

Palm Sunday...

We began with the blessing of the Palms...

Jesus' triumphal entry in to Jerusalem...

*All Glory Laud and Honor to the redeemer king...*

A few minutes later... Jesus is dead.

*It's spiritual whiplash*

In the past... I didn't preach on Palm Sunday...

We read the Passion Gospel in parts.

Different people reading the words of Jesus... Peter... Pilate... others.

It is so powerful... There literally nothing I could say after that.

But this year is different... We're not *in* the Sanctuary...

We are... living apart...

We can't have all those voices reading the gospel

We can't share the peace with a handshake or a hug

We can't receive the body and blood of Jesus... together...

No choir... no altar guild... no readers... no chalice bearers... no ushers.

Church is not what it was... just a month ago.

On Ash Wednesday I talked to you about

Stepping into God's presence in silence...

Reading the bible...

Spending time alone in prayer...

It's almost as if Lent is being forced on us...

That a season of repentance... and prayer... was no longer optional!

There was nothing else we *could* do!

And now... we're stepping into a very different Holy Week.

Last year... **8 days** of *exceptional* prayer, worship and music

3 Palm Sunday services  
A Tennebrae service  
2 Maundy Thursday services  
A Seder Supper  
The Stripping of the Altar  
The Great Watch  
3 Good Friday services  
The Easter Vigil  
2 Easter Sunday services  
5 Morning Prayer services

20 Services... in 8 days!

This year...

1 Palm Sunday service  
1 Maundy Thursday service  
1 Good Friday service  
1 Easter Sunday service  
5 Morning Prayer services  
6 Compline Services

15 Services... in 8 days!

Delivered to your computer... tablet... phone...

Live streamed on Facebook

Uploaded to" You Tube and Vimeo...

Audio recordings stored on our website... while you're safe at home.

They're **not** the same. They're not like last year...

For that matter... like any year!

This is **all new** territory.

And yet... in spite of everything we've lost...  
We've made real gains...

So many of you calling each other to check up on how you're doing  
So many joining us for daily Morning Prayer  
So many at our daily bible study

We *never* had folks read the bulletin *before* they came to church.

But we miss Holy Communion...  
All of us do.

I wish I could consecrate bread and wine through the computer  
But I can't.  
Holy Eucharist is an ancient right.  
A tradition for two millennia  
And it *requires* the priest... to lay hands on the bread and the wine.  
I can't *do* that electronically...  
I can consecrate it... but without you here in person?

There've been other times when communion wasn't available...

During American Revolutionary War...  
The American Colonists needed priests to make Eucharist  
And there were no American clergy... so they came from England...  
And all of them... were loyal to the King!  
The minimum requirement to be a communicant in good standing  
Was to have Holy Communion... once a year!

During the middle ages... Eucharist was only received by clergy!  
at the point of consecration... they'd ring the Sanctus bells...  
and everyone would look up at the priest...  
and he'd hold up the bread... and they would see it... just look at it...  
***Ocular Communion!***

For me to stand before you... and consecrate bread and wine  
And consume it front of you  
Without giving you to you...  
Seems so unloving... I just can't do it... I won't...  
I'll wait... patiently... until we are together again...  
When we can share the body and blood of Jesus... together...

For 40 days... we've been moving toward Jerusalem... Good Friday...  
Toward the cross... the death and burial... of the Son of God...

As we move through these days... physically separated from each other  
Remember how Jesus... was physically separated from his people  
Remember that through all of his suffering... his agony... his death...  
The Father... never left him...  
and through his death... he opened the gates of heaven... for us.

Amen.