

**PALM SUNDAY 2014**  
**SERMON - CHRIST CHURCH PARISH**  
**FATHER JOHN ALTBERG**  
**ZECHARIAH 9.9 MATTHEW 21.1 27.1**

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**LET US GO FORTH IN PEACE...THE INTONED  
COMMENCEMENT OF THE PALM SUNDAY  
PROCESSION JUST A FEW MINUTES AGO...**

But stop...go where...?..one might reasonably ask...for what...?

The people in the **founding** Palm Sunday Procession might have asked similar questions 2000 years ago...

The leader of the procession, Jesus from Nazareth...could easily have answered...

- To Jerusalem...for Passover...
- To celebrate God having spared our ancestors from death...to do the same for you

Their Procession commenced in Galilee... probably took 8-10 days...perhaps 7 if they really hurried...

Our Palm Sunday Procession began on Advent Sunday as it ALWAYS does...yes; startlingly, it does...but we tend to forget **Procession With Lessons and Carols...4PM on Advent on Sunday**...remember...? Key term ...Procession, Lessons, Carols...

They, those folk on the long trek from Galilee to Jerusalem picked things up along the way...new information...if they listened, to what Jesus had say, new and useful perspectives...information that would change their lives for the better...Jesus told them more about himself...

We, if we take to heart our processions that commence on Advent Sunday, likewise pick up new information...information that can make our lives better, easier...easier for ourselves and for those around us...

Our path did not involve a 70 mile trek but it did involve travel...if we chose, commitment to travel through the nearly 10 weeks of Pre-Lent and Lent with extra focus on A Process of Redemption through giving life to **The Procession**, and **the Lessons**, written for our learning, and **the Carols**, giving musical voice to what we read and hear... coalesce to teach why we are here...if we have ears to hear...

Today our Procession played out the arrival of **The Procession**...the Procession of the Palms...something for which Jesus spent his lifetime preparing...the final three years in an increasingly public and visible way...we signed on as orthodox Catholic followers of Jesus...yes...in a public way, for our presence here does not hide our commitment.

This year we have spent five Lenten Weeks preparing for today... extra study and, reconsideration of things we have long known but often become hazy in a year's time. Lent is the Church's way of being our parent...not in a nagging manner but simply reminding us of things we need to make life make sense...and better...!

Our Palm Sunday Procession brought into sharp focus the final days of His ministry... Jesus entered Jerusalem...500 years prior, Zechariah the Prophet said this would happen. Little is known about Zechariah but what **IS** known is that what he said came true!

Palm Sunday is marked by contrasting Gospel readings...Jesus the surprise King enters Jerusalem to cheering crowds...many join the Procession then that same crowd turns ugly...becomes a mob...mobs become disorderly...they lose control of themselves...unduly influence others and unwittingly cause disorder

Palm Sunday is indeed a depiction of ultimate contrasts...Jesus is hailed...then subjected to manipulated hatred. He is executed by the altered opinion of the very SAME people who joined the Procession only days before...then became an unruly, demanding and threatening mob...disorder seized the end of the week commenced with a celebratory crowd having recognized the great gift long awaited had arrived...then, the crowd turned mob, demanded the gift be destroyed. No, they would likely never have imagined themselves doing such a thing...likely swayed by noisy opinions of a few...that's how mobs get their start...then comes destruction...

Finally...we are called to a key decision...we joined **The Procession**...not just today, but when we were baptized...are we willing to stick with the procession...not go into hiding and throw rocks...

**Are we willing To Go Visibly Forth in Peace, with thanks and hopefulness to Jerusalem...?**

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