

Sixth Sunday of Lent – year A

Palm Sunday

Preparation

Read [Matthew 21:1-11](#). Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump at you. Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yeara/palmsa.htm>

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/109452_115817_ENG_HTM.htm

http://www.cyberfaith.com/proclaiming_faith.cfm?id=182

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/king-is-coming.html>

<http://www.msscrafter.com/newtestament/palmsunday.htm>

<http://www.ebibleteacher.com/children/lessons/JentersJerusalem.htm>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/palmsun.htm>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/a/Passion-a/A-PalmProcession-a.html>

<http://www.efree.mb.ca/lectionarypuzzles/in-awmp.htm#lent06>

The other reading for the Procession of Palms is: [Psaume 118:1-2, 19-29](#)

Readings for the Passion of our Lord are:

[Isaiah 50:4-9a](#) • [Psalm 31:9-16](#) • [Philippians 2:5-11](#) • [Matthew 26:14–27:66](#)

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- Purple candle and candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- Purple cloth
- Rocks of various sizes
- Streamer or balloon from previous weeks
- Map or globe showing water and land (from previous weeks)
- Dark and light coloured scarf (from previous weeks)
- Emoticon faces (from previous weeks)

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the candle and the Bible on the cloth. Have the children put the rocks and materials from previous weeks around the candle. Ask the children if they know how many days of Lent have gone by since you were last together (6, because we do not count Sunday). Light the candle. Pray the following prayer together:

**Walking with God, we learn to love;
Walking with Jesus, we learn to care;
Walking with the Spirit, we learn to share. Amen.**

Blow out the candle. Ask the children if they can remember a time when they were very excited about something about to happen – it could be a birthday, Christmas, summer holidays or something like that. What did they do to get ready for this special event? How did they feel? Explain that they are to remember how excited they were as they take part in today's story.

Story Time

Materials

- Blankets or coats that can be walked on
- one green streamer, 60-100 cm long, for each child

Instructions

Print “**Hosanna**” on the streamers and give one to each child. This will be an active story, so be prepared to move around.

Teach the children the following song (to the tune of *Baa, Baa, Baa Black Sheep*) and encourage them to wave their streamers while doing so.

**Ho-, Ho-, Hosanna!
Here comes Jesus now!
Cry out, cry out to the whole town!**

Jesus and his friends were staying on the Mount of Olives. They could see the city of Jerusalem on the hill across the way.

What a special place Jerusalem was for everyone. A most important event was coming up for everyone living in Israel. It would soon be time for Passover – a time to remember when God saved the people from Egypt and brought them to Israel. What a holy gift God gave to all of them.

Jesus said to his friends, “I want you to go across to the other town. There you will find a donkey tied up with her colt. I want you to bring her to me. If anyone asks what you are doing tell them I need it.”

Have the children get up and pretend to walk over and get the donkey; singing the song as they go.

**Ho-, Ho-, Hosanna!
Here comes Jesus now!
Cry out, cry out to the whole town!**

They brought the donkey back to Jesus. Jesus got up on the donkey. People began to crowd around Jesus. They began to throw their cloaks and blankets down on the ground for the donkey to walk on.

Get the children to help you throw the blankets down. As they are putting the blankets down sing the song:

**Ho-, Ho-, Hosanna!
Here comes Jesus now!
Cry out, cry out to the whole town!**

Some of the people broke branches off the trees and began waving them around. They started shouting: “Blessed is the one who comes in God’s Name.” and “Hosanna in the highest.”

They followed Jesus all the way from the Mount of Olives, down through the valley and up into the city of Jerusalem.

March the children around the room. Encourage them to wave their ‘Hosanna’ streamers and sing the song.

**Ho-, Ho-, Hosanna!
Here comes Jesus now!
Cry out, cry out to the whole town!**

People came out from their homes in the city. They asked the people with Jesus, “What is going on? Who are you talking about?”

The people with Jesus continued to wave their branches and to shout out hosanna to everyone around them. They told the people of the city, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee. He is coming to share God’s good news with everyone.”

