

How the donkey got its cross

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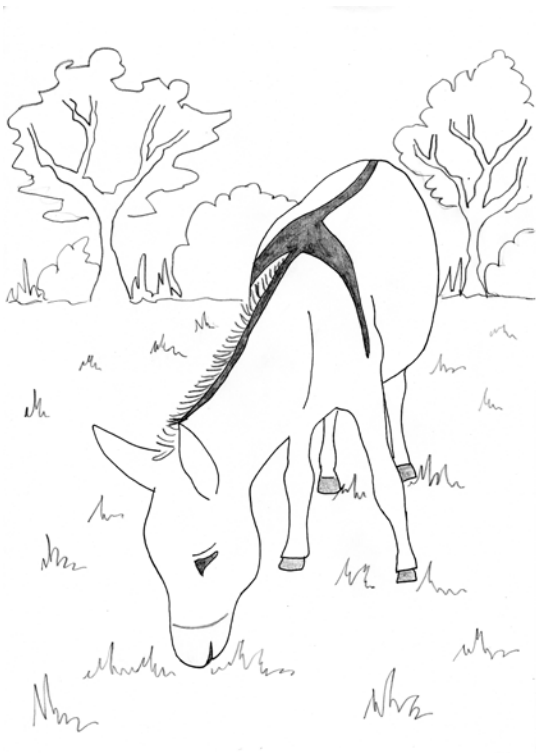
A poor man near Jerusalem had a small donkey which seemed to be too small to do any work. He could not get the beast to carry much on its back. He felt that he could not continue to feed a little animal like this, one that could do him no good whatsoever. So, at the supper table he told his family that he was going to get rid of the donkey.

His children, who loved the little creature, begged him to keep it. But their father said, 'How can I keep an animal that can't do a good day's work? I can't afford to feed it.'

Then the son, who realised his father would not be persuaded, suggested, 'Father, tie the donkey to a tree on the road to town, and let it be known that whoever wants it may have it for nothing.' The next morning, that's what the poor man did.

Soon, two men approached and asked to take the animal. 'It can carry almost nothing,' the farmer warned them.

'The Lord has need of it,' replied one of the men. The man could not imagine what the Lord would want with such a useless donkey, but handed it over. The men took the animal to Jesus.



Jesus stroked the sweet animal's face and then mounted it with no trouble.

So it was that on the day we now call Palm Sunday, riding on the back of this tiny donkey, the Son of God led his followers into the city of Jerusalem.

If you look at the back of a donkey you will notice that there is a dark patch of hair that crosses the length of its back, and another that crosses its shoulders. Legend has it that the donkey has worn this cross since the day it carried Jesus.