

What is the symbolism of palms?

VICTORY! GLORY!

Palm Sunday gives a hint of ultimate victory: the procession is joyful, but too soon in the Liturgy it is followed by the reading of the Passion by Matthew.

Passion is a multileveled word: it can be sexual, anger, aggression, or in this case suffering. In all of its meanings it means deeply stirring, from the very depths, a feeling that is immeasurable.

So it is for the sufferings of Jesus.

In many older explanations of the sufferings of Jesus, it was explained that mankind's sins incurred a debt with God. Then Jesus came to pay the debt, to ransom us from the captivity of our sins.

This always seemed like a banker's explanation to me.

How about you? in a recent homily, Pope Francis had this to say:

God's forgiveness "does not mean the debt we have with him is erased. The forgiveness that God gives us are the wounds of God's Son lifted up on the cross, in which he pulls us up toward him and we let ourselves be healed."

Jesus took everything upon himself, "all our sins, our pride, our self assurance, our vanity, our desire to become like God..."

"That is why a Christian who does not know how to glory in the crucified Christ does not understand what being a Christian means."

Breakfast Question: Is my attitude toward redemption that of a banker?

Personal Reflection: How shall I during this Holy Week be "pulled up toward the wounds of Christ and be healed?"