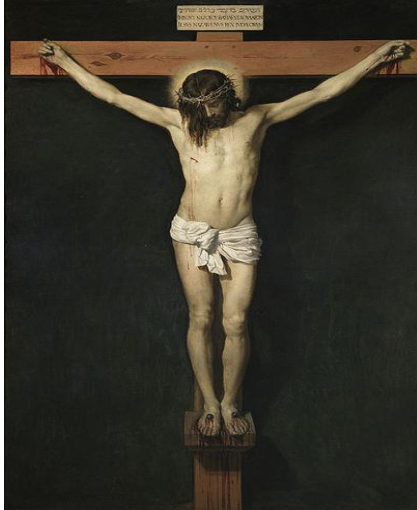


# Conforming our Human Will to the Divine Will

Palm Sunday<sup>1</sup>

By Fr. Gonzalo Meza



On Palm Sunday and Good Friday we celebrate the memorial of the mystery of the Passion, and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The moment of his passing from this life to his Father. The moment in which he opens the heavens to reconcile us with God the Father. To contemplate this mystery I would like to focus on two aspects revealed at his Passion, the double nature of human heart and the elements to conform our will to the Divine will.

## *Double nature of human hearts*

When Jesus entered into Jerusalem to suffer his Passion, Death and Resurrection, he was received as a King, “As he rode along, the people were spreading their cloaks on the road” (Lk 19:36). They proclaimed with palms in their hands: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord” (Mt 21:9; Lk 19:38). They knew he was a

king, and as such was recognized. Later in the Gospel we read that he was condemned, betrayed, tortured, and crucified. He was accused of blasphemy, which for the Jewish deserved capital punishment. Jesus was charged for blasphemy by the religious leaders at the time, however we know that he died for of our sins, to free us from the bond of death and grant us our salvation.

Pilate summoned the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them, “You brought this man to me and accused him of inciting the people to revolt. I have conducted my investigation in your presence and have not found this man guilty. So no capital crime has been committed by him. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him” (LK 23:14-17). Pilate was about to release him but people requested his crucifixion “Crucify him! Crucify him!” (Lk 23:21), they cried out. The same people who hours ago were saying to Jesus “blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,” are now asking to kill him.

On Palm Sunday when we entered in the church during the procession we imitated the pious people of Jerusalem, who waived the palms in their hands to receive Jesus as the King of Kings but hours later requested his crucifixion. Such is the double nature of human hearts. The Passion of the Lord help us to contrast the purity of heart of our Blessed Lord with the maliciousness which pervades human hearts. It also helps us to analyze the degree of our own maliciousness.

## *To conform our will to the divine will*

How can we conform our human will to the divine will? How can we avoid to do repeatedly what the people of Jerusalem did, to welcome Jesus and hours later to betray him, and request his crucifixion? Jesus set the example. He was able to put together the human will and the divine will, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done” (Lk 22:42). Who is Jesus talking to? He is asking God the Father to take the cup away from him. But if God is a triune God, why does it

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seem that we have two wills? Does the will of God the Father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit is not one and the same? Yes it is the same, but to understand Jesus' words "not my will but yours be done," we need to refer to the two natures of Jesus. He is true God and true man. As a true man, he experiences all that human do except sin, and as such he has a human will. In this passage, Jesus' human will is being conformed to the divine will. To put them perfectly together was not an easy task. In Gethsemane Jesus was conforming his human will in the most perfect way to the divine will. By doing so Jesus made possible that human will and the divine will could come together. He made it possible and set the example. For Jesus, the price to conform human will to divine will had a cost, his passion and death on a cross. We learn from him that when we adapt our human will to the divine will, we will have to share with him the cost, our own participation in his cross.

### *The cost*

In Gethsemane Jesus was in such agony that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground. The suffering of Jesus was not only because of the upcoming crucifixion, one the most cruel tortures inflicted on a human being. The most important reason for Jesus' suffering was that he experienced in his own flesh the nearness of sin and the remoteness of God. Jesus was truly human and truly divine, he was like us except for sin. Although he had no sin, he took the sins of all the people of all times in his shoulders. By doing so, he experienced the purity of his heart with the darkness of people's sins, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" The nearness of sin provoked the remoteness of God, and thus an indescribable suffering. If the clash in the atmosphere between cold and hot air shakes the sky with lightnings and thunderstorms. How would have Jesus felt when his supreme purity had to be confronted to the supreme malice of sins, and our own sins (yours and mine)?

Jesus made possible that human will and the divine will could come together in the most perfect way. He made it possible and gave us the example to do so. To conform our human will to the divine will is possible, but it will have a cost, our own cross, which is a participation in Jesus' cross. This is the cost of discipleship. With God's grace through the sacraments it is possible to conform our will to that of God. As Christians we need to strive to conform our human will to the divine will, otherwise we will continue to live a double life, a double heart, like the people of Jerusalem, who welcomed Jesus with palms in their hands, but hours later, cried out "crucify him." In this Holy Week, do not forget to accompany Mary in her sufferings, and to offer your condolences for the death of her son (Eventually we will rejoice with her for his Resurrection. *Regina Caeli, laetare Alleluia*). Accompanying Jesus next to Mary at the foot of the cross will help us to imitate Jesus and to imitate Mary. Their imitation will help us to conform our will to the Divine Will.