

## Children's liturgy – Palm Sunday

### Preparing the worship space

Colour: red

**Song suggestions:** Give me joy in my heart

**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

As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage at the Mount of Olives. There Jesus sent two of the disciples on ahead with these instructions: "Go to the village there ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied up with her colt beside her. Untie them and bring them to me. And if anyone says anything, tell him, 'The Master needs them'; and then he will let them go at once."

This happened in order to make what the prophet had said come true:

"Tell the city of Zion,  
Look, your king is coming to you!  
He is humble and rides on a donkey  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

So the disciples went and did what Jesus had told them to do: they brought the donkey and the colt, threw their cloaks over them, and Jesus got on. A large crowd of people spread their cloaks on the road while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds walking in front of Jesus and those walking behind began to shout, "Praise to David's Son! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! Praise be to God!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was thrown into an uproar. "Who is he?" the people asked.

"This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee," the crowds answered.

**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. The donkey was a very humble animal - not very special for such a special person like Jesus. Why do you think he chose a donkey?

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

All of the people were so happy to see Jesus that they laid their cloaks on the floor and cut branches from palm trees to lay before him to show their respect. This is why today is called Palm Sunday and why we wave palms. They shouted to show their joy and praise for God.

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?

Think again about what it would be like if Jesus arrived here today. 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**

As we welcome Jesus into our lives, 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...

For those throughout God's world who are suffering from the impact of coronavirus - may the Lord of Mercy bring them health and healing...

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For those who are working tirelessly to care for those who are seriously ill - may the Lord of Love give them courage and wisdom in their service of the most vulnerable...

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**

Share the accompanying activity sheet with the children. Ask them to colour the illustration and to add in speech bubbles of what they think the children are saying to welcome the newcomer. Ask them to do the other activities on the sheet either now or at home later.

Get the children to act out Jesus' triumphant arrival (if they haven't already processed at the beginning of Mass) or the Passion story.

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.

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