

Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

What About Palm Monday?

By Ken Woodley

On Palm Sunday, Christians around the world celebrate the apparently triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

Many who saw or heard of the procession firsthand thought, “Ah, at last, the Messiah has come with his army to topple the Romans with swords instead of plowshares. Finally, Jesus will render unto Caesar a thrust of sharp metal.”

How wrong they were.

A week later, Jesus would be nailed to a cross, cruelly executed after being betrayed, abandoned, mocked and tortured.

At St. Anne’s, we march around the church on Palm Sunday, waving palm fronds and palm crosses while singing a hymn, as if following in the footsteps of Jesus.

All of us extending our palms to the sky.

Raising palms to the Lord.

Then, an hour later, we all go home.

Back to our cell phones and social media.

Back to our TV remote controls and microwave settings.

Back to all of those things—and I know them all too well—that distract us from continuing on behind Jesus.

That prevent us from following the resurrected Christ, who stands beckoning us on to follow around the next bend into places we never imagined and things we never thought possible.

Good things that the world needs so desperately.

Things that only we can do.

Things that will be left undone if we do not do them.

Small, beautiful things.

Mustard seeds that only we can plant.

Because everyone has a sword with his or her name on it in this world.

A sword that can only become a plowshare for the planting of a mustard seed if it feels the transformational grip of our fingerprints upon it.

In reality, Palm Sunday has nothing to do with the palm fronds and crosses that we wave in the air.

Instead, it has everything to do with the palms of our hands.
With every tick of the clock all of us hold the fate of the world's next few moments in the palm of our hands.
And so the fate of the world literally depends on us.
At least, that part of the world that we call home.
Will we give our palms to Jesus or will we make a fist?
And, if we do give Jesus our palms, what about our fingers and our toes?
Jesus needs them all.
Jesus needs our arms and our legs.
Needs all of us in our entirety.
Oh, and how much Jesus longs for our heart and soul.
But, no, not for himself.
Jesus was never about himself.
It was always about us.
It is still always all about us.
How far are we willing to take God's great love for everyone on Earth?
Jesus took that love as far as his fingers and toes, and his heart and soul, would let him.
Now it's our turn.
Let's begin on Palm Monday and continue on Palm Tuesday, then every day that follows.
And we should start with ourselves.
If we do not feel God's great love for us, how can we possibly show that great love to anyone else?