

Palm Sunday (next Sunday) is a favorite of mine. We remember the crowds that lined the road as Jesus entered Jerusalem and their shouts of "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" They waved palm branches and flung their coats in the road.

Ruth Daugherty has written a reflection that contrasts Jesus' leadership as shown in his ride into Jerusalem with what the world sees as good leaders. It makes me stop and think and I thought you might spend a few minutes reflecting on the differences.

A Roman leader would have ridden in a chariot pulled by magnificent white stallions...

Jesus entered the city on a donkey, and a borrowed one!

A political leader would have been surrounded by security guards who would have kept crowds from close physical contact to prevent any personal harm to him...

Jesus was surrounded by his disciples representing many walks of life and rode into the midst of the people, almost at their height.

A military leader would have galloped along the road, passing the crowds with perhaps a wave of the hand or a nod of the head if there were any recognition at all...

Jesus on a donkey moved slowly with the people, accompanying the people, as well as accompanied by the people.

A religious leader in traditional, appropriate priestly robes would have moved sedately through the crowds surrounded by an orderly contingency of other religious leaders who would've prevented anyone who was unclean from touching him...

Jesus, dressed in his usual attire, moved humbly through the crowds, surrounded by his diverse band of disciples, not shrinking from the touch of anyone.

Jesus reminds us that those who wish to be great must first be humble, that the last and the least are the greatest in the kingdom of God: "...but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Luke 9:26-28).