

Weekly Handbell Music Notes – April 2, 2020

A Lenten Introspection, Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted, by Matthew Compton

Happy Thursday everyone (and happy birthday Jennifer) 😊

This Sunday is Palm Sunday, and for a number of years, we've played at this service. I don't know about you, but I am really missing practicing and playing together. But – have I found a piece for us to play Palm Sunday 2021! This music blew me away when I first heard it. It is beautiful, moving, and powerful! (You can add your own adjectives here when you listen . . .)

See below for my notes and a link to listen. Enjoy and be safe!

A Lenten Introspection takes us on the journey through Holy Week, moving us through the anticipation of Palm Sunday, the foreboding of what's to come, the sacredness of the last supper, the isolation and prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal of Judas, the march to the cross and crucifixion, and finally to the end. It – is – finished.

LISTEN to this piece, with eyes closed, moving through Holy Week in your mind's eye, with all it's meaning and significance. (I have done so dozens of times now.)

Listen again, if you wish, with the director's notes below, pointing out where I think the significant moments of impact are in the music score (visible in the link). This is just my own interpretation of the music. I'd love to hear your thoughts and feelings—what surfaced for you when you listened?

Introduction (bars 1 to 12):

A foreboding of something to come – a cautious anticipation.

Palm Sunday (bars 13 to 38)

The crowds are gathering. Something is happening. Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey. Palm branches are waving, Hosanna is shouted. The music has a quickening, slightly lighter sense, but there is strong underlying ominous feel to it.

The Last Supper, Garden of Gethsemane (bars 39 to 66)

A gathering; communion of the disciples. The soft but rich chimes in the bass clef offer some warmth and comfort in troubled times. The treble clef bells feel a little lighter somehow.

Betrayal by Judas, Pontius Pilate, the march to the cross (bars 67 to 84)

Jesus seeks God's grace in the Garden. Judas betrays Jesus.

The crucifixion (bars 85 to 90)

The final twelve measures: **It** (bars 85 to 87); **Is** (bars 88 to 90) **Finished** (91 to 95), are the most impactful, to me. Note the passion, the finality, the faint hope in the almost-resolved chord at the end.

Yours in ringing,

Kim Leitch

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