

## REFLECTION FOR PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 2, 2023

What would this bedraggled gathering of folks from the countryside look like to the towns people? One guy's on an ass and others are starting to pull down palm leaves to celebrate and walk before him. They are even throwing their cloaks on the ground before him. I have a sense the women who spent untold hours weaving those precious pieces of cloth weren't too happy about that and yet, there was a sense of excitement and joy in the coming together. We all know where this is leading but the folks involved in the moment had no clue. "Who is this?" they ask. Don't we keep asking that same question over and over again, not only on Palm Sunday?

Jesus was somewhat identified as a prophet by a few here and there. He was seen as someone who spoke the truth in a very consistent manner to whomever would listen. Isaiah spoke to the weary and saw a face looking forward like flint without knowing shame. I think of the many people today who still struggle with their identities in the larger world and long to be honored and loved for who they are, not shamed or judged. Some of us have been so buried in the right and wrong approach to life that we have lost the ability to love first and grant mercy to ourselves and all who touch our lives.

The rest of the week for Jesus is a tough road and by our human standards doesn't end so well. But by the mystery of incarnation, death and resurrection hope continues to nudge us forward and calls us again and again to love. Let's raise our palms today and rejoice that we know one who loved with his entire being, even unto death.

Kathy Stock  
April 2, 2023