

# Formed in Prayer



Let us be still  
and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us.

Dear Father, be with us as we pray.  
Open our ears to hear your Word in the Gospel.  
Unite us in faith, hope and love as we pray together.  
Send your Holy Spirit to inspire and sustain us in our mission.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Gospel

Mt 21:1-11

When they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me.

If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, “The Lord has need of them,” and he will send them immediately’. This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying, ‘Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, humble and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass’. The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon.

Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’ And when he entered Jerusalem all the city was stirred, saying, ‘Who is this?’ And the crowds said, “This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

*What words or phrases struck you in Sunday’s Gospel reading?  
What might God be prompting you to consider or inviting you to do in and through the Gospel?*

## Reflection

The saying goes: “how easy it is to be a part of a crowd!” Who would have thought that the crowd which today welcomed Jesus with such enthusiasm and awe, would be the same crowd to turn against him so quickly and call for His death? Palm Sunday begins Holy Week and marks Jesus’ triumphant entry back into Jerusalem. And I use that word quite deliberately. Nothing Jesus ever did was void of meaning. On Jesus’ way to Jerusalem we hear “... [He] came to Bethphage [and Bethany] on the Mount of Olives.” Now all of these places are directly east of Jerusalem.

The Evangelist is drawing deep images here from their Jewish heritage. The Prophet Ezekiel had centuries earlier spoken about gazing upon the temple and witnessing something most distressing: “Then I looked, and behold... the Glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple... by the east gate.” Jesus now enters from the east. Notice what is happening! Jesus, the Glory of God, is re-entering His temple once more and He returns the same way he had left; from the East. In today’s readings we now hear Jesus’ Passion, all within the context of this Palm Sunday celebration. The new Temple will now be His Body, given for us, and of which we have become a part through our baptism.

## Prayer

During this Holy Week O Lord,  
let us welcome you with great joy and remain by your side during your passion,  
that united to you, our wounds, may be transformed into springs of life.  
Amen