

Palm/Passion Sunday
17/04/2011

Mark the Evangelist

Matthew 21:1 - 11

Isaiah 50:4 – 9a

Psalm 70

Philippians 2:5 – 11

Matthew 26:14 – 27:66

What Jesus did and did not do

For some people the way to solve an ethical question is to ask: “What would Jesus do?” What really matters is what Jesus did not do. Philippians says that, like Adam, Jesus had “the form of God”, but he did not exploit this status. He did not snatch at equality with God but accepted the calling of the Incarnation and showed what faithful humanity is when it lives fully for God.

The word snatch/grasp/exploit is associated with thieving. Jesus did *not* choose to steal from God and take up the self- fulfilling way of Adam. Rather, in him all that it means to be human was embraced, even to the extent of suffering the dregs of life, at the hands of the children of Adam, who like their forebear, turned their back on God.

Paradoxically what Jesus did *not* do was turn his back on God and Easter is about how God did not turn his back on Jesus. His exaltation as “Christ Jesus” means he is the God-man for us. He spans both heaven and earth: he is our window into heaven, and our mentor on earth. His choice delivered hope to the world because the promise of his obedience is that where he is we shall be also (Jn.14:3).

There are many different choices for us to make in life. The one that really counts for something is choosing to live according to what Jesus did not do. Although it may not seem so, this is the choice that delivers new life to us.
