

ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE AMAZED...

Who has not felt the excitement and joy that stems from a crowd cheering on their sports heroes, welcoming an important personality, or celebrating their national or religious identity?



Palm Sunday tells us about a very special entry into the city that opens Holy Week, that of God's passionate love for humanity.

The events that unfold spontaneously around Jesus ask us to have a heart capable of wonder... For throughout this week, Jesus will perform acts and experience events that will surprise and confuse us. Only an open and receptive heart can allow itself to be amazed and fully enter into a mystery that both surpasses it and reveals to it an unexpected path of love.



Illustration : Claudette Danis, DW

Everything takes place in Jerusalem, the holy city, the city of the great temple, the city occupied by the Roman enemy, the city where Jesus, rejected by the crowd, will die on a cross. In today's Gospel, Jerusalem is teeming with people. Preparations are underway to celebrate Passover, which is still the most important Jewish religious feast of the year. Pilgrims flock there from all corners of the world. As a good Jew, Jesus also makes his way with his disciples to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. **He will enter in a surprising way!**

Sitting humbly on a donkey as his mount, Jesus enters Jerusalem. The crowd recognizes him. Isn't he the one who performed extraordinary miracles, the prophet... the long-awaited Messiah? The jubilant people spread their cloaks on his path, others cut branches

from trees, strewn them on the road or waved them in the air. "The crowds walking in front of Jesus and those following him shouted, 'Hosanna, please hear us, Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

The crowd had finally found "their king," "their Messiah"! They acclaimed a political liberator! But **surprisingly**, Jesus came not to rule, but to serve... By his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, he wanted to signify that his life was not "taken by anyone," but that he "lays it down" for the salvation of humanity.

*"Every year, Palm Sunday liturgy presents us with this astonishing paradox, embodied in the attitude of the crowd. We must move from the joy of welcoming Jesus as he enters Jerusalem to the sorrow of watching him condemned to death and crucified. These people were following an idea of the Messiah rather than the Messiah himself. They admired Jesus, but they did not themselves to be **amazed** by him. Admiration is the pursuit of one's own tastes and expectations, **amazement, on the other hand, opens one up to newness.** Admiration does not change the heart; it is not enough. **Deciding to follow Christ necessarily involves passing from admiration to amazement.**"*

Pope Francis

Even today, there are many people who admire Jesus, and we are among them: he said beautiful things, he was filled with love and forgiveness, he is a great prophet. We admire him, but does he change our lives? Because admiration is not enough. We have to follow in his footsteps, to let ourselves to be challenged by him, to pass from admiration to **amazement**.

The palm branch I bring home is more than just an object to place on a crucifix. It symbolizes Jesus' invitation to me: to open my heart to Him and **let myself be amazed** by the path of love He will reveal to me during this Holy Week.

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