For the final time have the children march around, waving their streamers and singing the song:

**Ho-, Ho-, Hosanna!
Here comes Jesus now!
Cry out, cry out to the whole town!**

Everyone in the city of Jerusalem knew that something special was going to happen that week. They knew God was going to do something wonderful – they just did not know what it would be.

Response

Project Idea 1: Newspaper Palm Branches

This craft will connect the children up with what they did during the story. They can use them to share the story of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem with others.

Materials needed

- newspapers – you will need about 8 full sheets per person
- elastic bands
- scissors
- strong tape
- markers

Instructions

Fold the newspaper bundle along the original fold lines. Roll up from the short side as tightly as you want. Loop an elastic band on one end. Using the scissors cut about 10 to 15 cm (4–6 in) down on the paper, every 1 cm (½ in) around the roll of newspaper. Take the elastic band from the end – but do not let the paper unroll – gently pull the paper from the centre of the cut end – so that it looks like leafy branches coming out of the top. When enough has been pulled out, tape the bottom of the paper so that it does not unroll. Encourage the children to print

'Hosanna' on the sides of their branches. They may want to use them to share the song they learned in the story with others.

Project Idea 2: Holy Week Countdown

Pretzels have been used by Christians for a long time to help them remember that Jesus prayed before everything that he did. The pretzel when folded over looks like praying hands. Making pretzels together will emphasize how Jesus prayed to God before asking for Lazarus to be raised from the dead.

Materials needed

- 6 small containers per person (ex.: reusable plastic Easter eggs)
- olive oil
- cotton balls
- dried beans
- one coin per person
- a small strip of cloth
- small cross cut out of cardboard
- spice mixture (cinnamon, ginger and all spice mixed together – 2 mL per person) in small bags
- a copy of this prayer for each one

**Loving Jesus,
Let us walk with you during this week;
Let us learn from you to follow God's will;
Let us love others as you have loved us.
We ask this in your name. Amen.**

Instructions

Lay out the different materials for the children to see. Explain that today is the beginning of Holy Week, a week when we follow Jesus through the final week of his life. Each day during the week, we will hear another piece of the story.

Ask the children to take 6 containers and put the following in each container (one for each day of the Holy Week):

Monday of Holy Week	Put the cotton ball with some olive oil on it.
Tuesday of Holy Week	Put a couple of dried beans in.
Wednesday of Holy Week	Put one coin in it.
Maudy Thursday	Put a small strip of cloth in it.
Good Friday	Put in the small cross.
Holy Saturday	Put in the small bag of spices.

Give each child one copy of the prayer. Invite them to bring these home and suggest they put the containers somewhere everyone in the family can see them.

Activity for the Holy Week – to do each day at home

Open the appropriate container, read the Gospel of the day and conclude with the Prayer shown above:

Monday of Holy Week	John 12:1-11.
Tuesday of Holy Week	John 12:20-36.
Wednesday of Holy Week	John 13:21-32.

Maudy Thursday	John 13:1-17, 31b-35.
Good Friday	John 18:1–19:42.
Holy Saturday	Matthew 27:57-66.

Project Idea 3: Palm Crosses

If you have an older group, this might be something to do with them. These crosses can be kept to be used as bookmarks and as reminders of what Jesus is getting ready to go through this week.

Materials needed

- flexible green palms: if possible, keep them in the refrigerator until needed

Instructions

Please visit one of these sites for instructions on cross-making with palms:

<http://www.kidssundayschool.com/Gradeschool/Crafts/1craft08.php>

<http://www.kingofpeace.org/palmcrosses/>

Have the children make as many crosses as you have time for. Encourage the children to use the palm crosses as a reminder that Jesus will be going to the cross this week. Invite them to think of someone that they would like to give a palm cross to this week.

Closing

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candle.
Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

**Loving God, be with us every day;
Caring Jesus, be with us every day;
Sharing Spirit, be with us every day. Amen.**

Please note that next Sunday is Easter; therefore there will be only a story and no activities. This is to allow people with children to attend church with their families on this most holy of our festivals.