

Catholic Faith Corner

Understanding, Teaching, and Living the Faith

Sea of Galilee at Sunrise



[HOME](#) [ABOUT](#) [ARTICLES](#) [BOOK LIST](#) [BOOK REVIEWS](#) [SPEAKING/EVENTS SCHEDULE](#) [TALKS](#) [CONTACT](#)



Thoughts on the Palm Sunday Donkey

by KATHLEEN GLAVICH, SND on [JULY 4, 2019](#)
in [BLOGS](#)

A donkey is a member of the horse family. On the first day of my retreat, we were invited to think about why Jesus chose to ride a donkey into Jerusalem as a prelude to his execution. He could have come like the king he was – riding on a white stallion. The chief reason he came on a lowly animal is probably because in his culture, the donkey was a work animal while a horse was ridden in war. Jesus was Prince of Peace not of War. A prophecy stated, “Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; . . . humble and riding on a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). A donkey’s back is marked with a large cross of dark fur, linking it to Palm Sunday.

The retreat director told us that a donkey spends much of its life resting in the grass. The point was that we need to just rest now and then and leave things up to God. I did research and found that donkeys spend six to seven hours a day eating. I don’t recommend imitating them in that regard.



Mary Kathleen Glavich, SND

I'm a Sister of Notre Dame, of Chardon, Ohio, the author of eighty-plus books on religious education and spirituality, including a novel, "The Fisherman's Wife: The Gospel According to St. Peter's Spouse." I enjoy giving talks and retreats and was a pastoral associate at St. Dominic Church. I also edit and self-publish books for others.

[View Full Profile →](#)

Donkeys are strong. Most of them are beasts of burden, their backs laden with items and people they transport to another place. I've read that in first-century Israel men would ride donkeys while women walked. Martin Luther noted, "Artists gave Mary a donkey on the way to Bethlehem; the Gospel writers didn't." A donkey is often a member of a Nativity scene. Donkeys also work for us by turning mills, plowing, and threshing. They have served us for at least 5,000 years. Some donkeys are kept as pets. And who hasn't played Pin the Tail on the Donkey?

Donkeys' reputations have been smeared. They are accused of being stubborn, but they are only practicing self-protection. Sometimes our actions have been misinterpreted. So have Jesus's. A synonym for donkey has long been ass. However, when the word "arse" for rear end became shortened to ass, the term used for donkey became derogatory. (By the way, a burro is a small donkey, a male donkey is a jack and a female donkey is a jenny. The offspring of a male donkey and a mare is a mule, and the offspring of a female donkey and a stallion is a hinny.)

A donkey's braying can last 20 seconds and can be heard for about two miles. While horses travel in herds, donkeys spread apart because they lived in the desert where food was sparse. Their raucous voice could connect them with other donkeys. Their large ears enabled them to hear other donkeys from afar.

In Egypt the donkey was a symbol of the sun-god Ra. Nowadays it stands for the democratic party, thanks to an 1870 cartoon by Thomas Nast that popularized the idea that originated in 1830.

You probably now know more about donkeys than you wanted to know. I found these facts interesting. Hope you did too.

Why do you think St. Francis referred to his body as Brother Ass?

What animal is particularly dear to you? Why?

Share this:



Tagged as: [donkey](#), [Jerusalem](#), [Jesus](#), [Palm Sunday](#), [paschal mystery](#)



About Sister Kathleen Glavich, SND

Jesus ordered us to make disciples of all nations and teach them. Mary Kathleen, a Sister of Notre Dame from Chardon, Ohio, responds to this call through writing, speaking, giving retreats, and teaching. Her motto, adopted from Eddie Doherty's gravesite, is "All my words for the Word!"

[Learn more](#)

About Catholic Faith Corner

A warm welcome to Catholic Faith Corner! May its reflections help you know and live the Catholic faith, inspire you, and give you hope.

Subscribe to Catholic Faith Corner

Subscribe to Catholic Faith Corner today to receive notification of new blog posts.

