

04/09/17 Palm/Passion Sunday A

-- As we enter Holy Week, we are not only in the most important week of our Church year, but the most dramatic as well. We live through it, and the fact that we have a “dialogue” in our gospel highlights the drama. It’s almost as if we are in Jerusalem with Jesus.

-- One year ago this weekend, I was there, in Jerusalem. Our group had the opportunity to walk part of the route of Palm Sunday and most of the way Jesus walked on Good Friday.

-- There’s something important you may not notice from pictures of the *Via Dolorosa*, the traditional Way of the Cross. You **do** realize this when you walk it. Most of it is uphill—steadily but dramatically uphill.

-- The steps from about the fourth station on go up and up to the point that most people have to catch their breath at each station when they stop. The trip up Calvary hill at the end is a mere two flights of stairs.

-- When I read St. Paul in our second reading, I think of that uphill walk Jesus took. He was humiliated all the way, and by all human standards, it seemed as if we was on a downhill course, metaphorically speaking.

-- For he was feeling all the pain that anyone would feel walking that way with a broken body. He felt pain similar to someone with cancer, for whom drugs can’t give much pain relief.

-- He felt the pain of humiliation of someone whose name has been dragged through the mud by people thought to be friends. He bore the weight of the persecution many Christians experience in our world.

-- And he brought that up to that small hill, which eventually became the site of his triumph over sin and death.

-- Our lives often seem like an uphill drag, constant and unrelenting. But Jesus has walked that way ahead of us. He knows what we feel. He bore our sins. And, in the end, he triumphed.

-- May we continue our walk knowing that Jesus will bring us through our Calvary to the resurrection to new life.