Dear Friends:

Palm Sunday greetings from Our Lady of Lourdes! It is hard to believe that Holy Week is upon us. Palm Sunday is also called Passion Sunday. It is a somber and sobering day. I am always touched by the fact that the Gospel reading begins with Christ triumphantly entering Jerusalem, with the people shouting, “Hosanna, hosanna.” But three days later, that same crowd of people shouted out, “Crucify Him; crucify Him!” I have often wondered what I would have done if I had been in Jerusalem at the time. Would I have had the courage to be present at the foot of the cross or would I have run away?

Please see the other areas of the bulletin for the Holy Week and Easter schedule. I urge you to come to some of the Holy Week services. If you have never been to a Holy Thursday or Good Friday Service, you should! They are very moving, powerful services. Take this opportunity to walk with Christ from Holy Thursday through Good Friday to Easter Sunday. Open your heart up to the Lord and allow Him to touch your life.

As you know, we live in times that can be described as unprecedented/unparalleled/exceptional - and any other synonym you can come up with! And, as you know, this is still a time filled with much anxiety and even fear.

Many people feel powerless in the face of this pandemic. We see, in a devastating way, how widely a virus spreads from person to person. However, I also hope that we have confidence that God allows the good that we do, our prayer and our actions, to make a positive impact on our brothers and sisters. As Pope Francis encourages us, “Let us call upon Him today, firmly rooted in prayer, for without prayer all our activity risks being fruitless and our message empty.” (Evangelii Gaudium, no. 259)

Normally, our Parish would have a whole host of Spiritual Opportunities for both adults and children. Our Children’s Liturgy Committee has always provided wonderful events for our children. This year, we will not be able to have any of these opportunities. I pray that all these will return next Holy Week.

On MONDAY, March 29th, from 3:00pm – 9:00pm, every parish on Long Island will offer the opportunity to go to Confession, the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Maybe you have not gone in 6 months; maybe you have not gone in 30 years. Take advantage of this opportunity or next year it will be 31 years! God loves us and one of the ways in which God shows His love for us is by forgiving us. Allow God to love you! Allow God to forgive you! Please note that Confessions will be available at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish at other times during Holy Week as well. See the Bulletin for these confession times. If none of these times is convenient for you, simply call the rectory and we can arrange for a private confession.

Also, please see an “Examination of Conscience” and “How to Celebrate the Sacrament of Penance” aid in other parts of the bulletin to help you.

Remember: Together, we can do something beautiful for God!

In Christ,

Fr. Brian

PS: POPE FRANCIS has said: “Holy Week is a privileged time when we are called to draw near to Jesus: friendship with him is shown in times of difficulty ... For a good Easter, Christians must do more than simply recall the passion of Jesus during Holy Week; they must enter into the mystery of the Easter Triduum and make Jesus' feelings and attitudes their own.”