



SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



**Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord**

**Saint Louis Abbey**

**April 17, 2011**

**10:00 a.m. Mass**

**Homily – Abbot Thomas Frerking, O.S.B.**

Dear friends, we begin today, Palm Sunday, the celebration of Holy Week, the holiest week of the Church's year. What is it that we celebrate in this week?

Let us ask ourselves: what is that one thing which we human beings need, which would bring with it everything else we need, which would bring with it freedom from all that enslaves us, liberation from every evil, the entrance into infinite and eternal good? What is this one thing? It is this: reconciliation with God. It is our alienation from God – and only one thing causes that alienation: our sin – it is our alienation from God through our sin which is the source of every evil, of every enslavement, of our being barred from that alone which can perfectly and eternally fulfill us. This is the message of all human history, and reconciliation with God through the wiping away of our sin is the one and only thing which could make sense of human history, which could bring human history to fulfillment.

Now this reconciliation with God through the wiping away of our sin: it is this, precisely this, which Our Lord Jesus Christ accomplishes for us this week, through his Passion, Death and Resurrection, his Paschal Mystery, and it is this, precisely this, which we celebrate in this Holy Week. We know well that we could never accomplish this reconciliation ourselves. We know well that only God can accomplish it. And this is precisely what God, in the Person of his Son, has done for us.

From now on, because of this saving work of Our Lord Jesus Christ, reconciliation with God is available to every human being, to every human being who has lived, to every human being who now lives, to every human being who will live until the end of time. But we, by the grace of God, through our free choice must accept this reconciliation. We accept it by making ourselves one with the Lord in his Paschal Mystery, by faith in him, by hearing his word, by receiving his Sacraments, by allowing him through grace to live Christian holiness in and through us.

How important it is, then, that we participate fully in this Holy Week, privileged time that it is for accepting the reconciliation with God which Our Lord has won for us, for saying 'Yes' to it. Let us, then, today join him in his triumphant entry into Jerusalem as the Messiah, but let us remember immediately afterwards, through the reading of the Passion, the kind of Messiah he is, the kind of Kingdom he is inaugurating. Let us be with him on Holy Thursday at the Last Supper, and receive from him the gift of the Eucharist, the gift of the Priesthood, the gift of the New Commandment. On Good Friday let us prostrate ourselves before the supreme mystery of Infinite Love who gave himself up for us that we might be able to love. At the Easter Vigil and the Mass of Easter



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Sunday let us rejoice with the greatest of all joys as we journey with him in his Passover from death to life, as we at the supreme moment proclaim his glorious Resurrection, as we join ourselves with him in his Resurrection through the renewal of our Baptismal vows, through the renewal of our sharing in the Holy Spirit, through the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist. Let us thus participate in Our Lord's Paschal Mystery throughout this Holy Week, and let us do so not only for ourselves but for all the world, for he died for all men and women, for all those who will not be with us this week, because they have never yet heard of the Lord Jesus and his saving work; for all those who have heard, but because of the terrible oppression of the wealth of our age and of all the preoccupations with temporal things it brings have become too distracted, too chaotic, too fractured to remember to come, or to remember at all the Lord Jesus and his work; for all those who have said 'No'. Let us do the work of this week for them, too, because the Lord died for them, too. Thus, by the Lord's grace, we shall proclaim by deed what Saint Paul proclaimed by deed and word: "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."