



TIDAL POWER

Freeporters are all too familiar with the tide. We witness its highs and its lows, its ebbs and its flows, and we watch and pray to be prepared for its changes, that predictable as they may be, can still inflict unprecedented damage when stirred up with other forces of nature such as those associated with nor'easters.

In today's Mass-Readings for *Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion*, we experience how quickly the tide turned on Jesus. He enters into Jerusalem, and although welcomed as a King, He arrives on a colt/a beast of burden, making it clear to those with *eyes to see* that: King though He was/is, His Kingdom was/is not of this world. This He would make clear as well five days later when those who welcomed Him as a King, demand His Crucifixion as He stands before Pontius Pilate and says: "My Kingdom does not belong to this world. If My Kingdom did belong to this world, My attendants would be fighting to keep Me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, My Kingdom is not here" (Saint John XVIII:36).



With help from "intolerant and hypersensitive attitudes that led to the spread of arrogance and hatred" (*Fake News* as defined by His Holiness Pope Francis in his *2018 Message for World Day of Communication*), the tide turned against Jesus. "Many gave false witness against Him, but their testimony did not agree. Some took the stand and testified falsely against Him" (Saint Mark XIV:56-57), yet Jesus doesn't turn against the tide. He accepts the Cross, lays His life down upon It, and allows it to *lift Him up from the earth so that He may draw every man, woman, and child to Himself* (cf. Saint John XII:32).

It is upon the Cross that evil reaches its high tide. It is upon the Cross as well however, that the tide of evil begins to ebb, and *the ruler of this world is driven out* (Saint John XII:31). And if it should seem at times "by folly and improper conduct, proceeding from a variety of causes"¹ (legal abortion, permissive homosexuality, physician assisted suicide, award winning blasphemies) that the tide of evil is rising, and if in fact we may "still suffer calamities more wasting and distresses yet more dreadful"² (human cloning, animal-human hybrids), it's only because those to whom Christ handed over the Spirit in the waters of Baptism, are ebbing in letting the Spirit flow to renew the face of the earth. "In proportion as the genuine effects of Christianity are diminished in any nation, either through unbelief, or the corruption of its doctrines, or the neglect of its institutions; in the same proportion will the people of that nation recede from the blessings of genuine freedom."³

On the Cross, Christ definitively establishes the flow of the Heavenly Kingdom that humbly began to rise when "the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us" (Saint John I:14) in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*The Annunciation*, celebrated this year on 9 April rather than 25 March); the Kingdom that was protected by Saint Joseph who "did as the Angel of the Lord had commanded him" (Saint Matthew I:24); the Kingdom that grew in grace and wisdom before God and man as Jesus "went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil" (Acts X:38). It is upon the Cross that Christ *unleashed the Power of the Spirit* (cf. Saint John XIX:30) that would change the tide in God's favour forever!

From that Life-giving Death on the Cross flows the *Power of the Spirit* that make us "other Christs" and forgives sin in Baptism, reconciles us to the Father and the Church in Confession, unites a man and woman in the unbreakable bond of Holy Matrimony, and changes bread into Body and wine into Blood at Holy Mass so that not only can we who eat and drink at the Table be able to *deny ourselves, pick up our crosses, and follow Jesus* (cf. Saint Matthew XVI:24), but that we may in turn do for others what has been done for us! (cf. Saint John XIII:15)

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." (I Corinthians i:18). Tap into that power this Holy Week and the tide of God's favour will rise for you as you go forward to deal with this world's changing tides!

¹US President George Washington, 29 June 1788

²John Adams, 3 July 1776

³Jedediah Morse, 1799