

Celebrating King Jesus (John 12:12-19)

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Guidelines: Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts.

Ignatian Meditation Process: Ignatius chose this Gospel story for Week 2 of *The Spiritual Exercises*. Read the introduction and then “ask for the grace.” Then quietly read the passage by using your imagination to enter into the story, sensing and feeling what's going on. Don't analyze the passage or seek insights — *experience yourself as a character in the story*. After the second reading have a “colloquy” (short, personal conversation) with the Lord. You can use the prompts and questions at the bottom to guide your prayer time and journaling (and sharing with others).

Introduction: Palm Sunday is the height of Jesus' popularity. He's just raised Lazarus from the dead in front of a great crowd. This, on top of all his other “God-sign” miracles up to this point, along with his great love and wisdom, inspires the people to wave palm branches (a symbol of victory) and hail him as their Messiah and King. Jesus shows his acceptance of their coronation parade by riding a donkey into Jerusalem and fulfilling the Messianic prophecy. Luke tells us that as Jesus processes toward Jerusalem he weeps over the city, knowing they'll reject his reign of peace and be defeated by enemy nations.

Ask For the Grace: Divine Majesty, I ask for the grace I desire: that you move my will to choose what will bring the greatest glory to Christ and will further your salvation for myself and others.

Imagine Yourself in the Gospel: John 12 (MSG)

12-15 The next day the huge crowd that had arrived for the Feast heard that Jesus was entering Jerusalem. They broke off palm branches and went out to meet him. And they cheered: “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in God's name! Yes! The King of Israel!”

Jesus got a young donkey and rode it, just as the Scripture has it: “No fear, Daughter Zion: See how your king comes, riding a donkey's colt.”

16 The disciples didn't notice the fulfillment of many Scriptures at the time, but after Jesus was glorified, they remembered that what was written about him matched what was done to him.

17-19 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, was there giving eyewitness accounts. It was because they had spread the word of this latest God-sign that the crowd swelled to a welcoming parade. The Pharisees took one look and threw up their hands: “It's out of control. The world's in a stampede after him.”

1st Reading: Visualize yourself in the Gospel story. Don't seek intellectual insights — stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with? Or are you a bystander?

2nd Reading: Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?