

Passion (Palm) Sunday: Family Practices to Celebrate

A note about these resources:

Families of all shapes and sizes are places of encounter with Christ. Each member of the family has a role to play to reflect Jesus' posture of prayer, forgiveness and love. This is the mission of the domestic church.

Perhaps your domestic church includes mom, dad and children...perhaps you are a single parent family or a foster family...perhaps you are empty nesters or seniors with grandchildren...perhaps you are single or widowed...perhaps you are engaged with hope for the future. All families are called to live

daily life as a Christian family or as Saint John Paul II said, *"Families, become what you are."* Christ is present and active in our families at every moment today. Pope Francis writes, "the Lord's presence dwells in real and concrete families, with all their daily troubles and struggles, joys and hopes" (*Amoris Laetitia*, #315).



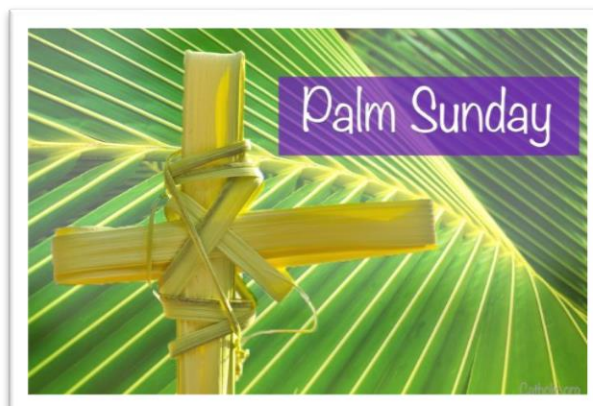
Holy Week 2020 will be much different from any we have experienced in previous years. The specter of COVID-19 and the onslaught of grim news often makes us anxious and fearful. Yet in the midst of this darkness there is Jesus, who as we discovered in the 5th Sunday of Lent, weeps for us and gives us courage in the midst of our vulnerability to move the stone that traps us in the tomb.

These resources were prepared to help you and your family celebrate Holy Week 2020 as best you can. Some ideas may be exactly what you were looking for. Other ideas may be something new you might want to try. Other ideas may not be your cup of tea. Trust in your own discernment as to what is best for you and your family. If you need any additional assistance or have questions, please contact your pastor or the parish staff member who sent this to you. You can also contact John Gaffney, Diocesan Director for Evangelization & Catechesis, at jgaffney@dmdiocese.org with any questions.

Please know of our prayers for you as we journey together into Holy Week 2020.

Passion (Palm) Sunday – Were You There?:

- Celebrate the Liturgy of the Word:
 - “On Palm Sunday the liturgy offers a panoramic view of the mysteries that we will contemplate during Holy Week or Paschal Triduum: the



institution of the Eucharist, the passion and death of the Lord, and the prediction of His Resurrection” ([USCCB](#)).

- “These rich Sunday readings include numerous phrases and expressions that have become part of the Sunday liturgy and other devotions. But, most of all, they reveal how each event of the Passion of Christ had been announced by the prophets in the Scriptures and by Christ himself, thus confirming that he was the One “who was to come”” ([USCCB](#)).
- **Liturgy of the Word** – When we meditate of Scripture we hear the Living Word of God, a message that is spoken to us personally this very day. By praying with the readings from Passion (Palm) Sunday we can hear God’s message which helps us enter into the most holy week of the year.
- Consider having a different member of the family read the different scripture passages. ([Activity for the entire family](#))
 - Gospel Matthew 21:1-11;
 - Isaiah 50:4-7;
 - Responsorial Psalm, 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24;
 - Philippians 2:6-11;
 - Gospel Acclamation (Glory & Praise, be to you or Lord Jesus Christ) Philippians 2:8-9;
 - Gospel Matthew 26:14-27:66
 - ❖ You can break it up with different family members reading the following passages – reading from a Bible:
 - ❖ Matthew 26:14-35 – 1st Reader
 - ❖ Matthew 26:36-56 – 2nd Reader
 - ❖ Matthew 26:57-75 – 4th Reader
 - ❖ Matthew 27:1-26 – 5th Reader
 - ❖ Matthew 27:27-44 – 6th Reader
 - ❖ Matthew 27:45-66 – 7th Reader (kneel if possible after the line (“and gave up his spirit”))
 - [USCCB Link to the Readings - <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/040520.cfm>](#)
- **Reflection Questions** – (From [America Magazine](#)) ([Adult Activity](#))
 - What can we learn from the women and men who served Jesus?
 - How can Jesus’ diverse supporters serve as a model for discipleship today?
- **Family Activity** – Art & Faith Video on Giotto di Bondone’s *Entry into Jerusalem* (circa 1305) – from Loyola Press ([Activity for the entire family](#)). Through sacred art we can be drawn more deeply into the mysteries of salvation. Since we are physical beings, physical things can help us come to know God.
 - **Art & Faith Video Link** - <https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/lent/arts-and-faith-for-lent/cycle-a/arts-and-faith-palm-sunday-cycle-a>
 - **Art & Faith Reflection** from Dr. Daniella Zsupan-Jerome courtesy of Loyola Press ([Adult Reflection](#))
 - ❖ Palm Sunday is a day of high emotions, teetering on the edge between happiness and heartbreak. Giotto’s *Entry into*

