

## Journey to Pascha

# Introduction



**During Great Lent we prepare ourselves for the Great Feast of Pascha. In this unit we will be studying the events that we celebrate during Holy Week and Pascha. Included in this unit are icons, activities, and both texts and explanations of services and prayers.**

The unit covers many Bible stories, but sometimes the source from which you are reading or telling the story will not be an actual Bible. When you are using another source, have a Bible at hand (or, preferably, copy the story and put the copy in the open Bible) to show that it is a Bible story. Of course, every classroom should have Bibles.

## Journey to Pascha

Each session will focus on a different theme that is part of our Journey to Pascha. We will begin with the story of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, and continue with our celebration of Jesus' joyful Entrance into Jerusalem. In the following sessions, we will learn about each day of Holy Week, what Jesus taught His disciples during this time, and what happened to Jesus as He was brought to trial, put to death and buried. Finally, we will celebrate the events that led to His Resurrection from the dead.

## Special Notes

**Role Plays:** Several lessons include role plays, and some include words said by Jesus Christ. If you, the teacher, do not want a child to take the role of Christ, use a narrator to say the words of the Lord.

**Gathering for Prayer:** We suggest having a gathering place for the class to pray together. You might have a candle, flowers, and the appropriate icon for the lesson. Icons are provided in the Resource Section of each lesson. You can reproduce these and put them on backing and then display them on a small stand (like a plate stand.) Of course you can use your own icons, which is why in some lessons the Resource Section lists icons as "optional."

**Preparing Your Lessons:** Lessons in this unit include themes, objectives, resources attached to the lesson and step-by-step procedure, as well as a list of materials. In some lessons, the Materials section will give you special notes for lesson preparation. These enable you, as you prepare by reading through the lesson and getting materials ready, to be aware of any special preparations you'll need to make.

**Timing Your Lessons:** Because our church schools vary widely in the time they have for teaching, we have not timed the procedural steps of these lessons specifically. You are free to adapt, shorten or expand the material, or to spread it over more than one session.

**Palm Cross Activity:** A great activity, suitable for older students, making a palm cross.

## Resources for Every Age

**The following resources can be found within the lessons of this unit, or on the Department of Christian Education website ([dce.oca.org](http://dce.oca.org))**

- Liturgical texts and resources for Holy Week
- Biblical texts, charts and guides to using the Bible
- Icons, graphics and coloring pages for school and home use
- Short musical settings for hymns and verses
- Brief reviews of good books for home and classroom reading
- Activities and outreach projects for families and mixed generation groups
- Information on teaching skills, ideas for classroom use, human development patterns, writing projects, etc.

***Highlights of individual lessons in this unit (upper levels) include:***

- **Lazarus Saturday: Jesus raises His friend from the dead.**  
Mary and Martha plead with the Lord to come quickly to heal their brother Lazarus. Jesus delays his return until Lazarus is dead four days. Martha confesses her belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus says: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live..." Jesus has the power to raise the dead, and raises Lazarus. Jesus is the Resurrection and Life of all people.
- **Palm Sunday: Jesus Enters Jerusalem as a King!**  
Jesus enters Jerusalem and is honored as a King. The children greet Jesus waving palms and branches, crying out "Hosanna!" The people shout their praises to Him: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" In our celebration of the feast, the palms we hold are a sign of our allegiance to Christ.
- **Holy Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday: Parables of the Bridegroom, Last Judgment and the "End"**  
God has made us stewards of His world, to serve and care for it. He calls us to bear fruit by using the talents He has given us. Christ will come to judge the world, and He will come at Midnight, at an hour when we least expect Him. He will come as a Bridegroom, to take us, the Church, as His Bride. God calls us to be prepared, for only those who are ready will enter His Kingdom. The Bridegroom Matins.
- **Holy Thursday: The Supper, Anointing, and Betrayal of Christ**  
A woman anoints Christ's feet with oil, as a sign of love, as well as a preparation for His burial. Jesus' enemies seek to kill Him and Judas agrees to betray his Master. Jesus shows the disciples how they must serve others, by washing the feet of His own disciples, and shares a Passover meal with them. He blesses bread and a cup of wine, saying "Do this in remembrance of Me." Jesus teaches the disciples about love, and promises to send them a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, after He is gone. The Mystical Supper
- **Holy Friday: The Trial and Crucifixion of Christ.**  
Jesus takes the disciples to a place to pray and tells them that one of them shall betray Him and the others will deny Him and run away. Jesus is arrested and brought before the chief priests and scribes who sentence Him to death for equating Himself with God. He is brought before Pilate, the Roman governor, and then to Herod, to be sentenced to death and killed. Jesus is put to death on a Cross, along with two thieves. Mary, Jesus' mother, and the women followers who served Him stand by the

Cross until the end. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take Jesus' body down from the Cross, prepare it for burial and lay Him in a new tomb. The Death & Burial of Christ.

