

“Protagonists or Spectators?”

Rev. Erika Martinez-Flores
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Westby UMC & Viroqua UMC
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Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday always offers a liturgy with very particular characteristics, as it contains several moments that are distanced from each other not only because of their content and symbolism, but also because of the emotional contrast that can be felt as the liturgy passes. of the Palms to the reading of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is as if in the middle of a sunny day a cloud appears and obscures everything, or as if an orchestra that is playing happy music suddenly changes its rhythm to play a funeral march; It's like after a couple of sunny days, a storm comes again.

Perhaps we can say, without fear of being wrong, that Palm Sunday is a space where contrasts come together to help us understand what following Jesus really means.

On this Sunday we receive a call by which Jesus invites us to participate in the construction of the kingdom of God, with the promise that He, Christ, will be with us until the end of time.

When we arrive at church on a Sunday like this, we already know what is going to happen: we meet in a previously designated place, they give us the palms to begin the first part of the day's liturgy. We know that later, in a few more days, we will read the passion in which, like every year, Jesus is betrayed by one of his own, arrested, tried at lightning speed, sentenced to death without sufficient evidence, crucified. between two criminals, he dies and is buried in a tomb belonging to one of the members of the Jewish Sanhedrin.

What new can we find in a story that we have read and heard so many times? Careful! Before answering, it is good that we ask ourselves another question: what was new for Jesus and his disciples in this story?

For Jesus? He comes face to face with the abandonment of his friends and the loneliness of the praetorium, the impetuous and disrespectful siege of the Jewish and Roman authorities on duty, the snatching of his human dignity when he is stripped of his clothing, the cruel power against a danger to the that he fears but cannot define, conglomerated voices of townspeople asking for his death without understanding the interests at stake, the sharp nails piercing his hands, a cry of helplessness with his eyes fixed on the sky asking God "My Father, why am I?" you have abandoned."

For the disciples? The fallen dreams and the dead hope, the meaninglessness of almost three years lost in the dust of the road and on the shores of the lake, a dream of freedom that slips through the fingers, bewildered eyes in search of an explanation, terrifying fear that paralyzes, absence of the teacher, pastor and friend after having had him so close, restless minds unable to remember that of "on the third day"

Let's return to the previous question about what is new that we, Christians of this time, can find throughout these days. Let's try to immerse ourselves in history and let our bodies and minds travel back in time and, even for a moment, find themselves in Jerusalem; there where our redemption is dressed as a cross and the death of the Lamb becomes a guarantee of eternal life.

Then let our thoughts reflect in wonder at the God who loves us so much that he did not reserve anything for himself, nor for his own Son, in order to recover and free us; the solid, faithful and consistent God, always faithful and close, willing to make a journey with his people.

And while we're there, let's take a look at Jesus' disciples. That group of women and men who made Him their reason and hope, and who bet everything on the Nazarene. For them, the passion and death of their friend was a personal thing and affected them in a very direct way, because before their eyes Jesus died for a cause worthy of

burning: the kingdom of God and his justice, manifested in love, peace and good. live together. That should also be the cause of every person who follows Christ.

Let's go back, let's go back to our present, to our twenty-first century. Let us think about the individual and community proposal that this Palm Sunday presents to us, because looking at the cross is what makes the passage of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ a predictable story, and makes us passive Christians. In each of us lies the power to make this Sunday, and many other acts of our life of faith, something predictable or unpredictable.

We make it predictable when at the end of the service we return to our routine, to everyday things and do not get involved in anything that can help transform the structures that led Jesus to death and that today produce injustice, poverty and the violence. We make it predictable when we stay in feelings and don't explore ways to be part of the changes we need in the church and in society.

The unpredictable aspect of the Passion story is ourselves when, following the example of Jesus and his disciples, we set out on the path to support the causes of the most vulnerable among us. We are unpredictable when we put who we are in God's hands, without reservation, and let Him use us at His sole discretion.

We can make this Sunday the most unpredictable of all Palm Sundays. May God help us find a way to do it!