

## Sunday, March 16, 2008

### Preparation:

Read the Gospel for the day over – Matthew 21:1-11 it can be found online at <http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary/ALent/aPalmSunday.htm> Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump out 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. If you can, print up the picture for the week from the website. 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://sermons4kids.com/palm-sunday-colorpg.htm>

[http://www.cyberfaith.com/proclaiming\\_faith.cfm?reading\\_id=182&language=eng&book=0](http://www.cyberfaith.com/proclaiming_faith.cfm?reading_id=182&language=eng&book=0)

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

[http://kingskidstuff.home.att.net/palm\\_sunday.htm](http://kingskidstuff.home.att.net/palm_sunday.htm)

<http://www.rainbowcastle.org/palm.html>

### Gathering:

Materials needed:

Small table or end of one table

Red or White candle

Bible & Bookmark

Rocks of various sizes

Red cloth (optional)

Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. If you have the red cloth, put it down and place the candle in the middle of it. Have the children put the rocks 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). You might want to talk about how long Lent has been now and how much closer we are getting to Easter.

Light the candle.

Pray the following prayer together:

Holy God,

We come to learn,

We come to grow,

We come to find Jesus,

Be with us in all we do. **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 needed:

Blankets or coats that can be walked on

2 to 3 foot lengths of green streamer with "Hosanna" printed on it – one for each person

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, Ho – sanna**

**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, Ho – sanna**

**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, Ho – sanna**

**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, Ho – sanna**

**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, Ho – sanna**

**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.

If you printed up the pictures of the day from the website take a look at what is happening in it. Ask the children to think about what they were feeling when they took part in the story.

### **Response:**

#### ***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 of newspaper 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 4 to 6 inches down on the paper, every ½ inch 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.

#### ***Idea #2: Holy Week Countdown***

*This idea will help the children get through the week remembering that Jesus and his friends were going through the most special week of their lives.*

*Materials needed:* 6 small containers per person (like reusable plastic Easter eggs), olive oil, cotton balls, dried beans, one penny per person, a small strip of cloth, small cross cut out of cardboard, spice mixture (cinnamon, ginger & all spice mixed together – perhaps ¼ teaspoon each) in small bags, a copy of the prayer below for each person

*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.  
In your name,  
Amen.*

If you want to find the scripture references for this week please go to <http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary/AHolyWeek/index.htm>

*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 hear another piece of the story. Ask them to each get 6 containers and put the following in each container: Day 1 put the cotton ball with some olive oil on it in; Day 2 put a couple of dried beans in; Day 3 put a penny in it; Day 4 put the small strip of cloth in; Day 5 put in the small cross; Day 6 put in the small bag of spices. Give each one a copy of the prayer. Suggest that they put the containers somewhere everyone in the family can see them. Open the one for the day and read the prayer together with the family.

### **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 fridge until needed.

*Instructions:*

Please go to the following website for instructions: <http://www.kingofpeace.org/palmcrosses/>

### **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:

Jesus be with us in Lent,  
Jesus be near us each day,  
Jesus be with our families. **Amen.**

*Please note for next Sunday as it is Easter there will only be a story and no activities. This is to allow people with children to attend church on this most holy of our festivals with their families. The story will be available for those families who, for some reason, are unable to get to church that day.*