

Spiritually Speaking

Time to Say Hosanna

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph SDB, St. Patrick Church

Just a little more than a year ago, life in our world was status quo and then a tiny microbe came along and changed all this. The coronavirus restrictions that have been in place have meant huge changes in everyone's life. Last year may be the first time the Catholic Church didn't celebrate the Holy week in this century. I still remember very vividly how we were all in lockdown. Man thought that the world was under his control, but political leaders, business leaders, scientists, were all caught unprepared and confounded. In his "Urbi et Orbi" message, Pope Francis noted that the coronavirus crisis, "exposes our vulnerability and uncovers those false and superfluous certainties around which we have constructed our daily schedules, our project, our habits and priorities. It shows us how we have allowed to become dull and feeble the very things that nourish, sustain and strengthen our lives and our communities." The corona epidemic taught us the need to trust in the divine providence. The letter of St James says that man knows how to control and tame animals and steer the ship against the strong winds, steered by a very small rudder. (James 3:3-4). Nearly after a year, the world of science and medicine was able to prepare an amicable vaccine for this pandemic. But people all over the world still feel threatened and anxious about what is going to happen next. An air of anxiety, fear, depression, dejection and disappointment grips us.

Christians all over the world are now celebrating Holy Week. I am sure that many of us cannot believe how quickly this time of Lent has passed. Perhaps we feel that, despite all the restrictions, we have journeyed through Lent with a new intensity. Holy Week's beginning is marked by the celebration of Palm Sunday, wherein we remember the solemn entry of Lord Jesus into Jerusalem. "The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed him were all shouting, 'Hosanna to the son of David!'" (Mt 21:9). When I checked the etymological meaning of Hosanna something struck me. So, I have given the title to my article as Time to Say Hosanna. The etymological meaning of this Hebrew word, "hoshi' a na," which is translated in Greek as "(h)osanna." In English, we know it as "hosanna." The original biblical dictionaries of the scripture describe it as "Save!" It is viewed as a plea for help. We have gone through a difficult time at this particular celebration of the Holy Week. Like the crowd who accompanied the Lord shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David," or like the disciples in the boat who cried out, "Master, don't you care that we are about to die?" (Mk. 4:38). The whole world, too, is faced with the same situation of troubled seas and a heavy storm in front of us day by day, as seen in the number of inflicted patients and nearly two hundred thousand persons who have lost their lives to COVID-19. Last year during the Holy week, I still remember so many old people of our parishes were saying this little soothing and comforting prayer: "Hosanna to the son of David, Lord come to our rescue." Like Psalmists, together we say, "Please Lord, please save us. Please, Lord, please give us success." (Psalm 118:25)

Matthew's Gospel (21: 1-11) starts on a triumphant note, the celebration of a victory parade. Parades and processions have always been part of worship in Jewish and Christian tradition, and they were the most normal way for people to acclaim the victories and triumphs of their heroes and heroines. When the parade is over, the heroes fade away and are forgotten, and Jesus, whom we acclaim in today's victory procession, will momentarily fade into His passion and death, but then He will rise again and live on. What is worth noting is the attitude of Jesus as He is about to enter into the final phase of His life. He enters the city boldly and fearlessly though He knows that He will meet His end there; He meets His opponents openly as He triumphantly enters into Jerusalem. He gives orders: Go to the village, find the donkey. If anyone asks, say the Master needs it. And He went riding in and they acknowledged Him: "Hosanna to the son of David!" We remember that the palms we carry today will be burned and the ashes for next year's Ash Wednesday will be made from them. Thus, the sign of glory and the sign of conversion are made of the same stuff and meet in our flesh and lives.

Palm Sunday reminds us all of an important thing: Though He is the king, He is coming on a mule. This king is different from the earthly kings. He shows us the example of humility. We cannot even think of any king who marches on a donkey. The donkey stands for humility, simplicity, ignorance, demureness, diffidence, docility. This Holy Week invites all of us to answer this question of the Lord: Can you be a donkey for me this Palm Sunday? Can you take me to the cities and towns shouting and yelling "Hosanna to the son of David"? To be a donkey for the Lord, what are all the things I need to leave aside?

