

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD "A"

APRIL 4/5, 2020

In the devotional prayer, "The Stations of the Cross" three of the fourteen "stations" (stations 3, 7 and 9) focus their reflection on Jesus falling to the ground on his way to crucifixion and death on Mt. Calvary. These stations are the product of tradition and piety. No record of them is found in any of the Gospels. Yet, I believe, they have an important message for us as we enter into these days of Holy Week.

First, these "falls" remind us of Jesus' full share in our human nature. Subjected to the judgement of Pilate and the resulting physical abuse of his Roman captors, plus the agony of carrying the weight of the horizontal crossbeam across his shoulders through the crowded and uneven streets of the Old City of Jerusalem, Jesus tripped and falls. These falls of Jesus bring to mind our own falls in our life's journey—physical or emotional illness, addictions, mistakes small or large personally or professionally, or a myriad of other falls that trip us up, lay us low.

Second, though without sin, Jesus' falls remind us of our falls through sin. How often we have all fallen been tripped up through temptation, in small and in big ways?

Third, Jesus' falls though painful, also offer us a message of hope. Laying prone on the ground, Jesus faces a decision in each of his falls. He can curse his fate, curse God, give in to despair, give up. Yet after each fall we see Jesus struggle to get up, continue weakened and bruised on his way to the cross with his eyes fixed on doing God's will, of trusting in God's promise, even though the fulfillment of the Father's plan is hidden from his eyes. It is in this determined perseverance of Jesus that we find strength and hope. Under the weight of our cross, public or private, in our falls, we too face the same choice that confronted Jesus. We can either give up, curse our fate, curse God, or struggle to get up continue our journey knowing we have someone who has gone this way before us. While it is still our own cross we bear, we do not bear it alone. Jesus is with us in our stumbling's, in our struggling risings, on our "way of the cross". With him we, too, ultimately will come to the glory that God has prepared for us.

**WE ADORE YOU O CHRIST AND WE BLESS YOU. FOR BY YOUR HOLY CROSS
YOU HAVE REDEMPTED THE WORLD.**

*5 April 2020
E. Jim & Erica*