

# Holy Week

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*Bishop Jon Anderson*

May God bless you as you prepare for this week where we gather around the central story of our Christian faith and our Lord's cross.

May God encourage and inspire pastors, SALMs, AIM's and interns as you prepare for many worship services and multiple sermons. May God strengthen leaders physically as you put in the many demanding hours of preparing and leading worship for the sake of the Gospel and your particular community of faith.

May God bless the musicians and other artists who will share their gifts to communicate something of the darkness of sin and the hope we share in this week as we remember the Passion of our Lord.

May God bless the mothers and fathers and grandparents who seek to teach the faith by what they do and what they say. May God call forth gifts in our midst from the next generation of youth and young adults.

May God bless all the quiet servants who make this week happen for local congregations, people like janitors, office staff and altar guild leaders.

May God embolden people to pray for the right moment and right words to invite family members, neighbors, strangers and people who have been estranged from the church to come and gather with God's people as they hear the law and Gospel in this week of Christ's Passion. May God bless those who will be welcoming people, serving as ushers, serving meals like our youth groups so that they might show hospitality to all, like they would show to our Lord Jesus if he was to join us.

May God surprise you with grace in small and mighty ways in the coming days as we gather to worship God and remember those events that led to the crucifixion of our Lord. May God confront you with depth of our brokenness, sin and the power of death. May God's resurrecting power proclaim an even more powerful Good News that we know in and through Jesus Christ our Lord and his passion and death on the cross.

In the midst of the busyness, may God's Spirit work on us all and through us as we seek to serve the Gospel.

## **Palm Sunday Quote – Martin Luther**

*Behold, herein you find the difference between the Law and the Gospel, namely, that the Law commands while the Gospel gives all things freely. The Law causes anger and hate, the Gospel gives grace. At the first advent the children of Israel fled before the voice of God, but now our desire to hear it cannot be stilled, because it is so sweet. Therefore, when you are in anxiety and tribulation, you shall not run to Mount Sinai, that is to say, look to the Law for help, neither shall you think that you yourselves have power to atone, but rather shall you look for help in Jerusalem, that is to say, in the Gospel which says: "Your sins are forgiven you; go your way, from henceforth sin no more."*

Martin Luther --sermon for Palm Sunday, 1522