

Holy Week: a pilgrimage of faith

By Archbishop William E. Lori

A blessed Holy Week, dear readers, to you and those you love.

This week, the holiest of the liturgical year and the period in which our Lenten journey culminates with the dramatic death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, appropriately began for me and for many young Catholics in our archdiocese with a pilgrimage through the streets of Baltimore.

Last Saturday, I was privileged to meet and walk with many of the more than 600 young Catholics who processed alongside a 10-foot wooden cross in a powerful witness of faith and belief.

Young people from throughout the archdiocese walked in truth and in witness to Jesus, who is “the way, the truth and the life.” Along the way, we listened to God’s Word proclaimed in the Scriptures, we took part in the sacrament of reconciliation, and we adored the true Body and Blood of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. We also enjoyed one another’s company as we walked and talked things over before enjoying a concert and taking part in the living Stations of the Cross.

Much like these past weeks of Lent, this Holy Week, which began on Palm Sunday, brings our journey of conversion to an end. And we all find ourselves asking: “What’s next?”

At Mass on Sunday, we heard how Jesus entered Jerusalem in triumph. In a spiritual sense, we joined those who walked along with Jesus as the crowds greeted him like a hero, shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David.” When we held up our palm branches to be blessed, we acknowledged Jesus as our Lord and Redeemer and resolved to walk with Jesus the whole length of his journey, long after the cheering stopped and the jeering started.

Then we listened to the Gospel account of Jesus’ Passion and death. Again, in a deeply spiritual way, we were united with Jesus as he walked the way of the cross, on his way to Golgotha. In witnessing his sufferings, we understood how truly our sins have wounded him. In witnessing his death on the cross, we understood how deeply he loves us. We have walked in truth and it has led us to the summit of the Lord’s cross.

But there is yet another step to take: remembering the death and Resurrection of Christ not just at Easter, but at every Sunday during Mass. All time is God’s time, so when we are at Mass, what Jesus said and did to save us becomes present, real and alive, so that it can become a part of your life and my life. So if we want to be the disciples of Jesus and walk with him in truth, our journey every week has to lead us

to Mass and to experiencing the gift of his presence in each of us through the reception of Holy Communion. This is where we encounter and receive the Risen Lord, who is “the way the truth, and the life.”

I pray each of you has a blessed Triduum and a happy Easter. May we walk with the Lord and one another and so lead many to experience the joy of knowing and loving the Lord as members of his church.

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