

## Walking with Jesus through Holy Week

Review the stories set during each day of Holy Week and use one (or more) of the 5 ways to retell the story with your kids available at <https://network.crcna.org/faith-nurture/5-ways-retell-bible-story-kids>.

### **Palm Sunday**      *Matthew 21:1-11*

Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem riding a donkey. He was hailed by the crowds with shouts of “Hosanna to the Son of David!” and waving branches of palm trees. The two Old Testament quotations in this passage together with the identifier of “Son of David” reveals for us that Jesus is the true king of the People of God. He entered Jerusalem, which was the capital city of the kingdom, in a way that’s reminiscent of a king returning to his kingdom.

#### *Matthew 21:12-17*

In Matthew’s record of the events, the first act Jesus did in reclaiming his kingdom was to re-establish the priorities of his kingdom: prayer, praise, hospitality (under the old regime the blind and lame would have been barred from the temple), and healing.

### **Monday**      *Matthew 21:18-23a; Matthew 24:1-8*

The next day Jesus returned to Jerusalem to teach the ways of his renewed kingdom. Jesus told many parables while he was in the temple (21:23-23:39), you’re encouraged to reflect on them as you see fit. For the purposes of this exercise, the focus for Monday is faith and prayer. At the beginning of chapter 24, Jesus cryptically told his disciples that he was going to die and would rise again. He also told them that there would be many people who try to define the time when the Redemption will be completed. The encouragement is to keep faith in what Jesus has said and wait for the Lord in prayer.

### **Tuesday**      *Matthew 26:1-16*

Jesus and his disciples stayed at the house of a leper named Simon. Lepers were considered social outcasts. While there a woman came and anointed Jesus with very expensive oil. Jesus explained that in his kingdom, what matters more than money is faith and devotion. While this was taking place, the chief priests and the elders conspired with the governor to have Jesus arrested and killed. Judas made the decision to betray Jesus.

### **Wednesday**

### **Thursday**      *Matthew 26:17-30; 36-46; 69-75*

The Passover supper during which Jesus instituted what we call the Lord’s Supper, or Holy Communion, or the Eucharist (which means ‘thanksgiving’.) After the supper, Jesus and his disciples went to the garden called Gethsemane to pray. Along the way, Jesus told his disciples that they would all betray him before the night

was over. In the garden he asked them to watch while he went and prayed. They fell asleep. Judas arrived with the crowd to arrest Jesus.

**Friday**

*Matthew 27:1-2*

*Matthew 27:3-10*

*Matthew 27:11-23*

*Matthew 27:27-37*

*Matthew 27:38-44*

*\*Matthew 27:45-54 (56)*

*Matthew 27:57-71*

There are many episodes within this one chapter. The Bible writers were careful to record the events of Good Friday in detail. In our online worship we will be focusing on the episode with the asterisk beside it. This records the hours between noon and 3:00 on the Friday. It is hard to *teach* this event. It is better to help people encounter the event for themselves. Re-telling the story is one way of doing this. The emphasis is on the truth that Jesus' crucifixion was not solely the gruesome execution of a rebel-rouser. In these three hours God intervened in human history to forgive sin and to reclaim the creation He loves.

**Saturday**

*Matthew 27:62-66*

Scripture is largely silent about what happened in the lives of the disciples on the Saturday following Jesus' crucifixion. Matthew recorded a few verses that continue the conspiracy between the chief priests and the governors. We don't know what the disciples were doing. Other gospels tell us the disciples had locked themselves in the room where they shared the Passover supper. This is a day to reflect on the silence of scripture. Jesus had died and the disciples didn't know what would happen next.

**Easter Sunday**

*Matthew 28:1-10*

*Matthew 28:16-20*

In these episodes we learn of Jesus' resurrection, his appearance to first Mary and Mary, second to the disciples, and the commission he gave to the disciples and all who become his disciples in the years to come. In other words, the resurrected Jesus gave his church their orders. Jesus' resurrection was something that is completely foreign to our experience. Jesus wasn't merely resuscitated, nor was he a ghost. Jesus was raised from the dead in a physical state; yet his physicality is something we cannot yet understand. We are promised in scripture that, when Christ returns, his faithful people will also be resurrected. Until then we are called to rest in the mystery. Nevertheless, understanding the resurrection as a physical occurrence helps us understand God's full plan of creation and redemption. God created a physical world with physical people. That is what He loves and that is what He is redeeming. The resurrection reveals the physical world in its true glory, untainted by sin and decay. Body, mind, spirit perfectly united with one another and with the Father in heaven by the Holy Spirit in the name of the Jesus, the divine Son.