



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This month, we live the Paschal Triduum, the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we seek to deepen our relationship with Jesus, I encourage you to partake in this month's activity for *Via Fidelis*: "Ask someone of a different age or background about their experiences growing up Catholic." But it's more than just that. It is asking another person how they have encountered Jesus and how it affected their lives.

We each share a unique view of Christ through our experiences with him — but he is the same Lord. On Palm Sunday, a throng of impassioned followers of Jesus welcomed him joyfully into Jerusalem. They saw a prophet, a wellspring of the knowledge of God and the law, riding on a donkey. When he was presented before that same crowd, jeering and rejecting him, Pontius Pilate looked on the Lord with fear, curiosity and even guilt. So follow Jesus with conviction, not emotion.

The women of Jerusalem, and Veronica who wiped his bloody face, saw Jesus through the eyes of compassion. Like her, we are called to be compassionate to the needs of others. Even Simon of Cyrene looked quickly at the Son of God before his cross was thrust onto his shoulders to bear.

Jesus manifests himself in our lives at different moments. Sometimes we forget that we are not the center of the universe. We focus inwardly so often, yet the most important moments of our lives can be found outwardly in the smallest, quietest, most mundane daily things, like the smile of a stranger or the kindness of a good deed. And Jesus most clearly shows himself to us in Mass, where that same sacrifice of his crucifixion in the elevated host makes us proclaim, "my Lord and my God" (Jn 20:28).

I invite you to exit your comfort zone and discuss this aspect of the faith with a sibling, a friend, a stranger, a coworker or a grandparent. Thank you for sparking these important conversations. Like mustard seeds, our own understanding can be grown through dialogue with others about the beauty of our faith.

In Christ's love,

Most Rev. Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS
Bishop of Charleston