

I've been reflecting this week about Jesus and his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what we celebrate as Palm Sunday. By all accounts it was a wonderful day with cheering disciples and friends, with waving of palms or leafy branches and robes thrown down in front of the Messiah.

But why did Jesus come to Jerusalem? It was the most dangerous place possible for him. He was having such a fine ministry up until this point. He went from town to town in Galilee, Samaria and surrounding areas giving people the Good News, hope and healing; forgiveness too. It was mostly successful and rewarding work. What would make him give that all up and head into the most holy, most dangerous place he could go?

I am struck with a parallel in our time of pandemic. Many people are fleeing the city, but some brave doctors, nurses, aids, care givers EMTs and vital service workers are heading into the city – the most dangerous place possible. Many of these workers need to put food on their own tables, and many also are going to serve people who are in desperate need. They may have memories of work in the past that was successful and rewarding. What is there now: misery, despair, lack of equipment and patients dying in their homes and in the hallways of hospitals.

Jesus went to Jerusalem because he was called there. To be with people there who needed to hear the Good News of God's love. He did the will of the Father. He died in solidarity with us and experienced suffering and death like we do. And then he rose on Easter Day to show us life. Health care workers are going into the city, or staying in the city because of their call to serve and heal others.

The sacrifice of Jesus for us, and with us, is breathtaking.

As is said at our baptisms; we have died with Christ in his baptism, and we will rise with him to new life through His resurrection.

Jesus gives us back our breath.