

Each year on Palm Sunday we listen to the account of the “*Passion of Our Lord, Jesus Christ*”. This year it is the account according to Mark. Let us reflect briefly on three aspects of this story:

1. The story is a journey at many different levels: geographical, emotional, spiritual. Another way of putting it is that it is a journey to death and a journey to life. There is constant movement: growth, change, shifting scenes, changing characters, etc. A question to reflect on: Is it us joining Jesus on his journey or is it Jesus joining us on the journey of human life?
2. Central to the story is the Jewish Passover meal and the new Christian meal, the Eucharist. Meals play a very important part in the biblical story, beginning with the first meal – an apple in the Garden of Eden. In John’s Gospel Jesus tells us that He is the bread of life – the food that sustains life itself.
3. Death is not an end but a beginning - it is the real beginning of life: that is the paradox that begins to reveal the deep meaning of this story. When our lives are a journey with Jesus and sustained by Jesus, the meaning of death is transformed. When the “*Passion of Jesus*” becomes the story of our lives: our passion, our dreams, our relationships, our loves – we begin to live.

### **For Reflection**

*El Pastorcico [The Shepherd Boy]*      *St. John of the Cross*

“A lone young shepherd lived in pain, withdrawn from pleasure and contentment, his thoughts fixed on a shepherd girl; his heart an open wound with love.

He weeps, but not from the wound of love, there is no pain in such affliction, even though the heart is pierced; he weeps in knowing he’s been forgotten.

That one thought: his shining one has forgotten him, is such great pain that he bows to brutal handling in a foreign land, his heart an open wound with love.

The shepherd says: I pity the one who draws herself back from my love, and does not seek the joy of my presence, though my heart is an open wound with love for her.

After a long time he climbed a tree, and spread his shining arms, and hung by them, and died, his heart an open wound with love.”

*From the writings of St. Teresa of Avila*

“If our nature or health doesn’t allow us think always about the Passion, since to do so would be arduous, who will prevent us from being with Him in His risen state? We have Him so near in the Blessed Sacrament, where He is already glorified and where we don’t have to gaze upon Him as being so tired and worn out, bleeding, wearied by His journeys, persecuted by those for whom He did so much good and not believed in by the apostles. Certainly there is no one who can endure thinking all the time about the many trials He suffered. Behold Him here without suffering, full of glory, before ascending into heaven, strengthening some, encouraging others, our companion in the Blessed Sacrament; it doesn’t seem it was in His power to leave us for even a moment.”