

**Homily Outline for the Palm Sunday Mass - Cycle B**  
**Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**  
**March 23, 2024**

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**Bishop of Springfield in Illinois**

- I. We had two Gospel readings today, both from St Mark.
  - A. The reading for the blessing of Palms tells of Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem, where he will ultimately be crucified. This Gospel reading preceded our procession into church with palms and the singing of "Hosanna in the highest."
  - B. Today's second Gospel proclaims the passion narrative according to Mark, describing in detail the final days of Jesus before his execution.
  - C. There are six events that make up Mark's passion narrative.
    - 1. First, Jesus gathers his disciples together for his last Passover meal and there gives them his eucharistic Body and Blood.
    - 2. Second, Jesus agonizes over his coming death in the garden of Gethsemane.
    - 3. Third, Jesus is arrested through the betrayal of Judas, one of his disciples.
    - 4. Fourth, Jesus is brought before the Sanhedrin, where he is examined and condemned.
    - 5. Fifth, Jesus is put on trial before Pontius Pilate.
    - 6. Finally, Jesus is crucified, dies, and is buried.
  - D. On the second Sunday of Lent, we read the account in Saint Mark's Gospel of the Transfiguration, when Jesus took Peter, James & John up the high mountain and revealed His glory to them.
    - 1. Today's Passion Narrative from St. Mark tells us how Jesus took Peter, James & John with Him to pray in the garden of Gethsemane.
    - 2. At the Transfiguration, Peter, James & John did not want to leave.
    - 3. In the garden of Gethsemane, Peter, James & John could not stay awake.

4. Sometimes we, too, experience spiritual highs and lows.
  5. Jesus showed Peter, James & John His glory at the Transfiguration so they would be strengthened to face suffering and death.
  6. Jesus gives us His grace in the sacraments and His presence in the Eucharist to strengthen us when we are faced with pain and suffering,
- E. Our Palm Sunday liturgy today marks the beginning of Holy Week, the most holy week of the year.
1. I strongly encourage you to attend all the major liturgical services of Holy Week and the Paschal Triduum: the Chrism Mass on Tuesday at 6:30 PM, the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday at 6:30 PM, the Good Friday Liturgy of Our Lord's Passion at 3:00 PM, and the Easter Vigil on Saturday night at 8 o'clock.
  2. By celebrating the entire Paschal Triduum, we will have a greater appreciation for the celebration of our Lord's resurrection on Easter Sunday!

II. May God give us this grace. Amen.