





Begotten Not Created
Philippians 2:5-11

God? Man?

st. bart's KIDS This Sunday



We will not do all the readings so please, at least view the the videos. KatieD+

Mark 11:1-11

Year B

On March 7, 1965, approximately 600 African Americans began a march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery in support of voting rights. As they attempted to peacefully cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, they were brutally attacked and beaten by state troopers and local lawmen. Broadcast live across the nation, “Bloody Sunday” triggered national outrage. Martin Luther King Jr., who had not been present for the march, issued a call for religious leaders to join in a

peaceful, nonviolent march for freedom on Tuesday, March 9. People from across the nation descended upon Selma to join him.

March 9 arrived and a crowd of thousands followed King from downtown Selma to the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Reaching the site of the Sunday attack, King and the marchers knelt to pray. After several minutes, King stood and, much to the surprise of those gathered, led the marchers back to Selma.

Many were critical of King's unexpected decision to turn the march around, to not press ahead toward confrontation on the road to Montgomery. They had come to march, not simply to pray and return to Selma. Two weeks would pass before King finally led the five-day march from Selma to Montgomery, this time with federal protection.

Similarly, many reading this reflection will have an idea in mind about what Jesus' 'triumphal entry' is supposed to be. We come to march, right? It takes great planning to ensure that we have palm branches and brass and children's choirs and ushers and bulletins outside so we can begin worship with a grand procession. Palm Sunday is a triumphant day, a day of celebration, a day well planned!

As it is recorded in Mark's Gospel, the planning for Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem appears to be diagrammed down to every detail with the care of an event planner.

- It begins at the Mount of Olives, near Bethphage and Bethany, about two miles east of Jerusalem; exactly where Zechariah had prophesied that the Messiah would appear (Zechariah 14:2-4).
- Two disciples are sent into Bethany and told to find "a colt tied there that has never been ridden." This colt has been set apart for a sacred purpose.
- The disciples are given a reply to anyone who asks them what they are doing, almost like a prearranged code word we might find in an espionage novel.
- When they bring the colt to Jesus, in addition to spreading their cloaks on the road, others begin to spread leafy branches "that they had cut in the fields." Not cut from the trees beside the road in the heat of the moment, these branches have been cut *in the fields*, brought to the road, and stockpiled for this parade.

- Finally, those who followed and those who went ahead began to shout verses from Psalm 118 that herald the coming of the king to Jerusalem: “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”

The true king of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth, has arrived. All appears to be going according to plan for a perfect triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

But then the whole thing comes to an abrupt halt. “Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve” (v. 11).

What? Jesus enters Jerusalem by himself? He looked around at everything in the temple like a tourist with a guidebook, looked at his watch, and then headed back to Bethany, back to the village outside Jerusalem where the parade began. Life went on without interruption. Jerusalem barely noticed that Jesus had arrived.

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Despite all our planning and preparation, all our expectations and anticipations, this is not the Sunday of deliverance and celebration. Jerusalem is not a city of triumph for Jesus, but a place of fear, anxiety, hostility, controversy, violence, plots against his life, and death.

Jesus has a plan; he is in control of the parade and the delay. We want salvation now and the celebration to begin today. But sometimes the colt goes around in circles, and we have to start again tomorrow. There is no doubt that salvation, resurrection, and Easter morning will come, but they come in God’s time, not ours.

Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem means trouble — maybe as civil rights leader John Lewis would say, “good trouble.” This will not be a peaceful Passover. And yet, it is the way that leads to life.

Questions for reflection

1. What do we do when life does not go the way we think it is supposed to go? What happens when we shout, “Hosanna! Save us now!” and the response we hear is, “Not yet, not now, wait a little longer.”?
2. Do you notice anything missing from Mark’s account of Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem that you expected to find from your memory, the songs we sing

this Sunday, or other Gospels? How does this change how you will hear or teach this text?

3. What plans do you have for Holy Week? How do we help congregation
[We have a Christian Potluck Seder on Thursday & on Good Friday a brief prayer at Noon-12:30 just enough to be observant but the building will be open until 3:00 for private prayer, drop in visits]
members not jump from the Hosannas of Palm Sunday straight to Alleluias of Easter?