

# JRS Lent Reflection

JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE  
UNITED KINGDOM

A WEEKLY PRAYER RESOURCE

SIXTH SUNDAY OF LENT • SUNDAY 5TH APRIL 2020 •

## THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL

JOHN 4:5-16, 19-26,39-42

When they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village facing you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her: untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord has need of them," and he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass.'

“ Behold, your  
king is coming  
to you ”

## AKBAR'S\* STORY

*Akbar\* is one of our refugee friends, seeking asylum in the UK. After being held in detention, suffering destitution and street homelessness, he has found hope in the work of JRS.*



**Akbar found out about JRS and came to the Day Centre. At JRS, Akbar felt like he had some support and he received a very warm welcome:**

“I came to JRS in 2013. Sister Angela took my interview, first day I was a little bit tense but then I found it very welcome place, from Sister Angela and Fr Harry. On that day my biggest problem was how to get a bus pass. I was hardly collecting £15 so I was very satisfied that JRS gave me a travel grant...at least if it's raining I can sit in the bus...if no place is available in the night I can sleep in the bus...it was a great help I think, the biggest help I received from JRS. It's not just financial it's



The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!' And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, 'Who is this?' And the crowds said, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.'

like emotional and psychological help is how I get from JRS. It's like a family. My father is died but I consider Fr Harry is my father. It's a great help not just for me but all refugees and asylum seekers. Most important thing is [the] atmosphere [at JRS] – it is welcoming and support and always hope.”

**If it wasn't for JRS's Day Centre lots of people wouldn't survive:**

“It's a great help. I think for not just for me but for all refugees and asylum seekers. Without this Day Centre, it wasn't able for so many Asylum Seekers to even survive I think. So I think JRS is doing a great job. It's a big help for most marginalized and needy people in this country. It's something which came out of the blue for so many so many Asylum Seeker. It's a lifeline for so many for so many Asylum Seeker. Without this grant, nobody will be able to buy like travel card, toiletries and grants and clothes.”

**Akbar is now full of hope for the future for his home country:**

“Look at now- last year all those two parties, very powerful parties were rejected by the public

“ **It's not just financial - it's emotional and psychological help. It's like a family.** ”



because literacy rate is going up, people are more and more aware. So now people's conscience awakens. So hopefully I am very optimistic that this Prime minister will continue governing. So I think I hope for better. I think this prime minister is ... at least he's honest man. He's not corrupt. So things will gradually will be good and will happen good. Everything will be fine.”

**And for himself:**

“[Now] I feel very comfortable and very optimistic and I think I will fight now more with the power and all my... whatever resources are available. And now I'm sure that I will ... I will find a place... after some time, good time is coming. It's giving me big hope.”

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION**

In this passage, Matthew describes Jesus as a king entering his city to take possession of it. It's an unlikely entry though – on a donkey. Has God arrived in your life in unexpected ways? Through unexpected people? How has your image of God changed through these experiences?



Abdul still faces a fight to have his case recognised, but the welcome he received at JRS has strengthened him and given him hope. At this uncertain time, many people are in need of similar strength and hope. In what ways can we offer one another encouragement and support to help us face the challenges that we are experiencing?



This Lent series ends on the brink of Holy Week. We know how the story of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection unfold. We do not know how Abdul's story will unfold or the story of others in similar situations, especially with the current changes to normal proceedings. What do you want to pray for, for them, as they face this unknown future? Have you been moved to offer help in some way?

*\*To protect his identity, this is not his real name.*