



Palm Sunday Commemoration

THE OPENING of the Palm Sunday Mass is a vivid expression of public worship. Catholic Churches offer a procession to begin the liturgy, and the faithful are invited to take an active part.

This opening is called “The Commemoration of the Lord’s Entrance into Jerusalem.” The word *commemoration* implies more than a historical lesson. People are to do more than remember. They are to partake in the entry of the Lord.

The commemoration takes one of three different forms. The first is the procession, which begins outside the place where the Mass will be celebrated and moves toward the church. The second form takes place inside the church when an outdoor procession is not possible. Both these forms include the blessing of palm branches and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem. One of these two forms must be used at every parish church. If the first form is used at one Mass, it should not be repeated at other Masses. The second form, however, may be done as often as the parish wishes.

The third form is a simplified beginning that does not include the blessing of branches nor the proclamation of the Gospel of Palm Sunday. Mass begins in the usual way, and the entrance antiphon for the day is the only mention of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It is designed for Masses where insufficient number of ministers or a lack of time demands a simpler, shorter service. As long as one Mass includes the first or second form of the commemoration, others may observe the third. However, most Catholics take a strong interest in participating in a procession, which creates a bond among themselves and with their Lord and Christ, who enters as king of their hearts.

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