

**All Saints Episcopal Church**

**Steenrijk**

**Leidenstraat at Heelsumstratt**

**Willemstad, Curacao**

**The Episcopal Diocese of Venezuela**

**Palm Sunday (C)**

**April 10, 2022**

**DRAFT**

**“Shouting Stones—A Surprising Finding”**

**A Sermon by the Rev. Joe Parrish**

**The Holy Gospel according to Luke 9:28-40**

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the

Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it.’” So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord needs it.” Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole

multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!”

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.”

Let us remember your sacrifice for us, Dear Lord Christ. Amen.

Prayers for peace in Europe that Russia and the Ukraine can coexist without War - Amen and Amen. Hear our prayers Dear Lord.

I walked from our brief home at the Marriott Hotel over to where we are now living at the AUSOM dormitory at the Avalon Medical School and found a small, heavy, but interesting stone on the wayside. I picked the stone up and lo and behold it has become an important fixture for us in the school dorm; it is the way we regulate the closing of our bathroom door which would otherwise swing closed anytime we entered the bathroom. This cast-off stone now has important meaning for us; it also happens to be a black volcanic stone, very dense, small but very heavy. Our stone of course does not have a mouth or lungs or brain, and it cannot possibly

talk, or could it? It is a very ancient stone, older than much of Curacao as it was part of one of the volcanic eruptions that formed Curacao many million years ago, some sixty to eighty million years ago to be more precise. The five kilometer thick Curaçao Lava Formation is the oldest rock unit on Curaçao, dating to the Cretaceous Age, somewhere between 89 and 62 million years ago. This rock saw dinosaurs become extinct when the huge Chixulub asteroid hit the Yucatan area of Mexico. But was it was only a random mixture of elements 4.6 billion years ago, Billion with a B, when the moon was formed from Planet Earth by a close encounter with another now non-existent

planet. Is this little rock is a whipper snapper, a youth, in terms of the age of the universe, a little over 60 million years old. But even at that age, what wisdom this tiny rock could give us. It saw dinosaurs become extinct, the end of much of earth's surface life, and then the beginning of surface life anew on Planet Earth. When the big asteroid hit the Yucatan and formed the Chicxulub crater, now the Gulf of Mexico, much surface life disappeared, and then over millions of years, life returned, and finally the first humans appeared. We didn't get to see the dinosaurs. That's only in movies. But was this rock formed just a few million years after the continents of Africa and South America had

separated, when the land mass over the Galapagos hot spot that formed Curacao was moving and now the hot spot is on the west side of South America.

So this little rock has seen the formation of new life on Planet Earth.

But then I gave the little rock a new look; indeed it at first looks volcanic, but I have seen lava before, and it isn't lava. It is entirely something else. It is a solid composite of iron, and nickel, and copper, and a whole host of other solid elements. This little rock was likely a part of that huge Chixulub asteroid that hit the Yucatan area of Mexico over 60 million years ago. This little rock had been travelling for

billions of years about the universe until it happened to come close to Planet Earth, when it was caught into the gravitational field of Earth and came burning a whole bunch of Earth's atmosphere due to its incredible speed, crashing into the Yucatan, exploding into many pieces like this one, and leaving the giant hole we now call the Gulf of Mexico. So this little piece of the asteroid has seen the birth of stars near the beginning of the universe and was like part of one of those stars. If it had been close to Earth 4.6 billion years ago it could have seen the now non-existent earth-sized planet come close to molten Planet Earth and draw a huge chunk of Planet Earth into an orbit around Earth, the

chunk that solidified into a ball and which we now call the Moon. This little dense stone has seen much of God's handiwork from nearly the very beginning of time. So what wisdom it could be giving us if it only had a mouth and lungs and a brain. Indeed, Jesus could see that the stones on his way were some of the very original stones of the universe, and those stones would affirm the handiwork of God and of God's Son Jesus Christ who was creating the world we now live in. This very Creator is now riding a little pony into town. Humble as anything or anybody. The Creator of Heaven and Earth, before all time and before all places. And This Creator chose to come into our very

planet's life and bring life eternal to, of all people, us. Jesus was the one who breathed life into the first human, who became the father of us all. And a part of him became woman, who would bear life in all of its glory. And knowing all this, surely this stone among trillions of others would bear witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. If we stay silent, this stone would be God's witness against us. What a picture Jesus is painting on that first Palm Sunday.

Now life seems irrepressible on Earth. When the slightest positive event happens, new life springs up. Have you noticed the green plants that spring up when there is a tiny crack in a concrete roadway? A tiny seed falls, and, wala,

a new plant begins at the edge of that hard concrete.

Our congregation here has seen rough times, which have not completely ended, but we are at the beginning of a new rebirth, I believe, a bit like my pet rock saw millions of years ago. It may take some careful nurturing, but new life always springs up if we let it, and especially if we nurture it.

Palm Sunday is actually a recording of how new life begins. The sad part is that it has to begin with death. A dead seed falls into the ground and sprouts new life. Jesus had to be murdered, crucified, and buried, in order to show how God can raise the dead to life anew.

The towns-people who were strewing their cloaks and palms and other branches on the path of Jesus' little donkey did not realize they were preparing Jesus for death. They thought he would be the new Emperor--get rid of old Caesar, bring in the Son of God--sort of thing. They had no idea Jesus would be dead within a week, no idea. But, indeed, Jesus cooperated with the procession, even orchestrated it with a borrowed burrow. And the contrast with how a victorious military commander would be seen, Jesus came in, not with trumpets and drums and tambourines, but with the praises of the nameless poor of the village raised in

cacophony, praising God for the deliverance that was coming.

Today we again see death in our world, death not of a savior, but death of many children, elderly, mothers and fathers. It has been a long struggle with covid, and now a devastating struggle at the boundaries of Europe, ready to plunge the entire world into destruction. And we can only speculate when the aggression will end, or if it will end. The warring nations need to be constantly in our prayers. So many millions are being displaced; life will never be the same again. So, we each need to support those in harm's way by whatever means we can muster. Their plight is our plight, as every

nation is taking sides. This is not good; the world is too fractured to withstand an onslaught.

But as my little rock here has seen life go and come, go and come, may our own lives be renewed so we can renew other lives. Let us take on the task of bringing new life here into our midst and into the lives of many others.

If we are silent, many more will die without Christ, and the stones will see and be our judge. And let us not be stones, but ones who bring new life to others.

Wave our palms. The King has arrived.  
Come let us adore him.

Amen.

## “Shouting Stones”

Description: Christ Jesus needs us; we need Christ Jesus. Let us not be silent as stones, but let us proclaim the Good News that Our Savior has come. We are the ones to make the love of God in Christ real to others.

Tags: Jesus, Christ, Curacao, Ukraine, Russia, pray, peace, proclaim, silent, stones, Good

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