

The Rev. Joel Petruschke  
Our Saviour Lutheran Church  
Passion/Palm Sunday  
April 10, 2022

Let us pray...May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, for you are our strength and you are most certainly our redeemer. AMEN.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, as I noted in the announcements, today is Palm/Passion Sunday.

Today's worship actually has two parts to it.

PAUSE

Today marks the beginning of Holy Week, which begins with the Procession of Palms on this Palm Sunday.

But, then by the time we arrive at the Prayer of the Day, our worship service on this Palm Sunday transitions.

By the time of the Prayer of the Day, we go from focusing on the Palms to focusing on the Passion.

And "Passion," in this case, does not have to do with feelings of romantic love.

"Passion" here doesn't have to do with intense emotions of desire.

No, "Passion," in this case, is a word that means the suffering and death of an individual.

And, so the second part of this Sunday's worship, is focused on hearing the Passion story, the story of Jesus' suffering and death.

PAUSE

And as I was thinking about the Passion story I couldn't help but think of the narratives by which we choose to live by.

I couldn't help but of the narratives by which we choose to guide our lives.

We have heard in the news of late, for instance, of false narratives that leaders of nations dream up to create a particular worldview.

Specifically, there is the false narrative that Ukraine is overrun by neo-Nazis and nationalists.

And it is this narrative then that has led the Russian president to plunge his nation into war, so as to “protect” fellow Russians in Ukraine from genocide.

It is narrative the media in Russia has been selling to its people.

Here then is one narrative, as misguided as it is.

Here is one narrative by which a nation is living by.

PAUSE

But the point is well-taken, narratives do help shape and guide our everyday actions as individuals and even as nations.

Yes, we all have narratives by which we live by.

As Americans we live by the narrative that our forefathers fought so that we might be a people who live in freedom from tyranny.

Our forefathers established a vision, a narrative for our nation whereby all people are created equal, whereby every person is endowed with certain inalienable rights like life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

This is the narrative by which we choose to live as American people.

It is a narrative we cherish.

PAUSE

And, as people of God...

As people of faith, we also live by another narrative.

We choose to live by the narrative that God sent his Son Jesus Christ into this world to redeem this world.

As people of God, we choose to live by the narrative that Christ dies on the cross that we may be forgiven our sins.

As people of God, we choose to live by the narrative that in Christ, God has conquered sin and death through the crucifixion and death of Jesus.

As people of God, we choose to live by the narrative that we have then a MOST certain hope because of Christ and his cross.

We live by this narrative such that through the Church, we seek to proclaim that good news, we seek to proclaim that narrative of hope.

It is our guide for the living out of our days, as people of faith.

PAUSE

On this Sunday then, when we read the Passion story, we are reminded quite plainly that we are a people who live by a certain narrative.

It is this narrative that we hear again this day.

It is this narrative that we are meant to embody each and every day of our lives.

It is this, THIS narrative that is our compass.

This narrative is our north star.

This narrative is our shining light in the dark.

So hear again the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may the hearing of this story strengthen your faith, may it fill you with hope, may it empower your life, and may it propel you forward today and always. Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel According to St. Luke the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> chapters.

Glory to you, O Lord.

(Read the Passion Story.)