

Monday, April 6 **Holy Week 2020**

Flatten the curve. By the end of 2020 those words may be given the honor of being “phrase of the year.” As it pertains to Covid-19 the “curve” refers to the projected number of people who will contract the coronavirus over a period of time. The curve takes on different shapes, depending on the virus’s infection rate. It could be a steep curve, in which the virus spreads exponentially, and the total number of cases skyrockets to its peak within a few weeks.

A flatter curve, on the other hand, assumes the same number of people ultimately get infected, but over a longer period of time, resulting in people having better access to care.

Flatten the curve. What does this have to do with Holy Week? Grant me some pastoral license here.

On Palm Sunday, Jesus’ popularity reached its apex. He rides into Jerusalem fulfilling Old Testament prophecy, the crowds have gathered and celebrate His arrival by spreading their cloaks and branches of trees on the road and by shouting, *Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest heaven. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”* (Matthew 21:8-10)

The Jerusalem Opinion Poll Survey wrote that Jesus’ popularity spiked at this time and His “approval” rating was the highest recorded of any leader in Israel. The general population expressed tremendous confidence in Jesus’ ability to make the necessary changes in the nation. There was only one group that was dissatisfied with Jesus, and that was the Jewish religious authorities. They criticized Jesus as a charlatan, a false prophet, who only wanted to upset the traditions of the Jewish religion. He “wasn’t really in touch with the people’s needs,” they were quoted as saying.

And from that point until Jesus’ resurrection, His poll numbers plummeted. In other words, his curve was flattened and the attention He received became less positive, and more hostile.

How is this relevant to us today? In this world there is the disease of sin, and it’s infection is worldwide. The need is to flatten the curve. And the only way to do that is through faith and trust in Jesus.

Romans 3:23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

John 10:10 *I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*

John 11:25-26 *Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*

As we move day by day through Holy Week, take a moment to assess the arc of the curve in your own life. Is there a sin that needs to be confessed? Is there a person with whom you need to work out an issue of forgiveness? Are you being a healer by blessing others with your words, attitudes and actions?

Flatten the curve . . . spiritually.