**SEVEN QUESTIONS**

**Week of Monday 30th March 2020**

**Ice-breaker:** What vehicle have you owned that you would consider your best vehicle? The most loved? The one you enjoyed the most? If you are meeting with others, share why.

1. Breaking with tradition I’m going to invite you to respond to the first ‘question’ before you read the passage. This is Palm Sunday, Jesus enters Jerusalem. The fact that this story is recounted in all four gospels signals its importance in understanding the person and purpose of Jesus. Before reading the scripture, try to visualize as much of the drama of this high, dramatic moment as you can.

**Bible reading:** Matthew 21: 1-11

1. Matthew is careful to draw parallels between the movement of Jesus here and Biblical prophecies regarding the messiah. The allusions to the entrance of Jesus and passages from Zechariah (9:9-10; 14: 1-11). *What do these teach us about the reign and rule of Jesus?*
2. The humility and gentleness of Jesus is well-documented throughout the gospels but finds particular expression here. The donkey is the ‘silliest of animals’: it is awkward, makes a strange noise when it calls, and in every way is a bit of a parody of a ‘real’ steed. It is God’s chosen vehicle. *Read and reflect on GK Chesterton’s poem, ‘The Donkey’ (at the end of Seven Questions).*
3. DEPTH DISCIPLESHIP QUESTION: *What is the appeal of gentleness and humility? Why are these such captivating qualities? Is there power in these qualities, if so, what is it? What is the authority in them?*
4. The text’s most obvious join-the-dots message is how different this King is to all others! Apparently, as Jesus entered from the East, the Roman ruler came from the West - a procession including cavalry and soldiers. He would’ve sat atop a warhorse. The two forms of power are before us. *Can you explain each in your own words? In light of COVID-19, which power is finding expression and which power is being called into question?*
5. The rallying cry of the peasants around Jesus is a single word, ‘Hosanna!’ It means in translation ‘Save!’ *In what ways do we need to be saved? In what form do we need God now? In what way can we sense God’s presence now?*
6. At this point, Jesus clearly has a following. People find his message captivating, he captured their imaginations and nourished their souls. *How has Jesus done that for you? In what ways are you inclined to say, ‘Hosanna!’?*

**Prayers.** The prayers are writing themselves through this season. Before us is the ongoing struggle to fight and overcome COVID-19. Pray as you are led for issues that come to the fore when our hearts and minds turn to this current issue.

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**The Donkey**

By [G. K. Chesterton](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/g-k-chesterton)

When fishes flew and forests walked

   And figs grew upon thorn,

Some moment when the moon was blood

   Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry

   And ears like errant wings,

The devil’s walking parody

   On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,

   Of ancient crooked will;

Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,

   I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;

   One far fierce hour and sweet:

There was a shout about my ears,

   And palms before my feet.

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