

Children's liturgy – Palm Sunday (Year B)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: red

Welcome: Today is Palm Sunday when we remember how Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem by crowds of people who waved palms and shouted “hosanna”. We also hear how Jesus was arrested and crucified. Let's think a bit more about all this today.

Song suggestions: Give me joy in my heart (190, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone).

Opening prayer: Christ Jesus, show us how to welcome you into our lives as you were welcomed into Jerusalem. May we never turn away from those who need our help. Amen.

Gospel: Mark 11:1-10

As they approached Jerusalem, near the towns of Bethphage and Bethany, they came to the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead with these instructions: “Go to the village there ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. And if someone asks you why you are doing that, say that the Master needs it and will send it back at once.”

So they went and found a colt out in the street, tied to the door of a house. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders asked them, “What are you doing, untying that colt?”

They answered just as Jesus had told them, and the crowd let them go. They brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks over the animal, and Jesus got on. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches in the field and spread them on the road. The people who were in front and those who followed behind began to shout, “Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the coming kingdom of King David, our father! Praise be to God!”

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

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

Psalm: Psalm 21:8-9, 17-20, 23-24, R. v.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: Mark 14:1–15:47 [*Due to space restrictions we have not reproduced the reading of the Passion here.*]

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from the first gospel reading that you heard today?

Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem by crowds of people. They waved palm branches and shouted “hosanna”. Why do you think that the crowd did this?

How would you welcome Jesus if he arrived here today? How can we welcome Jesus into our lives?

What do you remember from the second gospel reading that you heard today? Were the crowd still pleased to see Jesus?

Jesus had been arrested and handed over to Pontius Pilate. Why did the elders and chief priests arrest Jesus?

Pilate tried to release Jesus but the crowd shouted for him to release Barabbas and crucify Jesus. Why do you think the crowd did this? How do you think Jesus felt when he heard the crowd shouting?

Pilate sent Jesus to be crucified. The soldiers placed a crown of thorns on Jesus's head. They hit him and spat at him. How do you think this made Jesus feel?

They made Jesus carry his cross to the place where they would crucify them. The cross was heavy and Jesus struggled to carry it so the soldiers made someone help him. Can you remember the name of the man who helped Jesus?

How do you think Simon of Cyrene felt while he was helping Jesus to carry his cross?

We all know that we are supposed to help other people, but how often do we actually do so? When was the last time you helped someone? What did you do?

Do you think it was easy or hard for Simon to help Jesus carry his cross? Why?

It is sometimes very easy to help people – we know exactly what to do to make them happier or to solve their problem. Sometimes it is very difficult to help people – others may laugh at us or think that someone is not worth helping. Or it may be that we do not know how to help them.

CAFOD helps people who are poor around the world to change their lives for the better, so that they have hope for a better future free from poverty. It is not always easy, but listening to the people they are helping and finding out what will really make a difference to them is a good start.

And CAFOD would not be able to help people around the world without our help and support too. How do you think you can help CAFOD to change people's lives for the better? How will you help people this week, both here and overseas?

Intercessions: We all need help sometimes and so we pray to God together:

We pray for world leaders: that they may make wise decisions which will help all people. Lord hear us...

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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We pray for people who are poor, or facing any kind of difficulty: that they may find the help and support they need to build a better future. Lord hear us...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that we may always be willing to help those in need, no matter how difficult it might be. Lord hear us...

Closing prayer: God of life and light, teach us how to help others and to live our lives in your love. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to draw on the back how they will help others in the coming week.

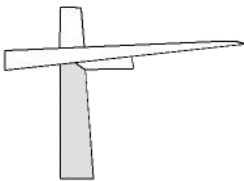
Get the children to act out the gospel reading.

Make palm crosses with the children.

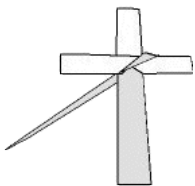
- Hold the palm so that the tapered end points towards the ceiling.
- Bend the top end down towards you, so that the bend is about 5 or 6 inches from the bottom.



About a third of the way down the bend you just made, twist the section you've pulled down to the right, forming a right angle. Bend this arm back behind the palm so that it is now facing to the left. Make the bend at a good length to form the right arm of the cross.



Folding that section at the same length as on the right side, bend the left arm and bring the arm forward over what is now the front of the cross. From the very centre of the cross, fold that arm up and diagonally to the right so that it wraps around where the upright part of the cross and the right arm intersect.

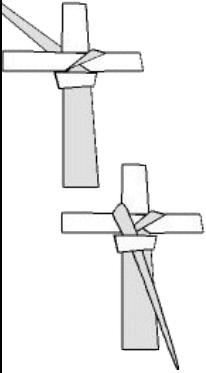


Fold this down and diagonally to the left behind the cross. Bring it back round to the front and fold it to the right so that it is parallel to the arms of the cross.

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Fold it behind the cross again and bring it up diagonally to the left.



Tuck the tapered end into the front and pull through to secure.

Turn the cross over – this side will now be the front. Trim.

Stations of the Cross suitable for children are available from cafod.org.uk/primary. You could share these or some of the prayers with the children as their reflection on today's gospel.

Encourage the children to pay extra attention to their Lent calendar during Holy Week. Even if you haven't already given it out, you could do so for this final week of Lent, available at cafod.org.uk/primary. Today's action is: *List ten things God has given you. Thank God for them.*

Images and instructions for how to make a palm cross taken from <http://www.sacredheartrcchurch.org.uk>

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