

The drama of Holy Week is upon us. The Church invites us through ritual actions to re-enact the events of Jesus' death, to make them real for us.

We are perhaps tragically like Peter. Warned that he would deny Jesus, Peter did nothing while Jesus was arrested. Then Matthew gives us a pitiful detail about Peter. He says that after the soldiers led Jesus away from the garden and took Him to Caiaphas, Peter followed at a distance. There were no heroics from Peter; rather like a coward, like a man driven by idle curiosity, he simply followed at a distance to watch the tragedy unfold. That he would then deny Christ comes as no surprise; Peter was already a mere spectator.

My brothers and sisters I'll keep this simple today: Let's not imitate Peter this week. The death and resurrection of Christ is not a spectacle to be watched; it is a mystery to be lived. We pick up a palm branch today to say yes to Christ the King, yes to his power at work within us.

Has your celebration of Lent moved you to want to make some changes in your life? Then come to confession tonight. Do you want to strengthen your devotion to the Eucharist? Then come to the banquet on Holy Thursday. Are you carrying some cross too heavy to bear alone? Come share it with Christ on Good Friday. Do you need to recommit yourself to Christianity? Come celebrate the new life of baptism at the Easter Vigil.

Peter followed at a distance. If he'd had a television, he probably would have stayed home. There are many ways to deny Christ.

The drama of Holy Week makes these events real for us because Christ is real for us. This week let us crucify within ourselves whatever draws us toward death, and enjoy the peace of life in Christ.