

Devotion, Holy Week, March 24, 2024
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It all started so wonderfully – this young, charismatic holy man coming into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Crowds waving palm fronds and shouting “Hosanna!” Then, four days later, he is betrayed by one of his own to the Jewish authorities, who are intent on killing him to get rid of this man who continually criticizes them and questions the purity of their faith. And one day later, he is dead, crucified like a common criminal. We spend this week following the fast progression from triumph to horror, standing in grief at the cross with Jesus, and waiting on Sunday to see if there is any future for the people he loved and the faith he taught. It is a week of fast movement, and then slow waiting. The first two verses of “O Sacred Head Now Wounded” remind me of our emotions during Holy Week:

O sacred Head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded
with thorns, Thine only crown.
O sacred Head, what glory,
what bliss till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call Thee mine.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered
was all for sinners' gain;
mine, mine was the transgression,
but Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place;
look on me with Thy favor,
vouchsafe to me Thy grace.

As we wait for the glory of Easter morning, let us remember the pain and sacrifice that led our Savior to that sunrise discovery.

Jeanne