

Palm Sunday

Materials: A conductor's baton or a foot-long piece of dowel.

I have always wanted to try being a conductor, but that is rather hard to do without having a music group to conduct, a choir or a band or an orchestra. Last week, though, I came up with an idea for something we can do together this morning. I am going to conduct a story, and you are going to be the sounds. The story is the exciting one of Palm Sunday. It has six sound-parts we will need you to produce.

[At this time, divide children into six groups numbered 1 through 6; if there are not enough children to have at least three per group, use the congregation and/or choir to take the parts of "crowd", "city", or "enemies". The groups should be arranged so that they can be pointed to individually by the "conductor's baton".]

Here are the sounds I want you to make when I point to you with the baton. And please stop making the sound when I pull back the baton.

1. Friends of Jesus - Whistle a little tune or a single note; hum if you cannot whistle
2. Crowd - Say hosanna, hosanna, hosanna
3. Palms -- Say swish, swish, swish
4. Donkey -- Say clip-clop, clip-clop
5. City -- Say hubbub, hubbub, hubbub
6. Enemies of Jesus -- Say mutter, mutter, mutter

Here we go!

One day while Jesus was in Bethphage near the Mount of Olives, he turned to his friends (1), his disciples, and said to them, "It is time to go to Jerusalem." "But Jesus", they replied, "if you enter that city (5) your enemies (6) will try to kill you." Jesus had made up his mind, however. He gave directions to two of the disciples to go into a village to obtain a donkey (4) for him to ride. So off went the disciples. In the village, they found the animal tied. When they began to untie it, the owner said, "What are you doing?" The disciples answered, "My friend (1) Jesus has need of it and will return it to you." Soon the disciples came back to Jesus leading the donkey (4), which no one had ever ridden.

Quickly, Jesus' followers put some of their clothes upon the little animal's back, and then Jesus climbed on. All set off toward the city (5). As Jesus rode along on the donkey (4), people came out to welcome him with shouts and waves. A noisy crowd (2) lined the road. Some of them tore down branches of palms (3) to lay before the donkey (4) as it passed. "Blessed be the One who comes in the name of God!" they shouted. The crowd (2) followed Jesus and waved palms (3) as he traveled toward the city (5) where he would spend one final week with his friends (1) and where he would die at the hands of his enemies (6).

Thank you for your help in telling the story!

[Closing comments may be offered.]