

<sup>13</sup>Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" <sup>14</sup>God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" <sup>15</sup>God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': this is my name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

Exodus 3:13-15

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost + Amen

In his book The Death of the Messiah, Fr. Ray Brown outlines a definitive case for all that took place during the final weeks of Jesus Ministry. The actions He took and the predictable responses from the Jewish Leadership and the Roman Authorities. Fr. Brown believes as the church as always taught, that Jesus knew he was going to Jerusalem to die and that His death was the response of God to man's rejection.

I begin with this explanation today because during Lent I have referred to the Journey we are taking to Jerusalem. The journey we are taking with Jesus. Along the way like all trips we might take we have stopped and events have occurred which become the memories with which we recall the journey. In our travels we might remember a scenic overlook, a particularly good meal we shared, or a destination alone the way that gave us pleasure.

In our Lenten Journey we have paused each Sunday and we have recalled an event in the ministry of Jesus. Each of these events has pointed us to the Eternal Truth.

On the first Sunday of Lent we read of Jesus being tempted in the desert. Our old enemy appears again. The same temptations which drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden are again presented to Jesus, but unlike Adam, He does not fail. Our ancient enemy is defeated in this battle, but we are told he will return at a more opportune time.

On the Second Sunday we are reminded through the Syrophenician Woman that God's Grace is available not only to the Jews, but to all who believe. Those who beg the crumbs from His table will be filled and will receive more than they can desire or imagine. The Salvation of God is for all who believe.

Our Lenten Journey continued and on the third Sunday we paused again. This time it is for the first time the identity of Jesus is questioned. He is casting out demons and they wonder who He is. And with what power does He do these things. Is He a demon, is He possessed or is Jesus the willing accomplice of the prince of the demons? He proclaims to us that it is by God's Grace that He works and to do the Will of God is His work.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent finds God doing what God has always done, providing for His people. We remember the feeding of the 5000 and again we ponder the generosity of God. Jesus bears witness to the Love of God as He takes, Blesses and breaks the bread so that all may have enough to eat. And not only enough, but food left over so that even those not present may be cared for and loved through this more than symbolic meal.

And now here we are at Passion Sunday or the fifth Sunday of Lent. It is the Sunday when we are to begin to prepare for the Passion. One week to remember and look forward to the paradoxical liturgy of Palm Sunday. We have only a week left to prepare to walk with Him in the streets of Jerusalem.

The reading for this Sunday poses the same question we have heard before, Who is this Jesus and more importantly to the Jewish Leadership, who does He think he is? I began with the reading from the Book of Exodus. It is in that reading that we will come to understand what Jesus said today in the Gospel and why according to Fr. Brown and many other scholars this event ultimately led to the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus.

In the reading from Exodus, Moses is talking with God. God has chosen Moses and is giving him instructions on what he is to do. Moses is reluctant and wants every assurance he can get from God. In the Hebrew tradition to know the name of something or someone was to exercise a degree of control of the subject. (Think about knowing a dog's name and being able to call the dog and give it commands) When the relationship was between men it introduced a familiarity that borders on intimacy between human beings.

God grants this request of Moses and tells him, I AM WHO I AM. Thus YHWH is the name of God a name so sacred that it is not even spoken in the Hebrew Scriptures, rather the word Lord is substituted. Those who are questioning Jesus certainly know the Jewish Scripture. As they question Him Jesus not only claims to know Abraham, but to be the Son of God and then finally Jesus says to them plainly - I AM. Jesus proclaims that He is one with the Father, He is God.

From the first Sunday of our Journey to this Last Sunday of Lent we have been instructed and led to understand the Truth. Jesus is Lord, the Son of God and through Him God has come to His people. **To us, to all those who accept the truth and believe**

For now we enter Passiontide, all that was required has been done. Jesus has done all that He needed to do to reveal Himself to the World. Next Week, He will make His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, they will begin the week the proclaiming Him as Messiah and end the week by killing Him.

His work is almost done, but what about ours?

It is not question of whether we have completed our work, there will be much to do before we die, but have we done all we could to prepare for this Paschal Feast?

It is not a question about making ourselves worthy to celebrate this feast, for we are never worthy, that is what we are celebrating. That unworthy we may be, He died for us and rose again that we might share in the divine Life.

The question is are we ready now to throw ourselves on the Divine Mercy and accept perhaps for the first time, the reality of what He has done for us? Are we ready to accept His Holy Invitation?

Will we walk with Him to Jerusalem, To the Cross and the Grave? Will we Trust only in the Lord and allow Jesus to die for us that we may live for Him?

Amen