- **Holy Saturday & Pascha: Descent into Hades & Resurrection**

Jesus died in order to give us new life! Through His death on the Cross, Jesus defeated the power of death. Having died as a man, Jesus descended to Hades, the place of death, to destroy death and bring life to those in the tombs. Jesus' Life was more powerful than death. At the moment of His death, the earth shook, the tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints were raised. By His Resurrection from the dead, Jesus, who is the Christ-God, gives new life to all who believe in Him and do His will. Although we will die, we know that "death can no longer hold men captive," for when Christ comes again, all those in the tombs will be raised from the dead. Christ the Lord of all will come to judge the living and the dead, and grant life eternal in the world to come, to all who believe in Him as King and as God. "Christ is Risen! "

Journey to Pascha • Lesson 1

# Lazarus Saturday *(Ages 7-9)*



## Overview

### Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

## Objectives

*By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:*

- Identify Mary, Martha and Lazarus as friends of Jesus
- Recount the events leading up to and including the raising of Lazarus
- Sing the Troparion of the Feast of Palms

## Materials

- Icon of the Raising of Lazarus
- Black line drawing of the Raising of Lazarus (Resource section)--have one for each group of **four** students
- Colored pencils, crayons, markers
- For the Holy Week mural: Roll of mural or drawing paper or butcher paper--plan enough for six panels
- Felt pieces (available at craft stores) in colors to match the clothing in the Raising of Lazarus icon (see icon in Resources section.) Students will be cutting and then pasting the felt pieces onto the black line drawing of the icon, with the icon's colors as their template. This method will be used in all but one of the following lessons, so plan to have a good supply of felt pieces, and a variety of colors
- Glue
- Scissors for students to share
- **Note:** If you do not wish to use felt and glue for the mural, Lesson One for ages 4-6 suggests two other options for creating the mural panels
- Chart with the words of the troparion which is the Opening Prayer to be mounted (after students have decorated it) and kept in the classroom for following class sessions
- Toilet paper in which to wrap Lazarus' body in the tomb for role play
- Wall calendar, to be mounted in the room, showing the nine days from Lazarus Saturday to Great and Holy Pascha, with each day labeled. Each week students will mark off the days as you finish talking about them.
- Tape or wall-mounting material

## Resources

### Required Resources

[Jesus Raising Lazarus \(PDF\)](#)

[The Raising of Lazarus \(John 11:1-45\) \(PDF\)](#)

## Optional Resources

[Icon of The Raising of Lazarus \(Image\)](#)

[Raising Lazarus from the Dead](#)

[Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead\(HTML\)](#)

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

(Have students stand, for this and for all opening and closing prayers.). Say or sing the Troparion.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

#### The Troparion (*Tone 1*)

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,  
 Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.  
 Like the children, with the palms of victory,  
 We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death,  
 Hosanna in the Highest!  
 Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

Use the chart you've made to help with learning the words.

Go over the meanings of the following words; plan to review them in the coming weeks as you say or sing the troparion again:

**passion:** this refers to Jesus' suffering and crucifixion.

**confirm:** to say that something is true

**universal resurrection:** this means that by raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus showed us that He will raise all of us--everyone and everything in the universe.

**vanquisher:** conqueror or one who wins a victory and does away with something (in this case, Jesus won the victory over death.)

Have students decorate the chart with drawings of palms. Then mount it on the wall.

### 2 Bible Story

Choose one of the following to read to or with the students. If your students are older, you may want to use the Bible; if they are younger you may want to use the story in the Resource section.

- **Raising of Lazarus** (John 11:1-45)

- **Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead** (Resource section)

If you choose to read from the Resource section, have an open Bible to show that the story is from the Bible.

