

Palm Sunday because of our Lord's reception into the Holy City for the High Feast as the people **cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road**. Unless you understand very important things about what is happening, this all just won't seem to make any sense.

Palm trees? Characteristic of oases, watered places, their fruit edible. The judge Deborah rendered her decisions under a palm tree; Hebrew poets counted the palm as symbol of beauty, prosperity, a sign of victory. Palms used in construction of tents for the festival of tabernacles. Carved images of palms, by God's command, decorate the Temple.

They greet Jesus with palms, its use acknowledges the King. hailing Him their King. Amazing the saints in heaven, washed in the Blood of the Lamb, recorded by John, in his vision in Revelation, sees palms in the hands of those who have gone before us, before the throne of God now in worship. They take up palms to identify with our Lord's entry into Jerusalem. They rejoice to see victory, He comes not as a hero but as a Sacrifice to redeem them.

Palms represent an oasis, drink, food, rest, shelter, in a barren and hostile place. That's exactly what God gives in the Temple and His Word: Jesus -the Temple built without hands. He abides in the hearts of the faithful. He draws them to the font to place His name on them, give them eternal drink, food, eternal rest, dwelling, shelter. So saints in heaven decorate themselves like the Temple on earth, with palms, they are with the Lamb. Heaven and earth joined every Lord's Supper, thru His sacrificed, yet risen, Body and Blood.

This is why on Ash Wednesday the palms are burnt in repentance ashes on your forehead and now on Palm Sunday, Holy Week, our Lord was not only welcomed with royal palms, but also by the royal chant recognizing Him as the King: "the Son of David." From the eternal covenant given to David, his heir will sit on the throne forever.

We also take up palms. See them in the stained glass windows above the altar. Don't miss this sacred mystery in the liturgy. Just as the 1st Palm Sunday, we cry every week in the communion liturgy: **Hosanna in the Highest! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord!** Hosanna- Save us Lord, There's no greater hymn of praise.

That's what He wants us to ask for. **Hosanna!** Save us now! We're helpless, desperate for Jesus Himself to save. He still comes to you, Himself to speak absolution to you, to bring you His life-giving, life-sustaining Word, humble, lowly riding in to give His very life in the

Supper, as a bridegroom to claim His bride, the Church, in His new Jerusalem for this wedding feast. Shame on us all for now craving this gift, this Eucharist as we should.

We, like the saints in heaven, identify with our Lord's victory in death. So we take up palms. Holy Week, we commemorate the last days of Our Lord's humiliation, the most important week of your life.

Whoever loves his life loses it, whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. One must follow Him. Not your own ideas, not loving the world and yourself. **Lose your life and gain it.** He is your life, you are not your own; you are His. You've been purchased with His blood. Apart from Christ, you will not know true forgiveness, love, peace, or comfort. Apart from Christ, is only man's vain attempts, no real life.

The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified...And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. All creation, past, present, future looks to a day we call Good. What's so incredible is how Jesus refers to His crucifixion as His glory.

a cross that serves as a throne, a throne from which our King offers the greatest decree ever uttered by any King: **Father, forgive them.**

He sheds His blood to have you. The only way, the way He loves and brings life. **Unless a grain dies, it bears much fruit.** And He has. He has brought forth much fruit. And He calls this fruit, _____ all of you. You are the fruit of Jesus' death, the reward for His victory. He was lifted up from the earth, dead, buried, deliberately, that He would bring forth you, draw you unto Himself. All this for you. His passion to save you. This is why the saints in heaven rejoice this week, hold their palms. Let us do the same, mingle our praise with theirs. For heaven and earth joined here, poured out for you as in no other way or place.

Confirmands of this year and yesteryear. Do not let your desires, your future years, this world, friends, take from you what you receive this day. The times ahead will be more difficult to confess this truth. Truth. Unchanging truth. No other life. No other perfect Word, this Sacrament. Do not let anything take this Sacrament from you. you need this in your life more than anything This is how He loves you to the end. And He lays down His life to answer your cry each week of Hosanna. do not be far from the Sacrament. For He has baptized you. You belong to Him. Behold, Your king comes for you.