

**PALM SUNDAY 2019**  
**SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH**  
**FATHER CRAIG LOONEY**  
***SAINT MATTHEW 21.1-9***



Don't you just love a parade! Everyone is jumping and shouting and the air is electric. But there's something different about this parade. We see parades here all the time...but not like this one.

You've heard about the itinerant preacher named Jesus. He's attracted quite a following. They say he's from Nazareth in Galilee. I've been there before...once...it's a one-horse town if there ever was one. They say he's Joseph's son and makes nice furniture. Well at least Nazareth has one thing going for it. But I digress!

About this Jesus...I heard him preach once by Lake Galilee. Everyone was hungry and he fed us with just a few fish and loaves of bread. I'm still wondering how he did that. I heard last week he went to the Temple and said he was older than Abraham...then he called himself by the special name we call God...and that got the priests and lawyers in the Temple upset. Why would he be coming back into town...riding on a donkey yet?

Look how he's gotten all the people charged up...they're throwing palm branches and even their coats on the ground. That reminds me of something Zechariah wrote a few hundred years ago...he said our King would be arriving on a donkey...and we should be happy when we see him arrive. Could this really be the King we've been expecting? I wonder what Pilate thinks about all this. I wonder if Jesus and his friends got the right parade permit. You know how Pilate gets when things don't go according to plan...his plan...that is.

Let's follow Jesus. I want to hear more of what he has to say. He's seems to be going toward the Temple. Now why would he do that...seems he's just asking for trouble. The town is full of people for the Passover. We sure don't need a riot...that'll certainly get Pilate on our case.

What's he doing now? He's turning over all the tables in the courtyard where the currency exchange is located and where they sell pigeons. Jesus looks really angry...he's shouting at the people saying they have

turned God's house of prayer into a hideout for robbers. Hmm...I remember something in Isaiah about this being God's house...a place for all people to pray. I can't argue with him about that. I got ripped off when I bought those pigeons last Passover.

Now what he's doing? It looks like he's healing some people...inside the Temple! All these young children are shouting and praising God and other people are calling Jesus David's son. The chief priests and lawyers don't look too happy about what the people are saying.

They're asking him if he doesn't hear what the children are singing. He's telling them indeed he does...and he says they should know the Psalm about children and babies praising God in the songs they sing (Psalm 8.2).

Now he's leaving the Temple. I heard one of his friends say they were heading back to Bethany. I don't know why but I want to hear more of what Jesus has to say. He's not acting like other people who have paraded into town. I guess I'll stay overnight in Bethany.

Well Jesus keeps attracting all kinds of people. Even his friends want him to send some of them away...but he keeps talking about God's love for all people and how they should turn their lives around and come back to him. There was this woman who poured expensive oil on Jesus' head...he said he was being anointed for his death.

Now he's talking about death...I didn't expect that. He keeps saying he's going to be betrayed by a close friend and arrested by the Roman police and then crucified. Crucified! If he's supposed to be our King how could he possibly be put to death? I don't get it. Could this really be the King who was going to make God's kingdom happen?

Like I said...this Jesus isn't like anyone I've seen before. He seems to offer hope for the people but then he talks about getting executed. Exactly what kind of King is this Jesus? There's got to be more to this Jesus than what we're seeing.

I'm not leaving...I want to see what's next. What about you?

