

April 2, 2023



THE LORD IS MY HELP

Palm Sunday

By Sister Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Today's Reading

The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back. I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

ISAIAH 50:4-7

Reflection

Every year on the Sunday before Easter, officially named "Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion," Christians recall Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and

commemorate the beginning of Holy Week with Jesus' journey to his death and resurrection. The word "passion" highlights this memory. It comes from the Latin word *pati*, which means to experience, to undergo, to endure.

Witnessing to God's word and the integrity of the covenant, the prophets of ancient Israel were persecuted, ostracized, and even put to death. They underwent their own passion, their own experience of endurance. Isaiah's description of the passage above includes the faith-stance in the midst of that passion: "The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced..." Even more, it has been suggested that Israel's experience of persecution and exile was understood not only as having redeeming value for the people of the covenant but also as being salvific for all nations.

The early Christians associated Jesus with Isaiah's suffering servant, i.e., the just man who voluntarily suffered for the sake of others that they might have freedom and life.



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For Pondering

- Which phrase from the Isaiah reading holds your attention? What does it offer you at this time in your life?

- What is the “passion” you are invited to share with other servants of God so that the whole of creation might be energized and know that the LORD God is its faithful help?

Closing Prayer

*God, you have given me
the physical, emotional
and spiritual will
to overcome so many obstacles
that have risen before me.
How many times have I faced
what I perceived to be
impossible, hopeless situations
and withstood them ---
and discovered creative solutions
through which to surmount
and master them.
You've strengthened me
again and again.
I know that you
will never fail me.*

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