



“Hosanna to the son of David”

New Testament reading: [Philippians 2. 5-11](#)

Gospel reading: [Matthew 21. 1-11](#)

Reflection (by Revd Sean Cathie)

With the crowds welcoming our Lord into Jerusalem, shouting and waving palms, we have a wonderful picture of the ideal way for us to greet the coming of God among us.

What a contrast with the kings and rulers of this world! He rides, not a magnificent horse, but an ass, that animal so docile we let the children ride them at the seaside.

We often compare this crowd with that later one calling for his death. But the important contrast is between our Lord and all the other characters in the story. Caught up in conflicts, all somehow end up at odds. Taking part in a live reading in church makes this real, especially when we, the congregation, have to call out that terrifying cry of hatred, “Crucify him, crucify him!”

The Philippians reading spells out how our Lord follows a very different way. Only later do we realise, as the first disciples did, how easily we imitate the rivalry of the fighters and cowards rather than our Lord’s way of peace . . . This humbling discovery is necessary for us to appreciate how different his way is. But that is for later. For today, and this Holy Week, we follow our Lord up to the holy city of Jerusalem and to the unfolding climax of his life . . .

Prayer

Lord Jesu Christ,
You humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,
And in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:
Give us the mind to follow you
And to live in peace with all,
To the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**