

## **PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 13**

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We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.



—Romans 8:28

It is a verse that can bring comfort, but only if we do not see it as a simplistic formula—“say the magic words, rub the lamp and the genie will give you three wishes.” No, this verse is not about easy, feel-good answers when we hit rough times. Rather it is about divine perspective. It is so seductive when someone says, “Pray and God will make it all okay.”

The fact is that there are times when we might well repeat the words in Mark’s Gospel of a desperate parent who cries out to Jesus, “I believe; help my unbelief!” (9:24). Faith can be a stretch in those times when we feel overwhelmed and alone. Years ago, I heard a priest who was experiencing really dark times with one of his children admit to a colleague, “I’m not sure I even believe right now.” Rather than berate that priest for such an admission, the colleague simply put a hand on his shoulder and quietly replied, “That’s okay. Right now we’ll believe for you.”

Hope and love come together to buttress us when faith feels far from us. Hope looks forward, expands our perspective. Love empowers, gives us strength. Yes, we may well admit that in the dark moments, we cannot see any sense, any meaning, but we can dare to hope and know deep in our soul that somehow, someday, “all things work together for good.” And until we can reach that good, here or in paradise, we can look to our fellow pilgrims to stand with us.

—C. K. (Chuck) Robertson