

Monday in Holy Week - Year B
April 6, 2009
The Reverend Mary Lee Bergeron

“Jesus And Miracles”

*God of hope before us,
God of healing within us,
God of mercy above us,
Come be with us. Amen*

John 12:9-19, Jeremiah 12:1-16, Ps. 51:1-18

Jesus and miracles. This just seems to be one miracle too much!! Jesus has healed lots of people but, ‘Raise someone from the dead!!’ What is he thinking?

In the gospels of Matt. Mark and Luke the triumphant entry to Jerusalem was peaceful; lots of people praising Jesus and saying, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” But in our reading from John there is a dark cloud hovering. Sure the crowd has lots of supporters of Jesus, but there are those who because of Jesus shocking everyone by raising Lazarus from the dead, want Jesus and Lazarus dead. And they to are apart of this crowd.

Have you ever been in a crowd that was all in harmony and joy – perhaps like we saw on TV with the huge crowds celebrating after Obama’s election? That is what I thought of when reading about the entry of Jesus to Jerusalem. Our reading from John about the same entrance brought a memory to mind.

Paul and I were in Washington DC in 1970, I was attending a Physical Therapy Conference . One day on the 4th of July Week end we decided to go site-seeing. When we got to the mall we saw the huge crowd which we expected, for both President Nixon and the Rev. Billy Graham were speaking at the Lincoln Memorial. People wanting to hear them and Vietnam protesters were there in force. We sympathized with all and continued our touring.

Yet as we came out of a long wonderful visit to the Smithsonian we were greeted with a shock. Police were everywhere, on horses and in cars and on foot. They were chasing a group of students, They were using tear gas. Everyone was running and screaming. We were out in the street trying to figure out where to go. People for and against the war were all lumped together. The tear gas spread. There was panic. A quiet and peaceful scene changed quickly.

Change quickly just like it did for Jesus. In John's reading the Pharisees are plotting to kill Lazarus and Jesus. Many in the crowd are shouting Hosanna, yet others want to crucify him. The part we read today is a peaceful scene but the events that follow are a part of our journey this Holy Week. We will follow Jesus who came to bring light into the world on his journey into darkness and then again into light.

Jesus knows that healing the sick will continue to get him in trouble. And he must know that raising someone who had died would cause extreme problems. But he did it anyway. Why? Perhaps because of his love for Lazarus and Mary and Martha; perhaps because of the absolute deadness of Lazarus, and perhaps to show the immediacy of life in Christ. He announced for the first time, "I am the resurrection and the life", "Those who believe in me will never die" What a gift to all.

Today can we accept Jesus as the Christ who cares enough for us to heal us of the dead parts in us; the parts we have pushed deep inside. We hope they don't surface – the wounds, the pains, the dreams all that have gone before. Let Jesus reach deep in you today. Bring those dead parts to the altar and as you take the bread and the wine know that you are ready to let Jesus be a miracle worker and heal your wounds. *Amen*