 [Subscribe to Catholic Faith Corner via RSS](#)

 [Subscribe to Catholic Faith Corner by Email](#)

[Click image to purchase](#)

{ 1 comment... read it below or [add one](#) }

Sue July 8, 2019 at 11:53 am



Hi Sister

When i go to my grandsons, there is a house with a donkey and goats. You have given me a whole different meaning to them now!!! Very interesting!!! I get a kick out of watching them. They love high places!!!!

Thanks for a fun read.

Sue

REPLY

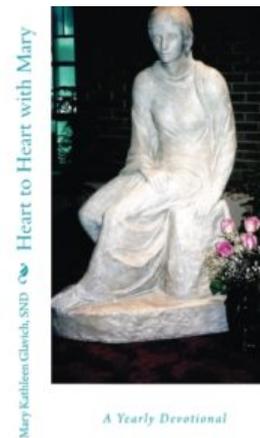
Leave a Comment

Name *

E-mail *

Website

Submit



Newest Book

In "Heart to Heart with Mary: A Yearly Devotional" Our Blessed Mother speaks to us every day of the year and a suggestion is provided for a response. It is similar to the popular book "Jesus Calling" and can be found on Amazon or purchased from me.

Featured Book

Totally Catholic! A Catechism for Kids and Their Parents and Teachers

Do you wish you had a simple, child-friendly summary of what Catholics believe? This book took first place in the Association of Catholic Publishers awards 2014 in the category of Children's Books. It can be purchased from Pauline Books and Media or from me. (\$14.95)

A Heavenly Book

Do you believe in angels? Most people do. The Catholic Companion to Angels offers heavenly facts about these majestic creatures, confirming that you can turn to them for help. Uniquely, The Angels comes with three covers (statue, stained-glass, or painting). Choose the one you like best.

Available from ACTA Publications and me.
(\$10.00)

My First Novel!

The Fisherman's Wife is the story of St. Peter's spouse, the long-suffering but delightful woman who puts up with Peter and his obsession with the itinerant preacher named Jesus. Through her we meet Peter, Jesus, and other biblical characters. In Capernaum she witnesses Jesus' healings and hears his words. The book is based on the Gospels, legends, and what is known about first-century Jewish women. The rest is sheer imagination. Order directly from me FOR AN AUTOGRAPHED COPY at kglavich@ndec.org.

A Bit of Humor

A Slow Student During indoor recess, the third and fourth graders were playing school. Taking part in the game, the teacher, Sister Janet, sat at a child's desk. Adam, who was playing the teacher, came up to her and asked, "And just how many years have you been kept back?" (from "Why Is Jesus in the Microwave?")

Of Interest

[The Fisherman's Wife](#)

[100 Catholic Blogs by Catholic Sisters and Nuns](#)

[Ideas for Church fundraising](#)

Recent Posts

[A Layman Answers Why Are You Catholic?](#)

[Advice for a Happy Thanksgiving Dinner](#)

[In Praise of Praise, Part 2](#)

[In Praise of Praise, Part 1](#)

[Mindfulness, Being in the Present Moment](#)

About the Sisters of Notre Dame, Chardon, Ohio

The Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio, belong to an international congregation of more than two thousand apostolic women religious. We are one in mind and one in heart for the transformation of the world in Christ.



[Learn More](#)

SND Blogs

[Catholic Web Solutions](#)

[Grace to Paint](#)

[In the Hands of the Potter](#)

[Living Justly](#)

[Prayer Poems](#)

[SND Express Blog](#)

[Sunflower Seeds](#)

[The Fisherman's Wife](#)

[What's Happening](#)

Search

SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME WITNESS DAILY TO
GOD'S GOODNESS AND PROVIDENT CARE.

Join us!

Contact our Vocation
Director today.



Copyright © 2012 The Sisters of Notre Dame, Chardon, Ohio | Design & Development by [Groupmind Media](#)