

Year A, Week 16 (March 16, 2008)

Matthew 20: 17-19, 21: 1-3, 6-11

Palm Sunday

Suggested hymns: Ho-Ho-Ho-Hosanna; King of King and Lord of Lords

Figures Needed: Jesus
two disciples
donkey
Jesus on donkey figure
crowd figures along road near Jerusalem
optional: green paper leaves, strips of cloth
optional: cityscape of Jerusalem to use as a backdrop
optional: strip of brown felt to serve as road
optional: build house near donkey out of blocks

Directions: Set up Jerusalem with brown road leading to it. Set up Jesus and two disciples at far end of road. Set up donkey at mid-way point. Set up block house near donkey. Set up crowd figures near city.

Story:

Jesus told his disciples, “It is time for us to go to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. While we are there, the Son of Man will be handed over to the Jewish religious leaders. They will sentence him to death. They will hand him over to the Romans to be beaten and crucified. On the third day he will rise from the dead.”

Then they headed towards Jerusalem, where the main temple was, where the religious leaders were, and where the Roman leaders were. (*Slowly move Jesus and 2 disciples.*)

As they neared the city, Jesus told two of the disciples to go on ahead. He told them, “Go into the village. You will find a donkey and her colt. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone asks you why you’re taking them, say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and the owner will give them to you immediately.”

The disciples did as they were told. They brought the donkey and colt to Jesus, and they spread their clothes on the animals. (*Move disciples to donkey, bring donkey to Jesus. Switch Jesus figure for riding Jesus figure.*)

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, a large crowd gathered to see him. They spread their clothes on the ground, and they cut branches from the trees and laid them in the road. They were hoping to see a king, perhaps a new king who would free the Jewish people from their Roman leaders. (*Place cloth and green leaves on road, if desired. Or just pantomime this action.*)

The people shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

As they entered the city, everyone asked, “Who is this?”

And the crowds who had seen Jesus said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth.”

They did not know that they had seen a real king, the king of kings. And they did not know that this king was riding to Jerusalem so that he could die for his people.

Questions with no Response:

I wonder ... why Jesus rode on a plain old donkey instead of a beautiful horse?

I wonder ... why Jesus went to Jerusalem when he knew he would die there?

I wonder ... why he's going to die when the people seem to like him so much?

I wonder ... what kind of king Jesus would be?