

Activity for Palm / Passion Sunday

We Honor Jesus

Scripture Focus: Matthew 21:1–11 (Featured Story “The Crowds Praise Jesus”). The children decide ways to honor Jesus, make their own palm branches with these ideas written on them, and then carry the branches in procession to the Bible corner.

Gather the following items: large sheets of green construction paper with a large “palm frond” drawn on each, black or brown markers, and scissors, one of each for each child. (To draw the “palm frond,” fold the green paper in half the long way. With the fold at the bottom, draw a curved line from the left-hand edge at the fold, up to the open end, and down to the right-hand edge of the fold. Go over the line with a dark marker so that children can cut around it. When open, this will look like a broad leaf.)

Let’s Look It Up! Have the children open *The Catholic Children’s Bible* to the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament. Direct them to find chapter 21, verses 1–11. (*Note:* Consider making the Featured Story “The Crowds Praise Jesus” the basis for your lesson.)

Activity

1. Explain to the children that all the people were happy to see Jesus. Even the children were waving palm branches to honor him. Today is the beginning of Holy Week. We will make special palm branches on which we can write the ways we will honor Jesus during this special Holy Week that we celebrate in the coming days.
2. Distribute the green paper with the palms drawn on them, one to each child, along with a pair of scissors. Instruct the children to cut along the line, and open their palm fronds.
3. Distribute the markers and instruct the children to write their names in big letters on one side of the palm.
4. Explain that on the other side of the palm, each child will write one way to honor Jesus in this coming week. Brainstorm ideas using the following suggestions if needed: saying bedtime prayers, helping at home, listening better in school, helping classmates. Ask the children to choose one of these ideas, or think of one on their own, and to write it on the other side of the palm.
5. Gather the children in one corner of the room, in the hallway, or in another convenient spot. Ask them to hold their palms high and wave them slowly while

everyone processes to the Bible corner. Choose an appropriate song to play or sing to honor Jesus, preferably one that includes the word *Hosanna!* When the song begins, lead the children, in a roundabout way, to the Bible corner. When the song stops, and with the children gathered in the Bible corner, ask each one to read aloud his or her way of honoring Jesus this week, and then to leave the palm on or around the Bible. At the close of the session, give the palms back to the children to take home.