This period of epidemic invites every one of us to have an introspection of oneself and to get rid of those things that make us boastful, arrogant, non-caring. Scripture says, "The greater you are, the more humbly you should behave, and then you find favor with the Lord" (Sir 3:18). Then Hosanna will be accomplished in our lives too. I would like to remind you once again of the little prayer that the Holy Father has taught us all during the time of the pandemic as a source of comfort for us all, "I am vaccinated by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. No virus can touch me." This is such a welcome message as we continue to try and do our best in the strange and difficult situation that we face at the moment. I am sure many of us have received the second dose of vaccine for COVID-19, but still let us continue to say that little prayer of the solemn entry of Jesus to Jerusalem: "Hosanna to the son of David!" (Mt 21:9). It is the right Time to Say Hosanna.



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Bible era sophistry refined, fine-tuned

To the editor, "Oh foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth...?" (Galatians 3:1). The church at Galatia was deceived with clever arguments and fallacious reasoning to turn them away from faith in Jesus Christ. The bible era sophistry of ancient Greek (bewitchment) has been refined and fine-tuned by present day liberal elites in America today. Jesus warned, at the end of the age, even the elect would be deceived if that were possible (Matthew 24:24) The prophet Isaiah wrote of our present hour, "Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." (Isaiah 5:20) America and the world has been bewitched.

OSHA in Oregon is proposing establishing a permanent law to require face masks for all Oregonians. Sixteen states in America have no mask mandate and equal or better results compared to states with mask mandates. At our southern border illegal immigrants are flooding the border with Biden's encouragement, with no mask mandates or Covid testing. Biden and liberal elites have bewitched America, calling evil good, a classic example of ancient Greek sophistry.

Henry Aaron, Marvin Hagler, and Leon Spinks all died directly after taking the mRNA experimental Covid vaccine. The liberal elites were quick to claim natural cause coincidence on the otherwise healthy sports icons to make sure no autopsy was performed. When revered conservative Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died in the most suspicious manner in a remote West Texas hunting lodge in 2016 the same elites made sure no autopsy was performed on the otherwise healthy justice. Last week the Heppner Gazette-Times reported two wolves had died: wolves that feed on our elk, deer and cattle populations. An autopsy has been ordered and expect a federal investigation. In Oregon today the death of a wolf trumps human life, classic sophism.

Recent Emmy winning rapper song "Wet Ass P...y," a pornographic lesbian sexual performance on a pole by Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion won the Grammys 2021. Cardi B responded to criticism of

her songs lyrics: ("Yeah, f..... with some wet ass p.....") The people that song bothers are usually conservative or really religious... Other people might think it's strange and vulgar, but to me it's almost like really normal, you know what I'm saying?" Lewd, vulgar, pornographic, perverse behavior is 'really normal' in America today but films like Gone with the Wind, Breakfast at Tiffany's, and books like Dr. Seuss, Mr. Potato Head, and Tarzan have been censored as morally unacceptable by liberal media elites and big tech. Bitter is now sweet. Jesus would call these censorship elites hypocrites, "Blind guides, you strain out a gnat but swallow a camel." (Matt. 23:24)

One final example, however, the list of liberal elite censorship/sophistry will soon turn America into communist slavery if this bewitchment is not cut out of our republic. Less than four percent of the 10.5 million black slaves out of Africa came to America (388,000). These slaves were freed by American Republican President Abraham Lincoln at a cost of 600,000 predominantly white American men in 1863. The Democratic controlled House has prepared a reparation bill H.R. 40 to "Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act."

At the same time America leads the world in child sex slavery, a 100-billion-dollar industry, which is estimated at 30 million sex slaves worldwide. These children, mostly girls, are sexually exploited, abused, tortured and some ritually sacrificed. The liberal elite media/big tech/politicians are fully aware of this satanic human slavery. Many of these elitists profit from this child sex slave industry, yet they are at the forefront of demanding reparation for America's black population. These traitorous elites that are using sophism to extract reparation, use racism as a system of advantage based on skin color.

"Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchers which indeed appear beautiful on the outside but are within dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (Matt. 23: 27,28)

Stuart Dick, Irrigon

A View from the Green

Lady golfers begin

The Willow Creek Country Club lady golfers will begin their season April 6. A meeting will start the day at 9 a.m., registration for play at 9:30 and play beginning at 10. The type of play will depend on the number of golfers.

Willow Creek Country Club men to start season

The Willow Creek Country Club men will start their Sunday play on March 28 at 8 a.m. The format will be a two-man blind draw scramble.

The schedule for the year's events will be available in the clubhouse this

week. Wednesday night play is scheduled to start on April 14. The sign-up sheet will be posted for those interested in that this week also.

For additional information, contact a member of the men's club board.

Death Notice

Joseph R. "Joe" Yocom – Joseph R. "Joe" Yocom, 88, longtime Lexington resident, died Sunday, March 21, 2021 at St. Mary Medical Center in Walla Walla, WA. A graveside memorial service will be held Monday, March 29, at 11 a.m. at the Lexington Cemetery. A complete obituary will appear in next week's edition of the Heppner Gazette-Times. Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in care of arrangements.

Chamber Chatter

Heppner Chamber will be holding its annual luncheon Thursday, April 1, 2021 from 12-1 p.m. in the Gilliam and Bisbee Building. Lunch will cost \$10, and RSVPs are required due to COVID-19 limitations and to guarantee a lunch. Please RSVP no later than Friday, March 26.

Murray Drug is giving the Moderna COVID vaccines every Friday from 8:30 a.m. -12 p.m. throughout the month of March. Contact the pharmacy at 541-676-9158 to schedule an appointment.

The Community and Public Enhancement grant program, provided by Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WC-VEDG) will be accepting applications starting Monday, March 15. Completed applications must be received by the Heppner Chamber by Monday, April 19 to be considered for funding. Applicants must be a local organization, club, special district or a governmental entity who resides in the south Morrow County service area and must have a 50 percent match for the total project budget committed before applying. Copies of the grant can be picked up at the Chamber office, Heppner, Ione and Lexington city halls or can be downloaded from the Heppner Chamber Website under Economic Development at www.heppnerchamber.com. Contact the Heppner Chamber at 541-676-5536 for additional information.

Nominations for the

Boardman planning commission to fill vacancy

The city of Boardman has one vacancy on the planning commission and is seeking interested parties who live within the Boardman city limits to fill the seat with a term ending on December 31, 2021. The position will be appointed at a future city council meeting.

The planning commission is comprised of seven members appointed by the city council and is a permanent advisory body to the council on matters related to planning and development. The commission holds monthly public meetings to consider land use and zoning matters presented by staff, such as plan amendments, zone

Annual Town and Country Community Awards are now open. The event, with dinner, will be held Thursday, June 17 in the Gilliam and Bisbee Building. Tickets will be available for sale in May (more information to follow soon).

Nomination forms are now being accepted for the community award winners, Man and Woman of the Year, Business of the Year, Citizen-Educator of the Year; Lifetime Achievement and Youth Award. These forms are available at the Bank of Eastern Oregon, Chamber office and City Hall and are due back by Friday, May 14, 2021 to the Heppner Chamber office.

The Heppner Ranger District is recruiting four students between the ages of 15 and 18 for summer employment in the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). The program will last six weeks beginning June 21, 2021. The youth are paid at the Oregon minimum wage rate of \$11.50 per hour (effective July 1, 2021, the wage rate will increase to \$12 per hour) and no previous experience is required.

Applications are available at the Forest Service offices in Heppner and Pendleton and at local high schools. The online application can be found at <https://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/ycc-application-english-v2-exp-1-31-2020.pdf>. Applications will be accepted until 2 p.m. on April 15, 2021.

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