

## Reflections from The Hill – Palm Sunday

This Sunday is a curious day because it is both Passion AND Palm Sunday. It is a day for getting to the gut-wrenching reality of the magnitude of evil in the world and how hard it is to keep an even keel and do the right thing at the same time. Perhaps you don't need any reminders of that, but I do.

Here's a bit of a list of some evil things that I garnered from a news service somewhere recently that are examples of the size of evil surrounding us: racial genocide in Indonesia; killing them softly in Zimbabwe; 82% of females in Pakistan and parts of Africa who are both illiterate and genitally mutilated; one in four people in the world today don't know what it's like NOT to go to bed hungry. I could go on. By any count, it's a frightening list.

But today is also a celebration that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Today, Jesus rides into our lives again, triumphing over sin and sorrow, conquering evil and chasing away fear, dispelling darkness and shedding new light in our dark places.

He comes in triumph, healing hurts and bringing to life dead hopes. In response to this regal entry of Jesus into our lives, we can pray with hope, even if things seem hope-less.

We wave palms because we have long awaited God's deliverance and now we're within 7 days of it.

We wave palms because Jesus shows us life-saving answers when we feel crushed by problems threatening to overcome us.

We wave palms because Jesus has set us free from the destructive longings of our fallen nature.

We wave palms because, like the pilgrims who came to Jerusalem to give thanks for their healing by Jesus, we too can be healed in body, mind, and spirit.

Let the procession begin.

*This from Rowland (again). It's in his collection Stories of Love, Life and Birthdays*

*A man asked his wife, "What would you most like for your birthday?"*

*She said, "I'd love to be ten again."*

*On the morning of her birthday, they got up bright and early and went off to a theme park.*

*He put her on every ride in the park: the Death Slide, The Screaming Loop, the Wall of Fear. She had a go at everything.*

*Five hours later she staggered out of the park, head reeling and stomach upside down.*

*Next stop Macca's. She was given a Double Big Mac with extra fries and a strawberry shake.*

*Then off to the movies - more burgers, popcorn, coke and Jaffas.*

*At last she staggered home with her husband and collapsed into bed. Her husband leaned over and asked, "Well, dear, what was it like being ten again?"*

*One eye opened and she groaned, "Actually, I meant dress size."*

Jill's Dad passed away within about half an hour of me sending the last *Reflections* and we've been away since then, tidying up his affairs and dealing with grief in our lives. On behalf of Jill, her sister Robin and brother David, thank you for your prayers and expressions of sorrow and please give God the glory for John's wonderful life.

This weekend I'm in Sarina again, helping with more information about Local Shared Ministry and hopefully being useful in the Palm Sunday Liturgies. Continue to pray for Fr Dallas and the parishioners of St Lukes and for freshness and safety for me as I travel.

Go well. Do good. Be joyful.

In His Grip

*Ian*

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*He is no fool who gives away something he cannot keep to gain something he cannot lose - Jim Elliott*