Benediction: Thank you God that you are faithful, true and loving to us always despite our changes in mood.

Amen

Of mankind we may say in general they are fickle, hypocritical, and greedy of gain. Niccolo Machiavelli[[1]](#endnote-1)

No where perhaps is humankind seen to be more fickle than in Passion Week where we begin hailing Jesus as King, and then end by crying “Crucify Him.”

But, as we know this isn’t just a story of a crowd of people long ago being swayed by their leadership to seek the execution of a charismatic threat to the status quo. It’s a story of ourselves – our daily lives – our ongoing relationship with Jesus. Because as Christians, some days we live and honor Jesus as king of all that we do -- as the one from whom we draw our whole identity. Then the very next day we act as if we don’t know Jesus at all. We fail to stand up for what we know is right. We do things that dishonor Jesus. We become selfish instead of selfless. We put personal gain above the cause of spreading the Gospel of Christ. We do things that make our Lord – who sees everything – sad and grieved. One minute our actions, thoughts and speech shout Hosanna! Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of Our Lord.” The next minute they shout “Crucify Him.”

The good news, of course, is that just as Jesus went through the humiliation and pain of the crucifixion for all those fickled folks in ancient times, he goes through it for us – fickled folks in our time. Jesus promises that if he is lifted up, he goes before us. [[2]](#endnote-2)

The hymn in the letter to the Philippians explains that by emptying himself of his Divine prerogative to experience a criminal’s death, Jesus fulfilled the Father’s will that this death would become a way in which God’s glory is manifested. The third suffering servant psalm in Isaiah tells us that although the message of God’s Kingdom has caused rejection and death, the servant trusts in God, knowing that his suffering has an eternal purpose. [[3]](#endnote-3)

Because Jesus died and rose again, we can have hope that, even in our fickleness, we are loved by God and that we will be with God always.

I invite us not to shortcut the experience that Holy Week offers to see both our own fickleness and also Jesus’s faithfulness toward us. I invite us to attend the services at St Johns on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday as they focus on all the words of Jesus – the prayers of Jesus – as he was lifted up for us and out of His great love for us. I invite us to Maundy Thursday as we thank God for all He has given us and participate in the meal that Jesus instituted on that last evening with his disciples. Then I invite us to pray as the altar is stripped, as we come to those dark hours when Jesus suffers and dies and when there is no Presence of Christ on the earth. I invite us to the Great Vigil of Easter, when the light of Christ is rekindled and spreads among us – as Jesus breaks free from the tomb and is Risen. I invite us to celebrate the glory of Easter – the glory of the Resurrection that provides assurance once and for all, that, even with all our fickleness, God’s love for us is eternal and our place with God is forever assured.

Amen

1. Niccolo Machiavelli, found on [*https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/fickle*](https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/fickle) [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Synthesis: A Weekly Resource for Preaching and Worship in the Episcopal Tradition, PNMSI Publishing Co., Inc**.** March 2018, Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Synthesis. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)