

REFLECTION

Palm Sunday

March 29, 2026

Isaiah 50:4-7

We start Holy Week with palms in our hands and the shout of “Hosanna!” on our lips—yet quickly, the liturgy guides us into suffering, rejection, and the Cross. At the core of this journey stands the mysterious figure from the prophet Isaiah: the Suffering Servant.

This Passion Sunday calls us to reflect deeply: "Do I possess the strength to endure the pain that comes with my faith?" The words of Isaiah, “I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard,” illustrate profound resilience. This steadfastness is not a sign of weakness, but rather a remarkable strength anchored in unwavering trust. The servant does not use violence or flee but rather remains steady in the face of aggression. The image depicts Christ's face in the Passion. When Jesus is betrayed, arrested, mocked, scourged, and crucified, He totally fulfills the prophecy. He does not strike back. He does not rely on power to defend himself. Instead, He gives Himself over to the Father.

In today's world, the pursuit of control, self-protection, and the impulse for revenge seem to dominate our instincts. When someone inflicts pain upon us, our immediate reaction is often to retaliate. If we are misunderstood, we rush to defend ourselves. When we encounter suffering, our natural tendency is to seek any means to avoid it. Yet, the example set by the suffering servant and Jesus offers a radically different path—one marked by patience, trust, and complete surrender to God. As Holy Week begins, the Church invites us to reflect on a profound question: Will we follow Jesus only in moments of comfort, when the path is lined with palms and praise? Or are we willing to journey with Him through hardship and sacrifice, all the way to the Cross? This challenge calls us to move beyond the easy road and embrace a deeper faith—one that persists even in the face of adversity.