

Children's liturgy – Palm Sunday (Year A)
Sunday 9 April 2017

Preparing the worship space

Colour: red

Song suggestions: Give me joy in my heart (722, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we hear how crowds of people welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem shortly before he was crucified. We have palms to remind us of how the people cut branches and laid them in the road before him as they shouted with joy.

Opening prayer: God of joy, we welcome you into our lives as the people of Jerusalem welcomed Jesus, with respect, love and happiness. Help us to remember that you are in all people and to try to make them feel welcome. Amen.

Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11

[Note: There is usually a blessing of the palms and a procession at the start of Mass. The children may be encouraged to take part in this before going off to children's liturgy, so it may be that the first gospel reading (Matthew 21:1-11) is heard in church.]

First reading (optional): Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalm (optional): Ps 21:8-9, 17-20, 23-24 r. 2

Gospel Acclamation: everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia'. We suggest 'Change your lives and believe in him' by Christopher Walker (OCP Publications).

Gospel: Matthew 26:14 – 27:66

Gospel reflection: Today is a special day, called Palm Sunday. Today we heard two gospel readings. The second gospel reading is called the Passion and tells the story of how Jesus was arrested, tried, crucified and buried.

What do you remember from the first gospel reading?

In the first gospel reading we heard how Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey. All of the people were so happy to see Jesus that they laid their cloaks on the floor and cut branches to lay before him to show their respect. They shouted "hosanna" to show their joy and praise.

How do you think Jesus must have felt as he rode on the donkey?

Why do you think the crowds were so full of happiness and praise for Jesus?
What would you have done if you were in the crowd?

If Jesus were to arrive here today, do you think he would ride on a donkey?
What would he ride or drive? What would his arrival be like?

What would you do to welcome Jesus if he arrived here today?

God made all of us, no matter where in the world that we come from. Jesus is in all of us. So every time we meet someone and we welcome them, we are welcoming Jesus.

Jesus is in all people, so we should treat all people with the respect, love and kindness that we would show to Jesus. We should try to welcome all people into our lives and treat them as we would like to be treated.

Can you think of a time you welcomed someone else, into your home, your class, your game? What did you do?

Or have you ever been welcomed by others? What did they do to make you feel special and welcome?

This week let's try to welcome all people as we would welcome Jesus.

Intercessions *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

As we welcome Jesus into our lives in other people, we pray together...

We pray for world leaders: that they may be inspired by Jesus' example to care for all people, especially those who are poor. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our brothers and sisters throughout the world: that we may look for Jesus within them and treat each other as we would wish to be treated. Lord, in your mercy

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may welcome all people with respect and love as Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of truth, we thank you for sending us your Son Jesus. Open our hearts so that we may welcome him in others and bring us together to make the world a fairer place. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of a group of children welcoming another child. On the back get them to draw what it would look like if Jesus arrived in your town/village today and how they would welcome him.

Get the children to act out Jesus' triumphant arrival and/or the Passion story.

If you have been making the net display in previous weeks, ask the children to write or draw on a fish someone they want to hold in prayer this week and add it to the net.

Ask the children to tell their parents all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to look for Jesus in others this week and to treat all people as they would treat Jesus, no matter who they are or where they come from.

Find more Lenten activities for children at **[cafod.org.uk/primary](https://www.cafod.org.uk/primary)**