

March 25, 2018 Palm Sunday
“Taking It All In”

First Reading ~ *Mark 11:1-11*

When they were nearing Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount Olives, Jesus sent two of the disciples off with instructions: “Go to the village across from you. As soon as you enter, you’ll find a colt tethered there on which no one has ridden. Untie it and bring it back. If anyone asks, ‘What are you doing?’ say, ‘The Rabbi needs it, but will send it back very soon.’”

So they went off and found a colt tied to a door at the street corner and untied it. Some of those standing there said, “What are you doing untying that colt?” The disciples replied exactly as Jesus had instructed them, and the people let them take it. They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks across its back, and he sat on it.

The people gave him a wonderful welcome, many spreading their cloaks on the street, others spreading out leafy branches they had cut in the fields. Running ahead and following after, they were calling out,

Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God!

Blessed the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in highest heaven!

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple precincts. He looked around, taking it all in. But by now it was late, so he went back to Bethany with the Twelve.

Second Reading ~ *from Henri Nouwen In: “In The Name of Jesus”*

One of the greatest ironies of the history of Christianity is that its leaders constantly gave in to the temptation of power—political power, military power, economic power, or moral and spiritual power—even though they continued to speak in the name of Jesus, who did not cling to power but emptied himself of it.

The temptation to consider power an apt instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel is the greatest of all. We keep hearing from others, as well as saying ourselves, that having power—provided it is used in service of God and your fellow human beings—is a good thing. With this rationalization, crusades took place; inquisitions were organized; Indians were enslaved; positions of great influence were desired; episcopal palaces, splendid cathedrals, and opulent seminaries were built; and much moral manipulation of conscience was engaged in. What makes the temptation of power so seemingly irresistible? Maybe it is that power offers an easy substitute for the hard task of love. It seems easier to be God than to love God, easier to control people than to love people, easier to own life than to love life.