

FR JUSTIN FORD, HOMILY, PALM SUNDAY, 5TH APRIL 2020

We know there've been so many incredible changes in recent weeks, and in the Church as well, things we couldn't have dreamed of at the start of the year. But it was interesting that when the Holy See gave special directives a few weeks ago for how Holy Week and Easter would be celebrated in countries where there couldn't be public ceremonies, the first point that it made was that the date of Easter couldn't be transferred to another day, or another time of year. And I think that's a great symbol: that there are deeper things that never change. Ultimately, in the words of Scripture: *Jesus Christ* is the same, yesterday, today and forever.

We know from history – well, it never exactly repeats itself, but we know there've always been upheavals. Much bigger upheavals than this. Even quite a few pandemics. The Bible tells us, we have here no lasting city; the form of this world is passing away.

But there's a famous Latin phrase which is the motto of the Carthusian Order of monks: *Stat Crux Dum Volvitur Orbis*: The Cross is steady while the world is turning. As we listen today to the reading of the Passion, there's a deep peace in knowing that the salvation of the world established in Jesus Christ, in his Death and Resurrection: that never changes. The Cross is steady while the world is turning. The Cross, by which God entered even into our human suffering and death, and transformed it into the pathway to eternal life. That's the pattern imprinted on the whole of human existence.

So through all the changes and upheavals, even all the anguish, that this world can bring us, that we try to help each other to bear – amidst all that, we keep hold of this one firm anchor of the Cross, that will keep us steady in this world, and carry us through to eternal life.