

Holy Week and Palm Sunday Lessons

Holy Week Lesson

Overview: Holy Week is the week before Easter when we celebrate the last days of Jesus. It begins on Palm Sunday with Jesus triumphant entry into Jerusalem and concludes on Holy Saturday.

Take a few moments with your students to quickly review what occurred and what is celebrated on each of the days during Holy Week. (These will be discussed in more detail in other Catholic Brain lessons and videos, but are discussed here briefly to give the students a quick overview of Holy Week.) Then continue onto the Palm Sunday Lesson.

Palm Sunday: Jesus rides a donkey into Jerusalem days before His arrest and crucifixion. A large crowd of people gathered and began praising Him as their King. Some put palms and cloaks on the ground as He road along and many waved the palm yelling, "Hosanna! Blessed be the King!"

Holy Thursday: Jesus celebrates the Passover feast with His apostles, which is called the Last Supper. It was at this Last Supper that Jesus celebrated the first Mass and gave us His Body and Blood for the first time to His apostles and it was at that time Jesus instituted the priesthood. Later He went with His apostles into the Garden of Gethsemane where He was arrested.

Good Friday: Jesus was brought before Pilate and was condemned to death. He carried His cross to Golgotha where they crucified Him. He died at three o'clock in the afternoon.

Holy Saturday: We remember that Jesus is now in the tomb.

Easter Vigil: This Mass is celebrated on the evening of Holy Saturday and is the first Mass to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. It is held later in the evening when it is dark outside.

Easter Sunday: This is a celebration of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

Palm Sunday Lesson

Watch the “Palm Sunday” video on Catholic Brain

Comprehension and Discussion Questions:

Note: These questions are asked after the video to check student comprehension and to clarify and further discuss and explain what was seen on the video.

- 1) What week of Lent does Palm Sunday fall on?

Palm Sunday falls on the final week of Lent, which is the 6th Sunday of Lent. Next Sunday is Easter Sunday!!

- 2) Palm Sunday marks the beginning of what special week?

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week. Holy Week is the week before Easter in which we remember Jesus’ last days that include His Last Supper, His Crucifixion, and eventually His Resurrection.

- 3) Into what city was Jesus riding a donkey into on the day we now celebrate Palm Sunday?

Jesus was riding into Jerusalem. He was going into the city to celebrate the Jewish feast of the Passover. This was celebrated every year by the Jewish people to remember the night when the Angel of Death “passed over” them and free them from their slavery in Egypt.

- 4) Why were the people throwing down palm branches in front of Jesus as He was riding along?

The people were recognizing Jesus as their King. Sadly many of these people will be the same people that will call for Jesus to be crucified later the same week. The Pharisees spread lies about Jesus turning many of the people against Him calling out for His crucifixion.

5) What does the priest do to the palms on Palm Sunday?

The priest blesses the palms. Remind the children that by blessing the palm they are now sacramental and need to be properly taken care of....no throwing them away! Also, remind them that the palms can be returned to church so they can be burnt into ashes for next year's Ash Wednesday.

6) What other name is Palm Sunday also called?

Palm Sunday is also called Passion Sunday. Discuss how the Passion is read at Mass on Palm Sunday. It is the only Sunday that Jesus Passion is read, because next Sunday is Easter. However, it will be read again at the Good Friday service using a different gospel account of Jesus' Passion.

Activity

Watch Catholic Brain's Daily Bible Story "Jesus Enters Jerusalem".

In the Bible, read the account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Mark 11: 1-11