

Palm Sunday 2016
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St. Mark's Episcopal Church | Milwaukee, WI
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I suppose that Jesus could have come into Jerusalem on a big white horse. A charger with big nostrils and lots of muscles. His saddle could have been trimmed in gold, and he could have been wearing armor and a crown. I suppose Jesus could have sent ambassadors ahead with the news of his arrival so that the Roman leaders and the Temple leaders would have been waiting for him—lining the street and singing patriotic or religious songs. They could have given him the key to the city. Or maybe, they could have read a proclamation naming the day Jesus Day in his honor. Jesus could have definitely come into Jerusalem that way.

But he didn't. He came into Jerusalem on a faithful donkey, humble and unassuming. He was not recognized by the powers of the day. He was recognized by the poor. They did not have banners to wave for him, so they waved what they had at hand—branches from the palm trees that lined the streets. And they laid down their clothes on the ground, to dampen the dust and to show that, somehow, inexplicably, they knew that he was God.

And even this humble entrance made the powers of the day nervous. They worried about this man—with his crowds of admirers and disciples—with his motley crew of followers. They worried that he would come and upset the order of the city—of the government and of the Temple. They worried about his teaching and the power of God they sensed in his person.

And so they did what the powerful do when they are scared. They killed him. With very little ceremony and just like a million other senseless deaths. Jesus put the fear of God into the powers of the day, and they killed him.

So, yes. Jesus could have come into Jerusalem a different way. But he didn't.

Salvation comes in ways we might not expect. God comes in ways we might not expect. But let this be a tip for all of us Christians—free of charge. Don't look for God in the towers of the world, in the cathedrals of the world. Look for God where there is need; Look for God where there is a surprise; Look for God where the opportunity for transformation is the greatest. And there you will find God.

Come into Jerusalem with Jesus this week. Walk with Jesus this week. Amen.