

Time flies when you are having fun, or so they say. This weekend, I had the opportunity to fly home to Indiana for my ordination service. It was a fast weekend. I am not sure if the traveling had something to do with it or that it was a milestone and monumental occasion for me. The whole of Sunday afternoon was filled not only with the worship service but greeting and talking to those who helped me in college, high school, and elementary get to the place I am today. It was a weekend of thanksgiving to others and to God. And then I flew back to Rockaway in order to prepare for Holy Week. Holy Week is another occasion when time is warped. We celebrate Jesus' exuberant arrival thru Jerusalem on a donkey as the King of kings. And then we turn around as we remember the night before he was arrested, his trial, and painful death on a cross. Time seems to be moving fast around Palm Sunday and then grinds to a halt as we approach Good Friday. Then, we are wrenched with anticipation on Easter morn.

How must have the disciples have felt to have gone through all this in real-time. To have Jesus triumphantly parade in on a donkey only to be betrayed by Judas during Passover days later. These are quite the ups and downs of emotions to experience in one week. And then Easter Sunday... The Paradox of the Easter story and our larger Christian narrative is that death and celebration are held so closely together. You can not have Jesus' death without the celebration on Palm Sunday or the celebration on Easter morn without his death on Good Friday. Death and celebration are contingent on each other. "Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again." Also, the story is not over. We await the return of Christ when all of life will be made new.

What do we do with our anticipation over Holy Week? Do we simply skip over the heartbreak and suffering of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday? Surely not. What we must do is find a way to contemplate and hold the pain of the week while also noting that it is not the end. We look towards eternal life and our Christian hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Morning. We look back at our baptism and the commitment that God has kept on our lives. Nothing is the same as it was. And this is ok, in fact it is more than ok. May we hold the palm and passion of Jesus' story in tension as we celebrate the overarching Christian story this season of Lent. Trusting that in both palm and passion, it is Christ at work in us which keeps us on the path of our Christian journey. Hosanna in the highest!! Crucify him! May we take in both this Lenten season.

-Pastor Ryon