

Jesus rides into Jerusalem, willful desiring your salvation. He rides to finish what He began. One of key scriptural points of preaching, as St. Paul would tell you, **we preach Christ Crucified**, I've been sent here to minister to you; I've tried to set you free from the fear of death. You're all free from the fear of death; to be unafraid of the last moment when you breathe your last, as all confirmands and all reception of members into this Church, the ancient Rite to be faithful unto death, willing to suffer all; not ever let go of what you receive, suffer even death.

What you received here, preaching, Scripture, doctrinal truth, forgiveness, Sacraments, you are not to fear death. And when you close your eyes in death open them to see the face of Jesus. The Bible tells us the fear of death is bondage to the devil. The saints that have gone before us did not love their lives unto death but they knew that **to live is Christ and to die is gain**. Some have told me, *I don't fear death, but what leads up to it. I'm afraid of the suffering I'm afraid of the pain. I'm afraid of this shame and the loss of control and what my care will be like.* May the Lord still your struggles.

Palm Sunday. Jesus rides to finish what He began. He knew what was coming. He knew He was going to Jerusalem not just to die but also to suffer, to be mocked, to be tortured, scourged, beaten; to have the crown of thorns pressed into His head. He knew -not only death, but also all the things that lead up to that death. The triumph entry and messianic hymns of Palm Sunday turn to Good Friday chants for His life and ridicule.

Jesus rides to finish what He began, to forgive their sins, the promised all of God's wrath for evil and sin, even your sins, spent on Him, He comes to die their death that His children never die. And not fear death.

Jesus rides to finish what He began. What He began at the font for _____. As St. Paul declares, **He who has begun a good work in you, (faith, baptismal) will bring it unto completion in the Day of our Lord**. What He will finish for you at the end, when He comes back in judgement, or when you breathe your last -you would not fear death or even what any man can do to you. At the baptismal font, the good work that our Lord began in you to be brought to completion, as on Friday He will cry out **it is finished** and joined you at a font to His cross and life.

Jesus rides to finish what He began. No one ever graduates or finishes Catechism class as some see Confirmation. Luther would quip, after the composing the Small Catechism 1529 (I think its fascinating it is the

second oldest book in the history of the world in continuous publication). He said he will never learn it well enough. He'd scold you people, *But if you spend 1000 years being taught by the prophets and apostles....Then you could say I've learned it well enough.*

As all husband and wives should desire to grow closer together in bonds of love over time, through the years, how much more will you treat your Lord, His Word and teachings? How will you treat His gifts of Sacraments as He rides here now to give? Most miss it in Jerusalem, most miss it today, He comes in love to care and save, do not miss His coming now.

The Rite of Confirmation, a blessed reminder to us all what's at stake, we vow unto death, that we must never stop being nurtured and fed and growing and given faith in the very means our Lord rides into this holy house to deliver.

Jesus rides to finish what He began. Holy Week is here. The week all create looks to, the week that changes your life. He endures it all to lay down His life for you. The suffering is your fault. You and I are the cause of the passion, your place to suffer wrath and torment for every sin you ever commit. Repent. And rejoice that your King rides to take care of your greatest need in all of life: the forgiveness of sin.

He rides to finish what He has begun, to give you what He has finished, accomplish in this Sacrament, He rides unto His holy city here, as every week when the Lord calls us to come before His altar, table, we join with the crowd of children and people in Jerusalem, mingle our praises with theirs, joining with them to sing the messianic psalm to our King. **Blessed is he, blessed is he blessed is he, who comes in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest.**

He rides to finish what He has begun. He will work upon you each day, to deliver His life-giving word, and Sacrament. What we learn from the catechism is never completed here. The promise to be with you always. He rides to finish what He has begun, until He rides back in judgment or you breathe your last. delivered to heaven

He rides to finish what He has begun. Since the creation of the world, the fall, His ministry, holy week, to today. What He continues to do for you right here and now. Devote yourselves to this eternal truth more than ever before. Cling to His Word and promises in such times. Come what may, health or sickness, prosperity or tribulation, God is for us, is one of us, has ridden to Jerusalem to make us His. From now until our last breath may the cry, **Hosanna, Son of David, save us** never be far from our lips.