

## **COLLISION COURSE**

*Homily for Palm Sunday, 2017-Matthew  
LPC, 4/16/17*

From the time we uttered the word hosanna this morning we have been on a collision course.

As we have just heard, Jesus entered Jerusalem as a triumphant king and left as a condemned criminal.

Those two pictures are on a collision course if there ever was one.

But from the beginning it's been clear that Jesus is no ordinary triumphant king.

A triumphant king arrives with blasts of trumpets. This king arrived to the songs of children.

A triumphant king arrives on a tall, spirited, richly caparisoned warhorse. This one arrives on a humble donkey which has been spread with peasants' cloaks.

A triumphant king is preceded by servants holding aloft the booty the king has carried off from the palaces and temples of his enemies. But the crowd around this king waves palm branches, not the trophies of battle.

A triumphant king is surrounded by soldiers with plumed helmets and gleaming armor, wielding their weapons of war. Some of those soldiers will be driving before them the king's vanquished and humiliated enemies, who would be clad in rags and chains.

Not this king.

Unlike other kings, this one's reign is not based on domination, violence, coercion, humiliation, greater wealth, superior strength, and the privilege of high birth.

In the context of a world in which there are winners and losers, where salvation is a zero-sum equation, where injuries are never forgotten, and where you protect your own at all costs but hate your enemies, this king is bound to be on a collision course with the status quo.

He still is.

Though we know Christ will triumph over the wicked world in his Easter resurrection, and the outcome of the collision described in today's narrative is known to us, Christ's kingdom collides daily with the world we know and unthinkingly play along with.

Maybe it's time, as we await the resurrection of this extraordinary king, to stop and think about how we do play along with the kingdom of this world. Maybe Palm Sunday is time to decide which kingdom we really want to be part of.