### 3 Role Play

Look at the icon of the Raising of Lazarus together. Identify Jesus, Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

If you have a space such as a closet, use it as a "tomb" for Lazarus (but with the door slightly ajar at all times.) If you don't have such a space, arrange chairs to suggest an enclosed space, leaving an exit path.

Assign parts of narrator, Lazarus, Mary, Martha, and "amazed onlookers." Have students wrap "Lazarus" in toilet paper as grave clothes, of course being careful not to impede the student's breathing, vision, or ability to take a few steps.

Role play the scene by having Lazarus in the tomb, Mary and Martha prayerful and weeping, and the onlookers talking about what they think will happen. Then a narrator will read John 11:38-44, and when he or she comes to the words "Lazarus, come out!" everyone should join in enthusiastically. Lazarus can then step forward and burst out of the grave clothes.

If your class is large, two groups or more can present the role play. Let students add their own details to what the characters do.

### 4 Wrap Up and Holy Week Mural

Divide the class into groups of four, and give each group a black line drawing of the Raising of Lazarus (Resource section), as well as crayons, colored pencils, and/or markers, glue, assorted felt pieces, and scissors. Have the icon of the Raising of Lazarus prominently displayed. Have the groups follow these steps:

- Work together to fill in the faces, body parts and background of the drawing with the crayons, pencils and/or markers. (The drawing is a simpler version of the icon, so the job will not be too complicated.)
- Cut the felt to fill in the clothing of the people in the drawing, using the colors in the icon as their model.
- Glue the cut pieces of felt onto the correct spaces in the drawing. (It may not be possible for the students to cut and match very small areas of clothing; these can be filled in with crayons, pencils, or markers. Other parts of the icon can also be colored in.)
- Arrange and attach the completed drawings on the "Lazarus Saturday" panel of the mural.

When they finish, as they are cleaning up and preparing for the closing prayer, ask the following:

- How do we know Jesus was a good friend to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus? *(He came to their home when Lazarus died, as the sisters asked Him to. he wept at the tomb of His friend Lazarus.)*
- Did Jesus do some of the things with His friends that you do with your friends? *(Yes. He spent time with them, walked and talked with them, shared meals with them, and went to a wedding. He healed, comforted, and taught many grown-ups and children.)*
- What did Jesus do for His friend Lazarus? *(Raised him from the dead.)*

## 5 Closing Prayer

(Have students stand.) In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **The Troparion (Tone 1)**

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,  
Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.  
Like the children, with the palms of victory,  
We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death,  
Hosanna in the Highest!  
Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

Have a student come up and "mark off" Lazarus Saturday on the wall calendar.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 2

# Palm Sunday

 (Ages 7-9)

## Overview

### Jesus is our King and God

## Objectives

*By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:*

- Describe what a king looks like, and does
- Name some ways in which Jesus Christ was different from other kings
- Tell the story of the Entrance into Jerusalem of Jesus, the King of All, using the icon of Palm Sunday

## Materials

- Crayons & Markers
- Drawing Paper
- Icon of Entry into Jerusalem/ Palm Sunday
- Black line drawing of Entry into Jerusalem/Palm Sunday, one for each group of four students
- Palm Sunday (Resource section)
- Pictures or photos of kings--these can be modern or from older times, but should show crowns, robes, possibly swords and other things that look as "royal" as possible. Check history books and the internet for photos and pictures
- Pieces of felt to match colors in Entry/Palm Sunday icon (see "Materials" list in previous lesson)
- Scissors
- Glue

## Resources

### Required Resources

[Palm Sunday \(PDF\)](#)

[Entry into Jerusalem \(Image\)](#)

### Optional Resources

[Icon of The Entry Into Jerusalem \(Image\)](#)

[Palm Sunday: Entry Into Jerusalem](#)

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

Have students stand.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,

Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.

Like the children with the palms of victory,

We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of death,

Hosanna in the Highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.

*Review the meanings of words and phrases using the wall chart, as in the previous lesson.*

### 2 Discussion Starter

Ask: *What do you think of when you hear the word "king"?* Put students' responses on the chalkboard. Words like powerful, strong, tall, rich, etc. will probably be suggested. Look together at any pictures you have brought.

Ask: *How would you greet a king?* (Bowing, standing up if you are sitting, etc.)

