

Lectionary readings: Matthew 21: 1-11; Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29 (Palm Sunday)

For reflection and prayer

- **Matthew 21:** Jesus enters the city in humility and in peace - no fanfare of trumpets, no demonstration of power. Apparently, Pilate entered Jerusalem every Passover with all the pomp and glory of his office, ready to do violence to anyone who caused trouble. Perhaps we should ask ourselves which way we are following - Pilate's way of power and self-glory, or Jesus' alternative vision, the Kingdom of God, the way of humility, peace, love, forgiveness, self-forgetfulness, seeking God's glory? Do we merge in today with the predominant attitude and mindset, or are we following the path of radical discipleship that Jesus invites us to? People were asking, 'Who is this?' We, too, are faced with that question: Who is this Jesus? What does it mean to follow Him?
- **Psalm 118:** *'Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His faithful love endures for ever.'* This is a recurring refrain in this psalm - a good verse to carry with us through each day this week. *'This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.'* (v24) Every day is a gift from God. Let's open our hearts to God moment by moment, receiving each moment as a gift from Him, and remember His presence with us, whatever we are going through. *'You are my Beloved, and I will give thanks to You. You are my Beloved; greatly will I praise you.'* (v28 Psalms for Praying)

A prayer

*Merciful God, today we are reminded
of human fickleness.*

We cry 'Hosanna' one minute and 'Death' the next.

We are a hot and cold humanity:

unreliable and selfish.

We have allowed Good Friday to be repeated

throughout the generations

and across the centuries;

refusing to see clearly

the meaning and message of Palm Sunday.

Forgive us for our hollow 'Hosannas';

for seeking a God to match

our national dreams and private goals;

for failing to look into Jesus' eyes

or understand his mind and heart;

for persisting in our worship

of narrow horizons and exclusive attitudes.

Ride into our tired lives,

turn over our tables of prejudice;

put to flight our doves of deceit;

and help us to build our lives

as cities of love

and temples of justice,

pointing to your Kingdom of liberation and joy.

(Donald Hilton)