



[If you haven't already, begin your meal with meal prayer, then take turns reading these boxes aloud, following the directions where applicable]

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter Sunday. On this day, we start Mass by gathering outside and processing in while carrying palms, while reading the scripture describing the way in which Jesus entered Jerusalem before he died. The Gospel reading on Palm Sunday, however, is actually the "passion" - the story of Jesus' suffering and death. We read the passion today, because Easter Sunday is about the resurrection after Jesus' passion. Even though reading the whole passion story helps us get the big picture this day, it's important to stop and think about the meaning of Palm Sunday itself. The scripture is rich with meaning:

- Jesus rides a donkey, much like King David said his successor would be the one who rides into Jerusalem on a donkey.
- People shout hosanna to the king. Hosanna is a plea for God to save us, and an expression of joy that the Messiah was here to save. We pray these words at Mass to remind ourselves that our savior is coming again at Mass to the temple of ourselves.
- They spread cloaks and wave palms. Spreading cloaks was a thing to do before a king; a cloak was a status symbol back then, like a car might be today. Letting him walk over it is a sign of submission.
- This is the first time Jesus allows them to call him Christ, meaning king, and he's killed within the week after that. The crowds expected him throw off Roman rule and the remove the pagans. But Jesus came to defeat an even greater enemy...sin and death. This may be why the crowds betrayed him later that week, after he didn't do what they wanted him to do.

Holy Week

The days between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday are called "Holy Week." It is tradition to spend the week pondering Christ's days leading up to his death and resurrection by reading the scriptures, developing some traditions as a family, and gathering together as a church. See the handout for this week to read more about the days of Holy Week and how you can celebrate as a family.

Discussion

[These questions are a spark for conversation, not a strict outline.]

- How has the last week of Lent been? What has been challenging? How has your relationship with God grown?
- Can you think of a time when you expected God to work in your life in a certain way, and He worked differently? Or, an idea of who God is that turned out to not be quite right or to be incomplete?
- What are you currently expecting from God? Are you leaving room for God's will to be done?
- How can you spend time with Jesus this week, "keeping watch" and preparing your heart through holy week?

Activity & Prayer

[For this activity section, you will need the additional resource provided by the parish. If you don't have it, you can download it on our website]

As we get close to Easter, try to keep any eggs and bunnies and such aside until it's actually Easter on Easter Sunday!

See the handout for this week for ideas to celebrate Palm Sunday - you could celebrate them now as a family or decide what you will do on Sunday.

Also, spend some time making a plan for when and how you will remember the moments of Holy Week in place of the usual COR time next week, especially what you will do as a family on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.

Close with the Palm Sunday prayer on the handout.

Extras

Informative series of talks about the days and events of Holy Week - one video per day, starting here with Palm Sunday

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/formed-live-understanding-palm-sunday>

Scriptural Walk through Holy Week - Audio

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/holy-week>

Beautiful children's video about the passion and resurrection:

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/benjamin-cello-o-lamb-of-god-i-love-you>

Stations of the Cross for kids

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/brother-francis-the-stations-of-the-cross>

Sacramental Life

This week's journal prompt for first reconciliation/communion: Although it is a mystery, the Church has come to explain the Eucharist as the body and blood of Jesus present in the signs of bread and wine. How would you explain or draw the Eucharist?

This week's confirmation work is: **Choose a Patron Saint**

Choosing a saint name is part of the confirmation process. The saint chosen is intended to be a patron or spiritual guide and model. You might consider the saints who share your name, favorite hobby, or are patrons of a cause. Research their biographical information and find a quote or prayer from your saint. Follow the complete directions on the parish website.

Looking Ahead

For Next Week, April 5:

- Attend Holy Week services - No COR guide next week
- Holy Week Services:
 - Thursday
 - Friday
 - Saturday
 - Easter Vigil
 - Easter Sunday

Upcoming:

- Confirmation AND First Reconciliation/Communion Students - your whole family should plan to attend on April 12 6-7:30 pm at St Augustine for a formation night.

