



Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
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You have heard me joke that Palm Sunday is my favorite day of the year because I get to ride the donkey in procession around the Church. I'm only partly joking. I love this day because of what it means for our faith. When Jesus entered Jerusalem and mounted a donkey, the drama of his passion was at hand. Jesus knew exactly who he was and why he was going into Jerusalem, even if the people with palms in their hands had other ideas of what he would do for them.

Jesus had entered Jerusalem many times before, but this time his entrance was very different. He was going to lay his life down for each of us. He was going to be crucified at the hands of the Romans and the Jewish leaders who feared him.

When Jesus mounted the donkey, he was fulfilling a prophecy that the Messiah would come mounted a humble animal, instead of an animal made for war. From Zachariah 9:9: "Our king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a **donkey**, on a **colt**, the foal of a **donkey**."

When we process together around the church, the priest sits on a similar donkey and leads the community in a commemoration of that day when Our Lord and Savior showed us that his kingdom is not of this world. Sitting on that donkey and receiving the praise of the people, Jesus truly was a king, but not of geographical, political territories, as they wished, but rather of their hearts. Jesus entered Jerusalem to free all of those people, and all of us, from the consequences of our sin. Jesus has come to show us in unforgettable images what true freedom and power look like.

We also hold our palms high and lay them at his feet. And in our hearts, we say to him, "Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Jews, and King of my heart, enter into my life and make me everything you want me to be."

God bless you and your families as we begin this Holy Week.

Fr. Jonathan