

SUNDAY PLUS

The invisible donkey

Life's "invisible" people

By Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

Have you ever been somewhere where donkeys are normally used for agriculture or for transport? They are frequently unappreciated, undervalued, over-worked and neglected. They are the invisible workers in plain sight of everyone who needs their patient strength and perseverance.

On Palm Sunday, a young donkey experienced its first rider. Was it old enough to have a grown man sitting on its back? We don't know. This is the only time that we hear

of the animal which would be subsequently remembered throughout Christian history – and yet we have no idea of its past or future story. It was – and still is – nameless.


There are "invisible" human donkeys around us all the time, nameless people on whose work we depend. Do we appreciate their contribution to our lives? A poster on the London Underground once challenged its readers to think. Quoting a migrant worker, it merely said, "Can't you see that I am more than 'just' the woman who cleans your public toilets?" She was a daughter, but perhaps also a sister, wife and mother. If she hadn't done her thankless, soul-

destroying job, she would have been sacked and a substitute quickly employed, probably someone who would be equally grateful for the pittance to be earned.

Palm Sunday reminds us to appreciate the invisible people in our lives, the workers who support us without recognition and often without our appreciation and gratitude.

On this Palm Sunday, we say thank you to and for all the invisible human donkeys who have graced our lives. May God bless them and keep them safe.

Sr Janet Fearn is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.

Lord, Father of our human family, you created all human beings equal in dignity: pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter, dialogue, justice and peace. Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.  Amen.

Fratelli Tutti, 287

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

Work, dignity and hope

Think of the day workers, who are made to work for minimum pay, and not for eight, but for twelve or fourteen hours a day: this happens today, here. Throughout the world, and also here. I think of the domestic worker who does not receive a fair wage, who has no social

security assistance, insurance, no pension provision: this does not only happen in Asia. It happens here.

Every injustice inflicted on a person who works tramples on human dignity; and also the dignity of the one who does this injustice. It lowers the level and

we end up with that tension that exists between a dictator and a slave. Instead, the vocation that God gives us is so good: to create, to re-create, to work. But this can be done when the conditions are right and the dignity of the person is respected.

Pope Francis

The Jubilee is about giving people dignity, justice and hope. What can I do to create a fairer workplace?

Hidden heroes

By Des Kelly

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was foretold by the prophet Zechariah: "See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey." Yet many people

had expected and hoped that Jesus would enter Jerusalem in mighty splendour. He entered on a donkey on Palm Sunday and the disciples openly acknowledged their belief in Jesus in public. When I was a child and I heard the account of Palm Sunday I would see, in my mind's eye, Jesus on the donkey, riding into Jerusalem and then I would think about the donkey who carried Mary to Bethlehem. I

would see in my mind the mark of the cross on his back and think back to my teacher telling me that this was his reward. There is no other animal in the world with the cross on his back. Today I believe we should be like the donkey humbly carrying Jesus' values to those around us.

Des Kelly, a retired headteacher, now works to develop leadership in Catholic schools and parishes.

We are impatient, anxious to see the whole picture, but God lets us see things slowly, quietly.

Pope Francis

Today:
Procession: Luke 19:28-40
Mass: Isaiah 50:4-7
Philippians 2:6-11
Luke 22:14 – 23:56

Monday:
Isaiah 42:1-7
John 12:1-11

Tuesday:
Isaiah 49:1-6
John 13:21-33, 36-38

Wednesday:
Isaiah 50:4-9a
Matthew 26:14-25

Thursday:
Chirm Mass:
Isaiah 61:1-3,
6a, 8b-9
Revelation 1:5-8
Luke 4:16-21

Evening Mass:
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

Friday:
The Celebration of the
Passion of the Lord:
Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1 – 19:42

Saturday:
The Easter Vigil in
the Holy Night:
Genesis 1:1 – 2:2
Genesis 22:1-18
Exodus 14:15 – 15:1

Isaiah 54:5-14
Isaiah 55:1-11
Baruch 3:9-15, 32 – 4:4
Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28
Romans 6:3-11
Luke 24:1-12

Next Sunday:
Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Colossians 3:1-4 or
1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
John 20:1-9