

# *A Coffee with Alessio*



AMDG

## Holy Week 2021

This week's column will be a reflection on Holy Week. Yesterday, on Palm Sunday we commemorated Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem with people waving palm and olive branches and singing "Hosanna to the Son of David." Everyone was on Jesus' side. They thought he was the best thing since sliced bread. All those people who thought Jesus was going to stage a *coup d'état* and overthrow the Roman authorities and establish a Jewish Empire never really listened to anything Jesus said in his three years of public ministry. The triumph of Palm Sunday was quickly going to turn sour for Jesus and that was reflected in the liturgy yesterday, because after the blessing of Palms and the Entrance Procession, the liturgy turned to Jesus' Passion and Death and we heard the Passion according to Saint Mark yesterday. Our lives can be like the Palm Sunday for Jesus turning into Good Friday. There are people who are on our side and very friendly, and then out of the blue decide they don't want to be friends and are rather unkind. We need to do our best to ensure that we are faithful in our friendships.

On Holy Thursday, we commemorate three things: the Institution of the Priesthood, the Institution of the Eucharist and the Washing of the Feet of the 12 Apostles.

Those 12 Apostles were the first priests of the Church. Let us pray for our priests that they continue to teach and guide us faithfully to Jesus and His teaching, that they preach interesting, relevant and instructional homilies and they continue to offer themselves in a ministry of service and lead God's people in fitting prayer and worship.

The Institution of the Eucharist is the most pertinent part of the story on Holy Thursday, but is inextricably linked with the Washing of the Feet. We receive Jesus' Body and Blood, and then by washing other people's feet (that is, service of our neighbour) we live the Eucharist out in our daily lives. There is a myriad of ways of washing people's feet. It may need to be done literally and that is what the Orange Sky provides (showers for homeless people as well as other services). You may recall those two young men, Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett, won the Young Australian of the Year award back in 2016 for their project which has grown and spread like wildfire. On a more local level, it might be sending a text message to see how someone's day is going, making someone a

coffee or being a listening ear. We must live out the Eucharist in our daily lives. If we are just receiving Holy Communion and don't link it back to the rest of our week – then it has been a complete waste of time!

We are back in Church on Good Friday, and I have written some reflections on various Stations of the Cross during this Lenten Season. On Good Friday we commemorate Our Lord's Passion and Death. God loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to live among us and die for us. I mentioned in last week's column that Thursday (last week) was the feast of the Annunciation and that it was nine months to Christmas. You might be thinking what has the Annunciation got to with Good Friday? Everything! Firstly, when Mary said "Yes" to God, perhaps without realizing it she was saying "Yes" to everything that was going to happen to her, including watching the death of her son on a Cross. Secondly, just as Jesus was born in the most humble of circumstances in a manger, he was to die in the most humiliating of circumstances. That same wood of the manger would become the wood of the Cross. Just as we come into this world with nothing, we leave it with nothing as well. (Just as an aside, since it was nine months to Christmas, you might like to start thinking about the gifts you'll need to buy.)

At the Easter Vigil, we hear the readings from the Old Testament leading into the new. A reminder of God's plan of salvation throughout history, only to be spoiled by people deciding to things their own way. When we take up the Alleluia at the Easter Vigil we know that Christ has truly risen for us. That continues into the Easter Sunday liturgy. Easter is a feast that lasts for fifty days! That's why they should be selling Easter eggs (and hot cross buns) right up until Pentecost Sunday. I will blow the dust out of the organ pipes at the Easter Sunday liturgy. We will hear the word "Alleluia" at the end of the Mass antiphons for the next fifty days. It's time for me to go and buy my favourite chocolates, Baci, some Italian Easter cake (Colomba) and to find a few places with pastries to celebrate the Easter Season. This Easter Week, an apricot danish from Miss Maud's with a flat white will help celebrate the joy of the Lord rising to New Life for us all. The flat white with a love heart on top will be a reminder of the sacrificial love that Jesus has for you and for me. Of course, with a love heart on top the flat white tastes so much better!

I wish all readers a very happy and holy Easter and pray the Lord's blessings will be with you all during this time. To the Italians who read this column I say "Buona Pasqua". To our liturgical musicians, I hope your preparation of music for the Holy Week liturgies will inspire people to prayer and worship of the God who loves us so much. Make sure you take a breather after Easter! This column will be in recess for the school holidays.

Till next term – enjoy your coffee, cake and Easter eggs!

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