

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To understand more about the meaning of Palm Sunday and why it is a special day in the Christian calendar.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Religious education: QCA Unit 1D 'Beliefs and practice' – to understand that festivals are celebrations of symbolic significance for believers; Unit 4C 'Why is Easter important to Christians?' – to learn about the events of Palm Sunday.

Art and design: KS1 and KS2 2c – to design and make images.

Palm Sunday

What you need

Paper for a freeze; painting and drawing materials; other art materials for individual figures and trees.

Background

For Christians, Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week – the week before Easter and which ends the period of Lent. It celebrates the day when Jesus entered Jerusalem for the feast of Pesach. As Jesus came into the city he was cheered by an excited crowd who believed that he was the Messiah. They waved palm branches to welcome him, spread branches on the road and shouted 'Hosanna' which means 'save us now'. In England, people who go to church are given palm crosses and some churches will have a procession around the church and will sing songs and wave their palm crosses. Any leftover palm crosses will be burnt and used to make the ash for next year's Ash Wednesday.



What to do

- Remind the children about Lent and talk to them about the background to Palm Sunday. The story is in the New Testament in Mark 11: 1–11, Mathew 21: 1–11 and Luke 19: 28–38.
- It is important to contrast the happy and excited feelings of the crowd and how Jesus would be feeling, knowing that he was soon to die.
- Ask the children if they have ever been in a crowd or a procession and find out how they felt. If they have been to a football match they should know a lot about how crowds react.
- Start making a freeze of Jesus' procession into Jerusalem.
- First of all, the children should draw and colour the houses and trees and mount them on the freeze paper. If you want to be ambitious some of them could be 3D. At the same time, stick straw along the road to represent the palm branches.
- Draw and colour lots of figures with brightly coloured clothes and all with different faces. Many will need to be waving palm leaves.
- Draw and colour Jesus on his donkey with his disciples.
- Mount all the figures on the freeze, making sure that the crowd looks as if it contains lots of people

Differentiation

More able children could read the story from the Bible and rewrite it from the point of view of someone in the crowd or a Roman centurion.