Homily Palm Sunday 4-5-20 Vernon, Quanah and Crowell

When I took homiletics at seminary we were told to keep Palm Sunday homilies short. The Gospel readings should be the homily. I would ask that all our parishioners read the Gospel lesson this week slowly and prayerfully because of the special circumstances this pandemic has put us in.

So, with that in mind I will make only one point: the crowd that welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem was the same crowd that called for His crucifixion just five days later. This has to be true or we have to believe that the entire population of Jerusalem vacated and was replaced by a whole new population.

This point should give us pause when we consider ourselves superior in some way to those people 2000 years ago who were complicit in the death of Jesus. We are NOT superior to them. We merely have the knowledge of who Jesus actually was. We would have behaved exactly the same way those people did all those hundreds of years ago had we been there.

It behooves us to remember this all through Holy Week. That's why the Church gives the role of the crowd to the congregation, so we will remember and meditate on who crucified Jesus. It was us.

This year is an especially trying one for us. One we hope will not be repeated. But we are, in one sense given the opportunity to participate in the Passion of Our Lord in a different way: not just metaphorically, but in reality. The Church is in mourning, not only for those that have died, but because for (hopefully) a short while we are denied receiving the Blessed Sacrament.

Remember that the Church has gone through this before. There have been plagues in the past, both in ancient times and modern times. But we are lucky in a way because we have a deeper knowledge of microbiology and medicine that people in the past did not possess.

Please understand that as your pastor I'm in mourning, too. I miss you all and look forward to when we may worship together again as Our Lord intended.