

# Get the Donkey Mark 14

Palm/Passion B March 28, 2021

1. Pastor Bill Mosley

Ann Brizendine from Oklahoma writes: “[Summer of 2005], my community worked with Katrina folks who were displaced. In Oklahoma 1600 were sent to a National Guard base near here. The Latter Day Saints showed up & cleaned the toilets & showers. They kept people assigned to that task for 4 days. Someone who went out & cleaned in order to be a disciple.

“Some other congregations were asked to work in the warehouse or sort clothing or drive a van. They said no thanks, they wanted to lead a worship service & talk to the folks about Jesus. We said - oh you will have opportunities to talk, but the work is what we need most right now.”

There are people still suffering from the destruction of last year’s Hurricanes and the recent Snovid 2021. But also, still people who volunteer to serve, to give of themselves that others might have a home, shelter, food, clothing.

People who know about getting the donkey.

Here’s a story from Pastor Wm Leety:

“Somewhere a child asks, “Daddy, what did you do with Jesus that day of the

parade in Jerusalem?” They had not, it was obvious even that day, been sent ahead to the village for special duty with leadership or responsibility. Ten would stay with him ... Two were sent to untie a donkey.

At the time there had been laughter that it would take two of them to manage to untie a colt.

Father answers, “I went to get the colt.” It sounded better to him than, “I was a gofer.” Though he still remembers the disappointment, even resentment, at being so designated by Jesus. The colt’s owner had not raised objections to their untying the animal. The two had raised more objections with Jesus at being sent ahead. But, Father adds, “Jesus worried that the owner might object, so he sent two of us. And we worried, too. But it went smoothly.”

Some call it the “triumphal entry.” Father winces at those words & remembers the chore of untying a donkey.

{In the Mel Gibson movie on \*The Passion of the Christ\*, the donkey becomes a symbol of the fickleness of the crowd & the sacrifice of Jesus. He is part of the parade when Jesus rides into

town. But later we see the donkey lying dead beside the road. Triumphal entry? Yes, on Sunday, but Thursday is coming, with its betrayal, & Friday the trial, & torture & death.}

This is a day to celebrate the ministry of untying donkeys, of setting tables where others will eat; of cleaning up & doing dishes & wiping the coffee stains from the table. Making quilts & school kits, raking leaves & trimming trees. Let it be a day set aside to honor the send-aheads & the stay-behinds, the gofers sent for lunch, the advance men & women who disappear when the cameras run & who reappear with brooms to sweep up the confetti; the ones who wear the uniform but don't play in the games, who work hard but without paychecks or pensions."

-- The Rev. William Leety PC(USA) adapted

[People who keep things going & get back little thanks.]

Tom Long says that the task of being sent to 'get a donkey' is not very glamorous. So often people want, or think they want, the glory parts of being a Christian, but most often the thing you have to do is go get a donkey. Sometimes we miss the call of Jesus because we don't want to 'get a donkey.' We want to do something more important.

Sometimes we miss the call because we lose interest or forget the enormity of

it after the big news splash when the blizzard, flood, or the earthquake, the hurricane, or the tsunami hit: Out of sight, out of mind. Isn't that the way it is with Christmas & Easter?

Palm Sunday gives us the sum of our ideas of the nature of God in Christ - an image of the smallness of our minds & the limits of our imaginations. The Passion smashes all our preconceptions of God -- leaving us on Good Friday to wonder at a God who hangs on the cross - who is found in the most vulnerable, the most abused, the most wounded. He wants us to look at the donkey and the cross and see things from his perspective.

Jesus came to give his life a ransom for many, to serve and not to be served. To wash feet, and to hang on a cross. To die. To cleanse from sin. But also to rise again. To bring new life.

**Preach, teach, tell people about Jesus. Wave the palms. Enjoy the glory. But also go get the donkey. For the one who rides the donkey is on his way to the cross. And we follow him.**

Jesus king on the donkey, help us to say no to everything that makes it more difficult to say yes to you. 845 words