

FAMILY ACTIVITIES FOR PALM SUNDAY

Things to do on Palm Sunday

- 1) Start the day by watching one of the Masses on TV together as a family.
- 2) If you don't have the chance to watch the televised Mass, share the story of Jesus' ride into Jerusalem as a family, A reading from the Gospel of Mark:

As they approached Jerusalem, near the town of 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 palm branches in the field and spread them on the road. The people who were in front and those who followed behind began to shout, "Hosanna! Hosanna! 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! Hosanna!"

Jesus entered the City of Jerusalem, went into the Temple, and looked around at everything. But since it was already late in the day, he went out to Bethany with the twelve disciples. **Mark 11: 1-11**

Talk about this story as a family. Talk about how the people praise Jesus and hailed him as a king. Then talk about how only a few days later he would be betrayed, put on trial, and nailed to the cross.

3) Palm Leaf Cookies

Bake palm-leaf-shaped sugar cookies. Have children ice the cookies and sprinkle green sugar on them. Just enjoy them.

- 4) **Palm Branches – Don't Touch the Ground!** A game to get kids talking about living lives of praise for Jesus. Supplies: Bible and any color construction paper. Give each person 5 pieces of construction paper. Say: **When Jesus came into Jerusalem on a donkey, the people laid some of their clothes in the road to make a path for Jesus. They also took palm branches from nearby trees and laid them on the road.** Establish start and finish lines.

Say: **In our game, your goal is to get to the finish line without touching the ground. We'll pretend the paper is the clothes and the palm branches.**



Demonstrate these rules: Only one person can be on a piece of paper at a time. The whole team will start the game with each person standing in line on a piece of paper. The kids will put the extra piece of paper on the floor in front of the line so each of the kids can move forward. Once they've all moved forward, the last person picks up the extra piece of paper at the end of the line and passes it to the front again. Although this isn't a race, they'll repeat this process as quickly as possible so they can reach the finish line without anyone touching the ground.

After the game, ask:

What was difficult about this game? Read the passage from Mark 11: 1-11 above again. What's difficult about following Jesus sometimes?

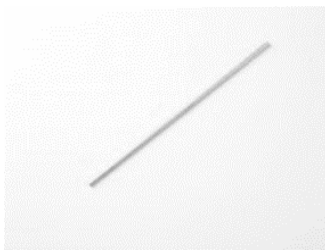
Ask: What can you lay down in your life so you can focus on Jesus? What can you give over to Jesus and lay down at his feet? Why does Jesus deserve our attention and praise?

Share the song: "I'm Trading My Sorrows" <https://youtu.be/y3Ak5mLhIHA>

Have the students show you and teach you to do the YES LORD gestures that accompany the song – they know them. *Close with spontaneous prayer.*

5) Praise Palms

Make symbolic palm branches to help kids remember the details of what happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and the people praised him as God. Assemble and wave the palm branches while they sing to Jesus. Supplies you will need:



A stick or dowel rod



String to represent a donkey's tail



Ribbons or strips of cloth (Garments in the road)



Ribbon with a bell attached (for joyful praise)

Use the dowel or stick and tie on the other 3 things to make a wand to wave.



Have the kids parade around and shout HOSANNA while playing a praise song. Here's a link to a good song the kids like: "Lord I Lift Your Name on High" <https://youtu.be/3tWSu9NAFIk>

If you watch the video link above, the students on the video do a dance using gestures. The kids may want to learn the gestures as a way of praising God.

