

Holy Thursday 3/4/26.

Palm Sunday's very brief homily ended with the words 'let the actions speak; the rest is commentary'. We could say very much the same today and indeed of the whole of the Easter Liturgy but later commentators felt the urge to say more and so do I because we've celebrated this liturgy for almost two thousand years now and so often seem to be back at square one in a world where violence and misunderstanding are the norm rather than the exception. We might look elsewhere for the causes of this – the hatred and greed in other people's hearts but perhaps it's our own lack of love which is the issue. The story of the Rainmaker culled from Daniel O'Leary may help:

'For three years, there was a great drought in the village. The adults were emaciated., the babies listless, the animals skeletal, the countryside desiccated. Without a harvest it had become a place of death. Then came the rumour of a rainmaker. A last chance. The fittest were sent out to search for him. Blessed by the gods they found him. He listened carefully to their desperate story and then shuffled away into the local hills. After three days it began to rain. There was transformation all round. The smiles returned as the bodies grew stronger; eyes began to shine as people danced to the greenery of their fields.

To thank the Rainmaker and to learn his secret should the calamity return, they searched for him again. 'No, he said to them, I did not make the rain fall. Things were out of order in this place. There was no inner peace in the people. Nature was affected. So was I. I waited here in the valley until once again I became part of the rhythm of life. When this happened, the rain fell'.

In short everything is out of sorts because we are out of sorts. Jesus comes to restore us to ourselves, and to the rest of creation, to that flow of grace which shapes us all. He comes among us as the peacemaker, some recognise him, some do not – even among those closest to him. Understanding only comes when we step into his steps, go where he goes, kneel at the feet of others in loving service. The action doesn't need to be done again by Christ but it does need to be received again and again by us until his action of self-sacrificing love becomes so part of us that we become fully part of him. And then the rain will fall again.

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