



## PALM SUNDAY

*PALM SUNDAY:* Mark 11:1-10

Look

Before and after,  
the crowds spread their cloaks  
and crying, "Hosanna!  
Hosanna  
in the highest!"

They cut down  
leafy branches from the fields,  
making the way for him to enter Jerusalem.

Hosanna! Jesus of Nazareth, eternal joy!  
Our God, walking along beside us!  
Our Lord who leads us to grace!  
Our king crowned with thorns,  
our beloved, our hero!  
Loving us all the  
way to the  
cross!

*THE Gospel of the Mass.* Mark 14:1-15:47

*A woman came with an alabaster jar of perfumed oil, costly genuine spikenard. She broke the alabaster jar and poured it on his head.*

In  
she rushed.  
She broke the jar,  
listening to her heart,  
she poured oil,  
out upon  
Jesus.

He did not shield his face from pounding and spitting,  
nor answer when they obscured his eyes  
and jeered, "Who struck you?"

But instead he quickly  
emptied himself,  
for he so  
loved  
the  
world.

Christ,  
teach us to pour out  
everything  
except  
you.

*THE FIRST READING. Isaiah 50:4-7*

*All who see me scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips.*

Jeremiah,  
and all your saints,  
morning after morning, you  
opened their  
eyes.

Sunrise to sunset, open our eyes too!  
that we may see you  
in all things.

Let us too hear the cry of the poor,  
the sick, the starving children,  
and the cry of the planet.  
Let us speak and act  
on their behalf.

Open  
our hearts  
that we may love you,  
holding nothing back, nothing at all.

*THE SECOND READING. Philippians 2:6-11*

*He emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,  
coming in human likeness.*

Christ,  
you emptied yourself.

No self-concern,  
no turning  
back.

Teach us to love this way.

Filled with your Spirit,  
let us surrender  
into your  
love.

Anne Osdieck

**Reflection:** John Predmore S.J.

Serenity seems to set into Scripture as Jesus begins his preparations for the Passover meal with his friends. Everything has been arranged and falls into place easily as if it had been preordained. The Passover meal is the celebration of God's fidelity to the Israelites, and God seems very present in these early events.

As the story unfolds, it begins to go wrong. After celebrating the festive meal, Jesus is betrayed and denied by his closest friends, and the rest of his disciples desert him. They fall asleep in the Garden during his time of need, and God seems more remote to Jesus in prayer. Mark's Gospel is chilling because everyone abandons Jesus, and, God, the one he relied upon most, seems silent. In fact, in Mark's account, Jesus goes to his death without knowing that God heard him. He dies quickly, but he dies alone, and God never answered him.

God's silence at the crucifixion scene is quite loud. It makes us wonder where God is in the face of human suffering. How many times has God been

silent to us in our pain and hurt? On the other hand, this is the moment of God's vulnerability. In Jesus, God saves us by becoming so vulnerable that we are able to kill him in the most vile and humiliating way.

At the cross, we turned away from friendship with God and we lost our way, and God remained silent as we chose our actions. God became vulnerable, and our best response to this vulnerability is to become compassionate and understanding. To be compassionate means to feel so completely for others who are in trouble or in pain that we put our very selves at risk. God's compassion for the world leads God to risk taking on human flesh and getting killed for doing so. In retrospect, God certainly was not silent. God was not absent. God was more present than we could comprehend.