Say: *We don't have kings, but we do have important people like presidents. How would you greet the President?* (Let students suggest ways--cheering, waving, standing, etc.)

Say: *One person who might visit us is a person we greet in a special way--the bishop. How do we greet him?* (Let students answer. Review the way we greet a bishop--kissing his hand, receiving a blessing, singing. Practice the way we receive a blessing, with hands open, right on top of left.)

Say: Let's see how Jesus was greeted when He came as a king on Palm Sunday into the city of Jerusalem.

### 3 Holy Week Mural

Divide the class into four groups, and give each group a black line drawing of the icon of the Entry into Jerusalem/Palm Sunday. As in the previous lesson, the group members can fill in the faces, background, and other details of the icon, leaving the clothing. Using the icon's colors as their model, students will cut felt pieces to fit the clothing parts of the drawing, and then glue them on.

They can arrange and attach their finished drawings as the second panel of the mural, entitled "Entry into Jerusalem/Palm Sunday."

As students are cleaning up, ask the following:

- Did Jesus do some of the things with His friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus that you do with your friends? *(Yes. He spent time in their home, walked and talked with them, shared meals with them, and taught them.)*
- What did Jesus do for His friend Lazarus? *(Raised him from the dead.)*

## 4 Palm Sunday - The King Enters

Look together again at the icon of the Entry into Jerusalem/Palm Sunday

Have students point out things in the icon that are different from the pictures or descriptions of kings that you talked about and looked at earlier. *(Encourage students to see that Jesus Christ is close to the people rather than being separate from them in a closed coach. He rides a simple donkey, not a big, proud horse. He carries no weapons or signs of power. His clothes are simple, not fancy and expensive. He is a different kind of king: He is God's own Son, so He is the true King. But He loves us, and came to be with us. So He is not a king who puts Himself above us)*

Ask students, as a review, "What was it that Jesus did for Lazarus?" *(Raised him from the dead.)*

Ask, "Could a king who is just a king, and not God's Son, do that?" *(No. Even a king with the strongest horse, the shiniest crown, the fanciest clothes, the biggest kingdom, cannot do that. Only God's Son could do that. And He does it because He loved Lazarus. He loves us, too. So He has promised that someday we can live forever with Him in His heavenly Kingdom)*

Read "Palm Sunday" from the Resource section together. Have an open Bible to show that this is a Bible story.

Say: "Our story tells us that Jesus knew some people would turn against Him. They would stop being His friends. They would stop being thankful for the good things He was doing. Why do you think some people would turn against Him?" *(Let students answer. Suggest these reasons: Jesus was not a king who would destroy their enemies, as some of them hoped. Some did not understand what He meant when He talked about His kingdom, because it was not right in front of them.)*

## 5 Wrap Up and Closing Prayer

As the students are cleaning up getting ready for the closing prayer, practice saying what the people said as Jesus entered Jerusalem: Hosanna! Blessed is He That Comes in the Name of the Lord.

Have a student "mark off" Palm Sunday on the wall calendar.

As the closing prayer, say or sing the Troparion of Palm Sunday, using the wall chart to review the words:

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,

Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.

Like the children with the palms of victory,

We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of death,

Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 3



# Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday *(Ages 7-9)*

## Overview

**The Bridegroom Services** - Being Ready

## Objectives

*By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:*

- Tell, in a simple way, the story of the Wise and Foolish Maidens (Note: "Maidens" is the word used in the Revised Standard Version of the Bible)
- Tell why it is important to be prepared for Jesus Christ when He comes to be with us

## Materials

- Icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens
- Black line drawings of the icon, one for each group of 4 students
- For the mural, felt pieces, glue, scissors, mural paper, tape as for previous lessons

For the Review Activity, have for **each group** of 4 students the following:

- Five Ziploc bags  
*Each containing 1" squares of heavy paper or card stock, each with a single letter. In each bag the letters will spell out **one** of the following words: LAZARUS, MARTHA, RAISED, JERUSALEM, PALMS. Each envelope should be shaken so the letters are well mixed. Use a marker to number the outside of each envelope, in the order of the words given above: 1/Lazarus, 2/Martha, 3/Raised, 4/Jerusalem, 5/Palms*
- Pencils
- Wall chart with the words of the prayer "O Heavenly King"
- Wall chart with the words of the Lord's Prayer, if you feel the class needs it

## Resources

### Required Resources

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

[The Bridegroom Services of Holy Week \(PDF\)](#)

[Icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens\(Link\)](#)

### Optional Resources

## Jesus the Holy Wisdom and the Parable of the Ten Wise and Foolish Virgins

### Procedure

#### 1 Opening Prayer

(Have students stand.)

