



Homily for Palm Sunday 2021

The angel, the messenger of God, comes to Mary and in that meeting God breathes the life of Jesus into this simple, wonderful human being. (That is the story of the Annunciation we celebrated on Thursday.) God renews in Mary, in us, the potential that

we have as his creation. United in this one child, and then man, are both the holiness and the humanity that Adam and Eve first shared when they lived in Eden in peace with God. And Jesus comes to us now to heal us, to unite us once more with that divinity we had lost.

In the two gospels we listen to today, we see what needs to be healed, what needs to be built upon. The fickleness of the crowd, loving Jesus one day, and choosing the criminal Barabbas over him the next, is exactly what is wrong with us. The fickleness of our faith, our trust in God, in our lives.

In the first gospel we welcome Jesus with palms, full of joy and excitement, just as his Father would wish us to do. But the second gospel is that darker side of our lives which even the human Jesus is drawn into, as he cries out to his Father in anguish, 'My God, my God why have you forsaken me.' It is the heart-felt human cry when we feel we have lost all faith and all trust.

As Jesus dies one human voice speaks. In the whole mocking crowd there is one person who has found faith through Jesus act of self-sacrifice. One voice of hope for us, that of the Centurion, that will be heard and picked up through the centuries that follow. This is truly a, the, Son of God.

This week we come together to celebrate that moment of total and loving self-sacrifice where Jesus, God's Son, reached down into, is pulled into, the depths of what it can be to be a human being, only rise and help us to join the Centurion in his new faith. 'Yes, this is the Christ, this is the one who will heal us, and bring us once more into that perfect relationship with God,' once closed to us at the gates of Eden.