

#Holy week at Home

A few suggestions and activities for Families to celebrate Holy Week at home



Palm Sunday

Jesus and His disciples make their entrance into Jerusalem. Two of His disciples went ahead of the rest and brought a donkey for Jesus to ride. Jesus is greeted by crowds waving palm branches and exclaiming, "Hosanna to the son of David!"

Scripture: Mark 11:8-10

Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Activity: Palms and Races

Need: Green construction paper, pencil, scissors, glue, Lollypop sticks.

Have each person in your family trace their hand four or five times on the green paper. Using the scissors, cut out the hands. Apply glue to the sticks and arrange the hands (*thumbs together*) on either side of the stick so they resemble a palm leaf. Once the leaves are finished, set up a start and finish line and divide into teams. Since the palms were laid so Jesus's feet would not touch the ground, lay the palms, from your team, end to end and try to be the first one across without actually touching the ground. Once you step on a palm, lay another in front. Then, once you step on that one, reach back for the other and, again, place it in front. Keep this going all the way across the finish line!

Prayer: Faithful God, we give you praise this day! The people gathered to surround Jesus with shouts of praise, yet here we are at home to keep our neighbours safe by social distancing. We join our "Hosanna!" with people all over the world you are praising you this day. Be with us as we walk with Jesus during this coming week.

AMEN.

Food Idea: Since Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem, take the opportunity to try some different foods from that region. Ideas include Baklava, hummus, or Israeli salad.

Baklava Ingredients

200g butter, plus extra for greasing
200g pistachios 50g walnuts
50g pecans 3 tbsp honey
2 x 270g pack filo pastry

For the syrup

250g golden caster sugar 50g honey
2 tsp orange blossom water ½ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground cardamom (from 3 pods)

STEP 1 - Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4 and grease a 21cm x 21cm square cake tin with butter. Chop the nuts into small pieces using a food processor, taking care not to blitz them to a paste. Put them into a bowl, stir in the honey and a pinch of salt and set aside.

STEP 2 - Melt the butter in a pan over a low heat. Cut the first pack of filo pastry sheets in half (so that they fit the tin). Put one sheet in the tin and brush with the melted butter. Lay another sheet on top and brush with butter again, keep layering like this until the whole pack is used up.

STEP 3 - Spread the honey and nut mixture over the pastry and press it down lightly with the back of a spoon. Open the other pack of filo, cut in half and continue the layering and buttering process. When you reach the last sheet pour any remaining butter over the top to finish. Use a sharp knife to cut deep lines into the pastry to create either squares or diamond shapes then bake in the oven for 20 mins.

STEP 4 - Reduce the heat to 150C/130C fan/gas 2 and bake for a further 45 mins. While the baklava cooks put all the syrup ingredients into a saucepan and add 200ml water. Heat gently until the sugar has dissolved then boil the mixture for 8-10 mins or until it has reduced to the consistency of runny honey.

STEP 5 - When the baklava comes out of the oven, pour the warm syrup over the top, allowing it to run into the lines you have cut. Leave it to soak in and serve when it's completely cold.



A Prayer Ritual at Home

Gather around the sacred space with the other members of your household. If possible, take some green branches from your garden to represent the branches people waved on that first Palm Sunday. If you cannot gather some branches, perhaps take some pieces of cloth to represent the cloaks laid before Jesus on this entry to Jerusalem.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we recall today your entry into Jerusalem those many years ago. The people waved branches and sang in welcome. As we prepare to walk with you thought that first Holy Week, we pause to become aware of your presence and welcome you into our hearts *(Pause in Silence)*

Let us say together **‘Hosanna, Hosanna in the Highest, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest.’**

Reading

‘And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him.’ (From the Gospel of the day, full text (<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/readings/?feature=sunday>))

Reflection

Jesus enters Jerusalem. The liturgy invites us to share in the joy and celebration of the people who cry out in praise of their Lord; a joy that will fade and leaves a bitter and sorrowful taste by the end of the account of the Passion. This celebration seems to combine stories of joy and suffering, mistakes and successes, which are part of our daily lives as disciples. It somehow expresses the contradictory feelings that we too, the men and women of today, experience: the capacity for great love... but also for great hatred; the capacity for courageous self-sacrifice, but also the ability to ‘wash our hands’ at the right moment; the capacity for loyalty, but also for great abandonment and betrayal. *(Pope Francis, 25th March 2018.)*

Ritual Action

Place the branches or pieces of cloth in the sacred space.

Intercessions *Light the Candle*

As we light this candle we take a moment to remember and pray for Christians throughout the world who will celebrate this week as holy. *(Pause)* We pray for our needs and the needs of the world. We remember in our prayer ...

(Bring your intentions to God) Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Our Father ...

Prayer

Loving Father be with us in these days as we recall how the divine goodness of Jesus had to struggle with the darkness of this world. Help us in our own daily struggles to live the life you created us for. Lead us to triumph as Jesus did so that we may always live in your presence. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross ...

To do

- Place a piece of palm or a green branch on your door to let people know it is Palm Sunday
- Post a picture of your sacred space on Social Media (using the hashtag *#holyweekathome*) and let people know that you are preparing to celebrate the greatest week of the church year.
- Pick a character from the bible to walk with you through this Holy Week – for example Peter, Mary, Mary Magdalen, one of the Apostles, an ordinary citizen of Jerusalem – try to see what they see, imagine their thoughts and feelings as the events unfold.