*In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, Who art everywhere and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and giver of life, Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, And save our souls, O Good One.

**Ask:** "In this prayer, we are addressing one of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Which one is it?" (*The word "Spirit" in the first line should make this clear.*)

**Go over these words as needed:**

- "Comforter" means one who both guides and comforts. The word applies here to a person
- "Abide in us" means stay with us, be close to us, be part of us
- "Cleanse us from every impurity" means help us choose to do good things, and to stay away from things that are wrong

#### 2 Review

Sing or say together the Troparion for Palm Sunday, the Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem:

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion,

Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.

Like the children with the palms of victory,

We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of death,

Hosanna in the Highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!

Make sure students understand the following words and phrases:

1. **passion:** this means the suffering and death of Jesus Christ when He died on the cross

2. **universal resurrection:** this is God's promise that even though our lives on earth, we will all rise to live with Him forever
3. **vanquisher:** conqueror, someone who wins a battle

Continue the review by dividing the class into groups of 4. Give each group pencils, paper, a set of five numbered envelopes ( numbered 1 to 5) containing letters, and a desk or table space to work on.

Have the groups work on spelling out the names and words in each envelope, arranging the squares in order on the workspace. Walk around among the groups and give help (especially with spelling) as needed. As students work out the words and names, they should be able to write sentences using each name or word, and the sentences should describe (in order) the events we remember on Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday. Let students work from memory, only reviewing the story from the Bible if they need to. (Have a Bible open to John 11, for students to consult only after trying to complete the activity from memory.) You may want to make the activity a contest to see which group can be first to spell out the words in the bags and write correct sentences. (The sentences should contain the following basic facts and chronology, though students may write them differently, and may compose more or fewer sentences. So long as the basic facts are presented, the sentences students create may vary quite a bit):

**Lazarus**, the brother of **Martha** and Mary, had died.

Jesus **raised** Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus entered **Jerusalem**.

The people welcomed Jesus by waving **palms** and cheering.

*Review the answers with the whole class when everyone has finished.*

### 3 Scripture & Discussion

Tell the class this story, based on the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Maidens that Jesus told. (The Resource section contains commentary on the services of the first days of Holy Week, which you can read for your own information.)

***Jesus told this story to His followers:***

***There were ten maidens (that means girls) who were waiting for a bridegroom to come to a wedding. Their job was to walk with him and light the way with oil lamps. They needed to have plenty of oil for their lamps, so they would be ready. Five of them did have plenty of oil, but the other five had not bothered to make sure they had lots of oil.***

***It got so late that all the maidens fell asleep. At midnight, the bridegroom came and everyone called, "He is here! Come to meet him!" The maidens all woke up and started to get their***

***lamps ready. The foolish ones said to the wise ones, "Give us some of your oil."***

***But there was not enough time for the wise maidens to share their oil, and still have enough. The foolish girls rushed out to buy some. But while they were gone, the bridegroom went with the wise maidens to the wedding party. The door was closed.***

***The foolish maidens returned, and knocked on the door. They said, "Let us in!" But it was too late. The bridegroom said, "I do not know you."***

***After He finished telling this story, Jesus said, "Keep watch and be ready, for you do not know the day or the hour when the Son of Man is coming."***

## 4 Discussion Questions

When we come to church on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, we will sing about the "bridegroom." (Ask students: "*Who do you think is the bridegroom?*")

Let them come up with the answer that it is Jesus Christ.)

Say "*The bridegroom in the story calls himself the "Son of Man." That is also Jesus Christ. He wants us to be ready for Him whenever He comes. We won't go out to meet Him with oil lamps. But we will think about the things we have done, and the way we live. We can be ready to meet Him by trying to do good things. We can be ready by being sorry for the bad things we have done, the things that make us feel bad inside, and that we know are not what He wants us to do. We can be ready by trying to keep doing the good things, and making up for the bad things we do, as much as we can. Then when we meet Him we can be joyful, and not ashamed of things we have done.*"

Give students one or two minutes of silence to think about what these words mean to them, and to ask questions if they wish to. It's important to assure them that Jesus Christ wants us to be with Him - He will never leave us out if we really want to be with Him.

