



Service for Week 23<sup>rd</sup> -  
29<sup>th</sup> March 2026 Palm  
Sunday. By Chaplain Andy

### **Our Opening Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, our commitment to you is so often short-lived, superficial and self-centered. Help us to welcome you into our lives with true gladness, and to go on serving you now and always.

**Amen**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father who art in heaven,..... **Amen**

### **Bible Reading Matthew 21:1-11**

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut

branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Holy words, Holy Wisdom

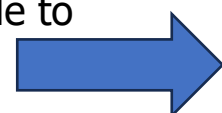
**Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection**

This coming Sunday is Palm Sunday the day we remember people shouting, cheering and laying down palm branches on the road (the palm crosses remind us of that event) as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey.

Why, we may think, did he choose to ride on a donkey into Jerusalem? The answer to this we find in the Old Testament, in the book of Kings we read that King David put his son Solomon on a mule (bred from a donkey) to signify that Solomon was going to become King. So, in affect Jesus was the descendent of David who was chosen to be king.

The people in Jerusalem would have known from their scriptures about Solomon riding a mule to



signify that he was king, and would have seen Jesus' actions as significant and the fulfilment of the prophesy.

Jesus was in a very modest way declaring himself to be the chosen one -the Messiah. It was not to be a political gesture that would anger the Roman administration but one of peace. However, I am sure there was a feeling among Jesus' followers and the people there that Jesus their Messiah was going to bring about a real change in their fortunes – he would break the occupying power the Romans had over the Jewish people – and restore the Jewish authority. The people shouted 'Hosanna!' a Hebrew phrase meaning 'save now' so at that time could be understood to mean- God save us now from the Roman occupation.

But that was not Jesus' mission or message. It was not about political conflict and force but one of peace. When the people fully realised this, they turned against Jesus as we know from the events of Good Friday.

Palm Sunday is when the people in Jerusalem were celebrating the arrival of Jesus the Messiah, but true to fickle human nature that quickly turned to one of denial and

hate which brought about Jesus' death on a cross. Little did they realise that Jesus through his dying and resurrection would bring about a lasting change for us all in every situation- throughout the whole world.

Jesus brought us a new and true understanding of God, not based on rules and laws, but based on love. And it is that love that God has for you, for me and for everyone, expressed in Jesus that is the ultimate triumph. It is a love which through Jesus we can know and connect with. It is a love which overcame the terrible suffering and agonising death of Jesus on the cross. It demonstrated through the wonderful resurrection of Jesus that even though we may suffer in this world and our lives here will end; we will be reunited, as Jesus was, with God in eternal life.

**Amen.**

### Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, as I remember your triumphant entry into Jerusalem, I am reminded of how easy it would have been for you to have been the sort of Messiah the crowds hoped you would be. But you stayed true to your calling despite the consequences. Give me the courage Lord to walk the way of discipleship and by your grace to stay true to you, come what may.

**Amen.**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett