

Anglican Church of Freiburg
 Palm Sunday
 Homily

Luke 19:28-40

The Palm Leaves, the Shout of Hosanna and the Stories around the Donkey were all part of our Christian upbringing. That was the Sunday before the Passion Experience. An eventful week was on the horizon. The shadow of the cross was already visible and lo and behold there is the triumphant entry. We live in a world where suffering takes different dimensions. If we just look at the week ahead and reflect

- Betrayal from close ones- What will you give me? I will hand him over to you
- The same people who shouted Hosanna now shouting Crucify
- Denial by intimate friends saying- I do not know him
- The deserting of close ones when you need them most and the gruesome loneliness one is pushed into
- State arrogance reflected in mid night arrests and unfair trials
- Public disgrace and making a mockery of the justice and judicial system
- Violent and Brutal Killing violating all human rights for dignity
- Propaganda of Lies- the list can go on
- Jesus tells us- I have gone through all these and I understand as you go through this now
- Easter is not far away from Good Friday.and Good Friday is not far away from the Palm Sunday

Let us take a closer look at the text and search some insights that would be helpful in our journey

1. The Choice of the Specific Home

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples to a home

Would it be right if we say that the Lord requires something from Us? The Master of the Universe owns everything including all that we have Yet we hear- The Lord needs it and it is worth asking today - how do we respond.

The name of the person whose colt was asked for is not mentioned in the gospel text. But it was specifically to this home near Mount Olives that Jesus wanted his disciples to go.

A question I want to ask with you this morning is Why this home? Why not any other home?

If it is to a specific house in Freiburg that the disciples of Jesus are sent to fetch something for the Lord- something that the Lord requires- would it be my house.

Jesus was confident that the owner of the home would not withhold the colt when he is told it was for the Lord.

Would it be my home?

2. **The Call to Untie** and bring the colt to Jesus

Jesus sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here.

To Untie something that does not actually belong to us is not an easy proposition.

The canoe man looked at the other side of the river and started rowing. However hard he tried he was not reaching the other side. He looked back to find out what was happening and surprisingly realized the canoe was not untied from the pole in the shore.

Many of us are rowing today with our canoes untied. That makes this word To Untie- something we need to closely consider.

Are there ropes that hold us back? If there are what are those ropes and poles that hold us back?

The disciples are being sent with the task of untying the ropes. Letting bound ones come to Jesus.

Our spiritual being is not able to move forward and carry Jesus because something is holding us back, something is tying us down.

Perhaps the gospel that one of us need this morning is just this one word-
 UNTIE.
 LET GO

What is it that we need to untie?

3. The Affirmation- The Lord Needs It

If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it." Then they brought it to Jesus;

Does the Lord actually need anything?

Why does the soft simple whisper of the Lord reach us sometime- The Lord needs you!

The Lord needs this little thing of yours!

The Lord needs your talents!

The Lord needs your children to live in holiness!

The Lord needs your time

The Lord needs you

The Lord needs it

Marvelous are the ways of the Lord. When Freiburg started the process of filling the vacancy did anyone in their wildest of dreams ever think that the Lord would have an Indian priest who have never heard of the beautiful town before would come to be the Chaplain.

When we as a family responded to the call- The Lord needs you in Freiburg now- did we ever know what the Lord had in or have in mind in our move.

Do we hear the voice of God- The Lord needs You, The Lord needs it

What is it that the Lord needs in our lives today that we are withholding? The voice of the Lord comes to us in several forms today gently prodding us- The Lord needs it! Do we hear that voice?

The Lord needs it

4. The Triumph of Peace

and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives,

There are several words associated with leadership. They include aggression, triumphalism, expansionism, imperialism, colonialism, war, violence, arrogance and so on on the oneside and servanthood, humility, peace on the other.

We are told if it is for war the king chose a horse and invariably for the pursuit of peace it was the colt that was used. It is a powerful symbol. The king is on the path of peace making

Messiah is making a public entry- a costly public entry- and when the systems that he was trying to transform comes down heavily on him the path of response is the path of peace.

Jesus in the donkey is a powerful symbol of the call to peace. Friends, the pursuit of peace is what Palm Sunday calls us to. Peace in the inner beings, peace in homes, peace in community and peace among nations.

How do we become peacemakers? How do we become participants of peace pursuits? Can I do something to bring peace? Can I at least ensure that I do not disrupt peace in any way?

5. The Shout for Salvation

the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

“Blessed is the king
 who comes in the name of the Lord!
 Peace in heaven,
 and glory in the highest heaven!”

Hosanna the word could mean- O Lord Save or the Lord has Saved. It is a deep cry of a people looking for a way out of the imperialist regime they were reeling under.

Hosanna- Save us now is a call that is reverberating across the world today

- People bearing the brunt of a gruesome war- the remnants and the refugees crying out Hosanna- Save Us
- People who reel under authoritarian regimes and long for justice in their lives crying out Hosanna- Save US
- People facing discrimination of different forms because of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, domestic violence, human trafficking, crying out Hosanna Save Us
- People going through turbulent paths in personal lives finding it hard to cope with the storms crying out- Hosanna- Save Us

The world around us is filled with the shout- Hosanna

The pews, the porticos and public spaces are filled with the call- Hosanna

How do we as a church and the community of faith respond to this deep cry that we hear from the city centers and home corners

Hosanna is a cry that we are called to carry to the throne of Grace

Do we hear the call today? Hosnaa

Do we echo the call today? Hosanna

6. The Call to ask the Disciples to STOP

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.”

The intolerance at the joy of glorification and worship of the disciples and the loud cry- Hosanna and the response of the Pharisees to ask them to stop has reverberated across the generations.

There were anti-conversion legislation and restrictions on professing ones faith in several parts of the world.

In preparation for Lambeth I was interviewed recently and the question put to me was what is the greatest challenge you see in discipleship today round you. I said- They have stopped.

Many have stopped connecting to God and the people of God

Many have stopped sharing the good news thinking that is not good manners
 Many have stopped being a Christian saying it is out of fashion
 Many have stopped the habit of regular church going
 Many have stopped Bible Studies and being part of fellowship groups
 Many have stopped reflecting the love of Christ in and through their lives
 They have stopped ringing church bells
 They have stopped!!

The efforts to silence

- The shouts for salvation and transformation
- The shouts of community rejoicing
- The efforts of Peace in Non Violent Ways
- The proclamation of the Power of Christ people have experienced is still a reality

Do we hear the call around us today- STOP or Ask them to STOP!

7. The proclamation- If they stop the stones will sing

He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

The gospel of Love will prevail despite us, in spite of us.

It is like the best of the robot the epitome of artificial intelligence asking- what is the fun and excitement of it without the soul.

If everything would end in a whimper- what is so precious about it.

The mystery of the beyond is what makes the here and the hereafter worth it and exciting.

The Passion and Resurrection was to give new dimensions to the understanding of the beyond

The Pursuit of Peace is Costly. We are realizing it across the world now through gruesome stories comparable with the pain and agony of the cross. And our hope is Easter cannot be far behind.

In Jesus Christ Super Star we have these lyrics

Tell the rabble to be quiet

We anticipate a riot

this common crowd is much too loud

Tell the mob who sing your song

that they are fools and they are wrong

They are a curse
They should disperse

Why waste your breath
moaning at the crowd,
nothing can be done to stop
the shouting,
if every tongue were still
the noise would still continue
the rocks and stones themselves
would start to sing

Hosanna Hey sanna sanna sanna
Hosanna Hey sanna hosanna

Vinod Victor
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