

Easter - wrapped up!

Here is a simple re-telling of Holy Week. You may not have the bits and pieces to make up the story, but you could improvise. Turning a matchbox inside out and re-assembling might give a suitable box. Cutting the end off a peg might give the little wooden figure. And you could go one stage further and include some straw. The box then becomes a crib and you have the story from cradle to cross to resurrection.

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter Sunday. It is the first day of Holy Week and celebrates Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Crowds of people came out of the city to greet him, throwing down their coats and palm branches on the road. They were pleased to see him and greeted him as though he were a king. People cheered and shouted Hosanna! Many churches give out small crosses made from palm leaves as a reminder of Jesus arriving in Jerusalem and also of his death on the cross. Some Christians keep these in their homes all year as a symbol of their faith.

On the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy week Jesus taught people, helped people and healed people. He also went to the temple in Jerusalem and chased out those who shouldn't have been there, saying that the temple was a place of prayer.

Maundy Thursday

On Thursday, a day we now call Maundy Thursday, Jesus ate his last meal with his friends. We call this the last supper. The word maundy comes from the command (mandate) given by Jesus at the Last Supper, that we should love one another. On Maundy Thursday we remember Jesus eating a Passover meal and breaking bread and drinking wine. Many people remember this today, all round the world, by sharing bread and wine together in a service called Holy Communion, Eucharist or Mass. It is a reminder that Jesus sacrificed his life for every one of us.

At this meal Jesus told his followers that they should love and serve one another. He demonstrated this by washing the feet of the disciples - something a servant would normally do.

Good Friday

On Good Friday we remember that Jesus died on a cross. Good Friday is a day of mourning in churches. During Good Friday services Christians remember Jesus' suffering and death on the cross, and what this means for their faith. The main service on Good Friday takes place between midday and 3pm. In many churches it takes the form of a meditation based on the seven last words of Jesus on the cross, with hymns, prayers, and short sermons.

Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday marks Jesus' resurrection. After Jesus was crucified on Good Friday, his body was taken down from the cross, wrapped in cloths and buried in a tomb. The tomb was guarded by Roman Soldiers and an enormous stone was put over the entrance, so that no-one could steal the body. On Easter Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene, followed later by some of Jesus' disciples visited the tomb and found that the stone had been moved and that Jesus' body had gone. Jesus was seen that day by Mary and the disciples, and for forty days afterwards by many people. His followers realised that God had raised Jesus from the dead. We call this the Resurrection.



Getting everything ready



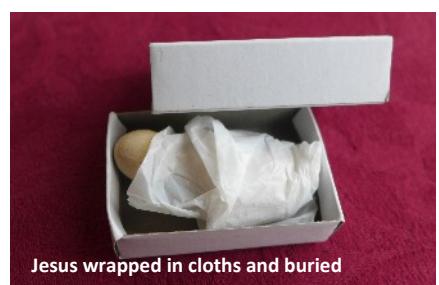
Palm Sunday - Hosanna!



Maundy Thursday, the last supper



Good Friday, Jesus died on a cross



Jesus wrapped in cloths and buried



Easter Sunday, Jesus rose again



Pack away, ready for next Easter