

# Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE OCIA

## CATECHUMENATE SESSION

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord • Year C • April 13, 2025

### Catechist Preparation

#### Scripture

**FIRST READING**—ISAIAH 50:4-7

This reading comes from the portion of the Book of Isaiah called the “Songs of the Servant” where the author tries to work out the meaning of Israel’s suffering during the exile in Babylon.

**SECOND READING**—PHILIPPIANS 2:6-11

The self-emptying of Christ is redemptive, and Saint Paul emphasizes how our unity with the Lord in his dying leads to our unity with Christ in his rising.

**GOSPEL**—LUKE 22:14–23:56 OR 23:1-49

It is only in this account of the Last Supper that we hear the words of Jesus, “Do this in remembrance of me” (see Luke 22:19). Luke underscores in his account of Jesus’ Passion how it becomes the pattern for our own dying (and rising).

#### Church Teaching: Care for the Suffering

Sickness, pain, and suffering are burdens that every human being shoulders in life. In the light of faith, these burdens take on a deeper significance. For Saint Paul, the Passover effected by the suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus is the basic pattern of all Redemption.

In his earthly ministry, Jesus looked with compassion on those who were sick. He worked miracles of healing. As followers of Jesus, we owe those who are sick as much physical relief and spiritual comfort as we can possibly provide. But as followers of Jesus, we also emulate his attitude that suffering can be

#### Further Reading

**Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 1499, 1505

**United States Catholic Catechism for Adults:** Chapter 19, especially the section entitled “Effects of the Sacrament,” page 254

**Our Catholic Heritage, Levels I and II:** pages 80–81

transformative. For in the end, Jesus prayed in acquiescence to the Father’s will. He drank from the cup of suffering, that it might become the chalice of eternal life to those who believe.

### Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Set the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a red cloth, a candle, some palm branches, and a crucifix. When all are seated, light the candle and sit in quiet for a few minutes.

#### Discover

Invite the children to think about the liturgy just celebrated. Ask them:

*What was different about today’s liturgy?*

*What surprised you?*

*How did the procession, the palms, the singing, and the readings make you feel?*

#### Deepen

1. Read the last portion of the Gospel at the Procession with Palms, Luke 19:28-40.
2. Discuss, highlighting the following points:
  - Today, Palm Sunday, is the beginning of Holy Week—the most important week of the whole Church year.
  - Explain that palm branches like those we used today were once used as a sign of royalty. The people wanted Jesus to be their king.
  - Although we did not hear the word “Hosanna” in today’s Gospel at the Procession with Palms, in other years—when the story is told from the Gospel of Matthew, Mark, or John—the people cry, “Hosanna!” as Jesus rides on a donkey through their midst.
  - We sing the word *Hosanna* when we sing the Holy, Holy, Holy, at Mass. *Hosanna* comes from a word meaning “save” or “we pray.” We too pray to Jesus to be our Savior.

## Pray

Read again the last portion of today's Gospel at the Procession with Palms. Invite volunteers to name the great deeds of God they have seen and to respond to each deed named with the words, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord."

## Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

### Supplies

In addition to the prayer table setup, you will need copies of the participant handout, the Celebrating Holy Week with My Family handout, and a copy of the Holy Week schedule for your parish.

### Sunday Word

Luke 19:28-40 (At the Procession with Palms)

Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalms 22:7-8, 16-17, 18-19, 22-23

Philippians 2:6-11

Luke 22:14-23:56 or 23:1-49

### Welcome

Welcome everyone and invite one or two children to share some of the key points from the **Dismissal Session**.

### Invite

1. Invite the children to share their experiences of sickness and suffering using the following or similar questions.

*What do you do when you are sick or in pain?*

*Who takes care of you? What do they do to help you?*

*Whom do you know who is sick or suffering right now, today?*

### Teach

1. Read a portion of today's Gospel, Luke 23:33-46. After reading the final verse, invite the children to kneel or to bow their heads for a moment of silent prayer.

2. Ask the children to recount the sufferings of Jesus. *(He was crucified, his garments were torn from his body, and he was made fun of.)*

3. Invite volunteers to recall how Jesus responded. *(He asked his Father to forgive those who crucified him, he did not reply to their jeers, he promised the criminal who spoke to him that he would be with Jesus in Paradise, and he cried out to his Father.)*

4. Continue the discussion, highlighting these key points:

- Sickness, pain, and suffering are part of life—just as happiness, rejoicing, and blessing are part of life. Everyone experiences these things.
- When we are sick and in pain, we can think of the pain that Jesus experienced and talk to him about what is hurting and how we are feeling.
- We can also pray to Jesus for those we know who are sick, in pain, and suffering in any way.
- One way the Church cares for those who are sick and suffering is through the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. *(Use pages 80 and 81 of Our Catholic Heritage, Levels I and II to speak more about this sacrament.)*
- As people of faith we trust that, just as Jesus rose from the dead, we will experience resurrection and new life—Easter!

5. Review with the children this week's **Key Teachings** and **Faith Words**, found on the participant handout.

### Challenge

1. Review with the children the Celebrating Holy Week With My Family handout, and encourage them to share this with their families.
2. Review the handout listing Holy Week liturgies and special events, and encourage the children to attend with their families.

### Prayer

Pray the prayer on the front of the participant handout.