

“Go into that village over there,” he told them. “As soon as you enter it, you will see a young donkey tied there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks, ‘What are you doing?’ just say, ‘The Lord needs it and will return it soon.’” Mark 11:2-3 NLT

lectio // Mark 11:1-11

I don't know how many of these examples exist, but I'm sure I've come across them before. Also, I am all for miracles and the leading of the Holy Spirit when it comes to these mysteries. I also believe that Jesus, and the gospel writers, were leaving small human hints along the way in their stories. This is a perfect example. It seems oddly in clandestine with the whole colt thing. It appears that God had maybe for-warned the bystanders of some strangers coming to borrow the neighborhood donkey. Maybe that's what happened. Can I propose another possibility? Jesus is a fantastic friend-maker. I can completely see him going through this neighborhood days or weeks ahead, talking with the locals and seeing the young donkey at someone's house. After some chitchat, some laughter and jokes about the Roman economy, Jesus could have just said, “hey, you mind if I borrow your donkey sometime?” Knowing the hospitality of the neighbors and the deep connection that Jesus makes with people, I'm sure there was a positive - “Sure! Anytime.” Then Jesus might have even said, “I'll send my guys for it later.” So when the neighbors saw someone by the donkey, maybe they weren't just “protecting” the neighborhood beast. Maybe they wanted to make sure these were Jesus' guys because they were EAGER to loan it out to Jesus! So the guys question, “What are you doing untying the colt?” could have been ensure that Jesus had priority and not just some random strangers. So you may ask, “why make such a big deal out of this odd detail?” And I would say, because of the way Jesus lived his life, with miracles and mundane, that WE TOO can live like Him. The miracles are obvious, the Holy Spirit puts you in a place where faith is required and God HAS to show up. But, we also live in the mundane where we can meander through a neighborhood, store or park and just make friends, being observant of the little nudges and nuances of the Holy Spirit at work. You never know when you may need a neighborhood favor, or donkey - not just for personal gain but to be a part of God's grander story. Today's young neighborhood donkey may be tomorrow's big object lesson! How fun it would be to get the neighbors all talking about their colt Jesus used to ride in like a conquerer.

Dad,

I know I have a huge imagination! But I get up everyday wondering, waiting, asking and listening for one question to be answered, “What do you want me to do today?” And, I never know if it's a simple conversation with a neighbor or a stranger and maybe even asking to borrow a donkey! I am so encouraged by the ease of Jesus' rhythm, his approachable nature. I want to live like that.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root