

Palm (Passion) Sunday

(Two alternative liturgies are given, one for Palm Sunday and a longer version which includes the story of Christ's Passion. The reading of the Passion for the adult congregation takes considerable time; therefore, you must check in advance with your priest and then choose the version appropriate for your age group and the time available to you.)

INTRODUCTION

The Jews were waiting for a king to lead them against the Romans and make them free again. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, he was welcomed as this king, but he came as a king of peace and not to bring war.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, shared the light of his love with us all:

The world was full of darkness and shadows, but now it is filled with light so everyone can see. God sent his only son to fill our world with peace and love. (Isaiah 9:1-2, 6)

SORRY

Jesus reminds us that God will forgive us as easily as we forgive others:

Do not always believe that you are right and others are wrong, but treat people the way you would want to be treated. (Luke 6:37)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 1.

GOSPEL (MATTHEW 21:1-11)

Jesus and his disciples arrived at the Mount of Olives just outside Jerusalem. He sent two of the disciples to the next village to collect a donkey and her foal. "If anyone stops you, tell them that they are for me," he said. They brought the animals to Jesus and put cloaks on their backs so that Jesus could ride on them.

When the people heard that Jesus was coming,

they laid their cloaks on the road before him and pulled branches off the palm trees to wave in the air. The crowds grew more and more excited and shouted at the top of their voices, "Hosanna, Hosanna! Blessed is the one sent by the Lord." Excitement filled the whole city, and some people asked, "Who is this man?" The people answered them, "It is Jesus from Nazareth, in Galilee."

DISCUSSION

Why did Jesus choose a donkey to ride on? By his actions Jesus was showing the crowds that he was no soldier, but instead he came as a king of peace, riding on a meek and gentle donkey.

The crowds waved branches from the palm trees they found along the roadside to welcome this king, just as we might wave flags in a procession today. They shouted "Hosanna, Hosanna!" which is a word used to praise God.

Do you know why Jerusalem was so crowded at this time? Many people had come to celebrate the Passover. This was a feast the Jews shared together each year to remember how God had saved them from slavery in Egypt.

ACTIVITY

Because of the length of the adults' Liturgy of the Word today, there is often sufficient time to complete several activities. The suggestions made should be adapted to suit the age group and number of children in your particular group.

1. Enlarge the figure of Jesus on a donkey and glue onto thin cardboard. The children can then decorate the figure and donkey. Cut out extra strips of cardboard to make the figures free-standing. Other children can be involved in making newspaper palms to lay before the finished figure.

2. Make a large frieze of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Make the picture detailed and interesting, and using it, allow the children to retell the story in their own words.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace,
we pray that your peace will spread
throughout our world today
and touch the lives of everyone.

