

**Homily for March 20, 2005
Passion Sunday**

By Father Charles Bowes

Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalms 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

Philippians 2:6-11

Matthew 26:14-27:66

We discover again our story in the story of Jesus.

The Passion (a word that means, literally, “the passing through humanity with deep feeling”) is not only something that Jesus goes through. We all go through it. Jesus’ suffering is our own, too.

How can any person who has ever lived escape some passion in life? We would never love; children would never be born. We would never share the anguish of, or help, those who suffer; we would never see compassion or know the meaning of tears. We celebrate these holy days because, in every detail, they say something not only about Christ, but about ourselves.

This week is the story of life. Make no mistake about it. It’s the story of history. If you want the closest historical account of Jesus, read the Passion. First told, first written, first believed. It’s our story. It is the world’s story. There is joy, there is jubilation, there is love. Faith is there along with doubt and greed and treachery. There is false accusation, mockery, jeering. There is the despair of Judas, the lying of Peter. There is the pride and arrogance of the leaders. His friends betrayed Jesus: those who ate and walked and talked with him and shared his ministry. They disappeared

faster than cockroaches in a cheap Miami motel. There is the tenderness of the women who stood by Jesus and took care of him. There is pain, suffering, and death. Yes, life. It’s all there!

So, this week we come to remember. To remember the gesture of love and service that Jesus gives us in the Eucharist on Holy Thursday, the tree of Friday – when the tree of death becomes the tree of life. And, finally, the quiet and final death of death on Easter day.

There is no way out of life. There is only one way through it. Jesus has taken it upon himself to carry us there. “Do this in memory of me.”

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in the story of Jesus.**