Jerusalem from the Scrovegni Chapel invites us into a scene of celebration, and true to his form, Giotto draws us beyond the formality of the Byzantine style, and presents a true to life, vibrant scene. It is a celebration, but one that we cannot give ourselves over to fully; it is a scene of contradictions. Indications of the celebration are set in a scene with an ultramarine blue sky, silver-green olive trees, and the gleaming white walls of the city that provide the backdrop to a brightly clad cavalcade of people who meet in the center of the scene. A crowd processes out of Jerusalem to meet Christ and his disciples. Some people wave palm fronds, some climb trees to get a better view, and some are removing their garments to lay before the hooves of the donkey that carries Christ. Yet, there is something foreboding about the faces of the crowd: intense, hungry expressions fixed on Christ. On the periphery of our awareness hovers the line from the Psalm: “Many dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers closes in upon me.”

- ❖ Christ and the disciples meet the approaching crowd. The big, docile donkey drives a wedge into the crowd, plodding forward with humility and good will, come what may. Christ on the donkey’s back is determined, blessing the crowd as he advances, his gaze resting on the boy waving the palm. His face is a visual depiction of the line from Isaiah: “I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.” It is a face that is resolved but peaceful, with a quiet gratitude for the crowd that exclaims “Hosanna!” to welcome him and a deep trust in the love of the Father to see him through what he is approaching.
- ❖ The exclamation “Hosanna!” is a way to praise God, but also carries the literal meaning “God save us.” The children climbing up and tangled in the trees, the palm frond raised above the donkey like a scourge, the donkey as the humble beast of burden, and the people stripping down their garments all evoke moments of the passion and hint at what is to come after this Palm Sunday. Between happiness and heartbreak, this day calls us to let go and give our fears, sorrows, and burdens over to Christ as he approaches Calvary.
- **Reflection Questions related to this video** based upon Passion (Palm) Sunday: (Adult Activity)
 - ❖ What time in your life did you feel both happiness and heartbreak?
 - ❖ How did Jesus help you through it?
 - ❖ Is there someone you want to bring to prayer on this Passion (Palm) Sunday who is experiencing happiness mixed with heartbreak?
 - ❖ Conclude reflection questions by praying a Glory be to God.

Praying the Liturgy of the Hours during Holy Week:

- While public celebrations of the mass have been suspended, as Catholics we still have the ability and invitation to participate in another liturgy of the Church, the Liturgy of the Hours. This is a powerful prayer that can unite the whole Church in worship, and is a way to draw together during a time of physical distance.
- “The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office or the Work of God (Opus Dei), is the daily prayer of the Church, marking the hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer. The Hours are a meditative dialogue on the mystery of Christ, using scripture and prayer...The Divine Office "is truly the voice of the Bride herself addressed to her Bridegroom. It is the very prayer which Christ himself together with his Body addresses to the Father"" ([USCCB](#)).
- For Sunday, April 5 - <https://www.keepthelordsday.com/>
- For weekdays during Holy Week - <https://catholicexchange.com/divine-office>
- For an explanation of the Liturgy of the office - <https://thejesuitpost.org/2019/07/catholic-101-intro-to-the-liturgy-of-the-hours/>

