The road that lies ahead leads to life in the risen Christ

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By Sister Estelle Martin, RSM Guest contributor

Almost midpoint in the journey we travel during this season we arrive at the hill of Olives, overlooking the city of Jerusalem. We take advantage of the view, the opportunity to look back along the road we've traveled and the perspective to look ahead toward the way yet to come.

Perhaps the road behind us has twisted and turned as we have struggled to convert our hearts to a deeper sense of God's presence with us. Perhaps it is riddled with the potholes of unkept promises and unfulfilled intentions. Perhaps the way has been paved with the richness of our discoveries about ourselves as we have listened and pondered with the Word and allowed it to take hold of our hearts.

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The way ahead stretches through valleys and hills patterned with sunlight and shadows. The experience of our participation in Jesus' life, death and resurrection continues to unfold before us. Now, on the first day of the period we call Holy Week, we seek to intensify our understanding of the paschal mystery, the Lord's passage through the pain of suffering and death to glory of the resurrection.

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Passion Sunday's readings lead us forward toward the joy of Christ's resurrection through the stories of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his sad and painful journey to death and burial. If we choose, we can accompany Christ as he walks this part of the journey. The procession of palms at the beginning of Sunday's liturgy is more than a simple reenactment of a past event. Its meaning bridges the centuries to challenge us to profess publicly our belief in Christ. The worlds proclaimed in the Gospel acquire a deeper meaning than the story they tell. They place Jesus' passion in the midst of our lives today and invite us to reach out in compassion to the poor and oppressed who share in Christ the crucifixion of injustice.

The liturgical celebration of Eucharist moves us beyond the theatrical interpretations of earlier centuries to a continual walking with Christ in the daily events of our own processions of faith experiences. It is our life in Christ through baptism that calls us to undertake with journey, this procession. It is the bread we are to others that moves us from the place of worship out into the marketplace.

It is the palm branches of proclaiming the Word in the workplace through our service to the poor and neglected that gives shape to our lives as people of God. It is the wine we drink from the cup of suffering which gives us the strength and courage to share in the passion of Christ and to comfort the pain of others. It is our own journey in faith with Christ that reveals the paschal mystery events unfolding within us and confirms our commitment as Jesus' followers.

The view from the Mount of Olives is spread before us once more. Let us enter the procession as it winds its way through the city streets to the Calvary's hill and beyond to life in the dead and risen Christ.

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Sister Martin is chairwoman of the diocesan Environment and Art Committee.





that Easter dinner is Sunday, April 11. The Old Mill will be serving a spectacular Holiday menu and traditional favorites from Noon till 8 p.m. Hop on over!

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Thursday, April 1, 1993