

X Trinity 2022
Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish
Father Craig Looney
I Cor. 12.1-11 St. Luke 19.41-46



“Real men,” they say, “don’t cry”. In fact, in western culture, it’s often considered wrong for men to show much emotion...especially when it comes to crying.

Young boys are taught from a young age not to cry. When I was 8 years old, my Uncle Bernard died. I cried at his funeral. One of my aunts came up to me and scolded me for crying. “Boys don’t cry,” she said.

Jesus was a real man and he cried real tears. The New Testament records Jesus crying on three occasions. If Jesus can cry openly and in public, so can men today. And we don’t need to apologize for our tears.

John tells us Jesus went to Bethany, where Mary and her sister Martha lived, when he learned Mary’s brother, Lazarus was sick. When he got to their house, he was told Lazarus had died three days earlier. Jesus cried. Jesus said,

“I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in me will live, even though they die.”

And he raised Lazarus from the dead and gave him back to Mary. Tears of sorrow were turned into tears of joy.

This morning’s Gospel from Luke takes us back to the first Palm Sunday just before Jesus begins his donkey ride into Jerusalem. He looks over the city and cries. Jesus doesn’t cry for himself...he cries for the city and the people. Jerusalem, the City of Peace, longs for Peace in turbulent times. Jesus said,

“If you only knew today what is needed for peace...But now you cannot see it...not a single stone will they leave in its place, because you did not recognize the time God came to save you!”

Jesus cries for the people who are about to proclaim him to be their King and then turn around and reject him and kill him less than a week later. It’s the failure of the people to recognize him for who he is that caused him to cry...for their missed opportunity.

We long for worldly peace in turbulent times. True peace is the inner peace that comes from knowing and loving Jesus and letting his love flow from our hearts out into the world.

The first stop on Jesus’ donkey ride into Jerusalem was the Temple. He didn’t like what he saw. Greed, fraud, dishonesty and other unfair business practices angered Jesus enough to compel him to turn over vendors’ tables. People who knew better had hijacked the religion for their own selfish purposes. Jesus quoted Isaiah and Jeremiah,

“My Temple will be called a house of prayer; but you have turned it into a den for thieves.”

Luke tells us Jesus cried one more time, on the Mount of Olives, the night before he died. Real tears from Jesus, God’s Son, who knew what he was about to go through. Jesus cries...we cry with him...for what he has done for us.

Paul tells us in the Epistle we each have gifts from God that enable us to do his work. We learn from Paul to use the gifts God has given us wisely...not for selfish purposes...but to help build up the Church. Christian love means always acting for the good of others, sometimes setting our own interests aside.

The connection between the Epistle and Gospel is the person of Jesus himself. The Gospel compels us to make a decision about Jesus. He is God’s Son who came to save us...or he is a fraud. We believe he is God’s Son, who brings us the kind of peace the world can never give us. The Epistle is also about us...how we live our lives loving Jesus and each other. We must pay attention to Paul...he speaks the truth.

It should not surprise us Jesus cried. At the Incarnation he took on human nature with all of our emotions. He feels what we do. What do we learn from Jesus crying? We learn his tears didn’t last forever...neither do ours.

We have God’s promise of better things to come for those who believe in Jesus:

“God himself is with them and he is their God. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

