

MARK 11:1-11

NIV: As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They answered as Jesus told them to, and the people let them go. When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

SCRIPTURAL
BACKGROUND

This Palm Sunday, we turn from Elisha's spring to the story of Palm Sunday. In today's reading we hear about a small moment that is often overshadowed by other, more dramatic events. Jesus has just made his way through the city of Jericho, where he healed a blind man called Bartimaeus. In just a few short hours Jesus will ride into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey while the whole city is thrown into turmoil. Some people cry out, "Hosanna!", which means, "Save us!", hoping that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah. Other, more powerful people are afraid of what Jesus may do and what he may ask the crowds to do for him. When he has entered the city, Jesus will go straight to the Temple, where he will cause a commotion by flipping the tables of the money changers. All of this dramatic



action will set into motion the events that lead to the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

But after the healing and before all of the noise and cheering of the crowds, we find this small, quiet moment. Jesus sends two of his disciples on an errand. "Go into the village ahead," he says. "You will find a donkey and bring it to me. If anyone tries to stop you, just tell them the Lord needs it."

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS TO MINISTRY

In this moment we see Jesus doing something he has done throughout his ministry: he relies upon the assistance of others. Just as Elisha involves the people of Jericho in the healing of the well, so Jesus relies on the generosity of people he meets along the way, over and over again. Maybe you can think of moments when this happened. Not long after Jesus was born, wise men from the East brought him valuable gifts. These gifts helped them when his family suddenly needed to escape from Bethlehem and flee to Egypt. When Jesus needed a place to stay, Mary and Martha opened their home. When Jesus needed to feed a crowd, a young boy offered to give up his lunch. When Jesus needed to pay his taxes, he pulled the coins out of the mouth of a fish. To a certain extent, Jesus relies on the generosity of others because he has to.

As a wandering rabbi, he doesn't have a steady income. He doesn't have a place to lay his head. However, there is another, deeper message in this habit Jesus has of asking for help. God invites us - God gives us the privilege - of being part of his will. We get to become part of the story of salvation, the story of healing creation. Our gifts, placed in the hands of Jesus, have the power to transform the world. Jesus wouldn't have it any other way.

This week, as we consider the things Jesus did and the things Jesus gave for our healing and salvation, we invite you to consider what you might be willing to place in God's hands. What are you willing to give or do in order to transform communities?

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Jesus can accomplish miracles on his own, yet, he chooses us to be an active participant in his work here on earth.

- In what ways can you be an active participant in the ministry of Christ? In what ways can you directly participate in relation to water and water access?
- What do you feel called to do right now, in response to God's Word and teachings?
- How do we keep water sacred in our daily lives?