Continue: "On Pascha (Easter) we will sing and celebrate Jesus Christ rising from the dead. Someday we will meet Him face to face. This story helps us get ready for that wonderful day. It is such a great day that we see the name of it written as Great and Holy Pascha."

## 5 Holy Week Mural

Look together at the icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens, and see how it reflects the story. Put the following phrases on the chalkboard. Have groups of four, each with paper, crayons, colored

pencils, and markers, write out one of the phrases, using color and "flourishes" on the letters as they wish (if your class is large, more than one group can write out the same phrase or choose another from the Bible story:

- Give us some of your oil
- I do not know you
- Lord, lord, open to us
- Five were wise, and five were foolish
- Behold, the bridegroom!

They can then arrange and attach their completed phases to the panel. It can be labeled: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: The Bridegroom Comes.

Have three students mark off Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday on the wall calendar.

Look together at the "Jesus the Holy Wisdom" line drawing from the Resource section to see another way in which the story of the Wise and Foolish Maidens is depicted. Jesus is shown as the fountain of wisdom. We see the maidens and the closed doors.

## 6 Troparion & Icon Reflection

Look again at the icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens together. Say part of the Troparion together:

*Behold, the bridegroom comes at midnight, and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching, and again, unworthy is the servant whom He shall find heedless.*

Ask students to define "heedless." If they are not sure of its meaning, tell them it means not paying attention and not caring about what God wants us to do. Ask them to say how the foolish maidens give us an example of being "heedless" (they did not care enough to provide themselves with enough oil to be ready to go with the bridegroom)

## 7 Closing Prayer

(Have students stand)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.



## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 4

# Holy Thursday

 (Ages 7-9)

## Overview

**The Last Supper** - Jesus Shows Love for His Disciples

## Objectives

*By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:*

- Describe the Last Supper as a sign of Jesus' love for His disciples
- Describe Jesus' washing of the feet of His disciples as an example of humble service to another
- Relate the Last Supper to our reception of Holy Communion

## Materials

- Icon of the Last Supper
- Black line drawing/s of the Last Supper icon, one for each group of four students
- A clear pitcher or glass of water
- Section A: Children's Bible Stories (Resource section)
- Materials for mural, as in previous lessons (crayons, colored pencils, markers, felt pieces, scissors, glue, mural paper)
- Wall chart with words of the Opening Prayer. **Note:** Since this prayer is only for today, and is fairly short, you may prefer to put the words on the chalkboard before class.

## Resources

### Required Resources

- [Palm Sunday \(PDF\)](#)
- [Section A: Children's Bible Stories \(PDF\)](#)
- [The Last Supper \(PDF\)](#)
- [Last Supper Icon \(Image\)](#)

### Optional Resources

- [The Last Supper line drawing \(PDF\)](#)

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O Heavenly King, the comforter, the Spirit of truth,  
Who art everywhere and fillest all things,  
Treasury of blessings and giver of life,  
Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity,  
And save our souls, O Good One.

Review words and phrases in this prayer as you did in the previous session, using the wall chart you provided.

## 2 Discussion Starter

Ask students, "Do you like to have a meal with people you love? What is nice about eating with people you like and love?" (Let them give answers and say a little about their experiences of sharing meals.)

Continue by saying, "Jesus Christ liked it, too. One of the last things He did while He was on earth was to share a special meal with His disciples. Here is an icon of that meal. (Show the icon of the Last Supper.) Do you see how close everyone is sitting? They loved Jesus and He loved them. Jesus showed His love in a way that really might surprise you. We will read about it, but first I want to ask you something."

Pointing out the pitcher or glass of water, ask students, "What can you do with water?" (*Let students give answers such as: take a drink, clean something, water the garden, wash your face, etc.*) Then have students stand. Tell them you are going to read a list of things, and that they should sit down if they hear something they would NOT want to do with water. They can stay standing as long as the things you say are things they would be willing to do. Read these items slowly, one by one:

--take a drink

--give someone else a drink

--make ice cubes

--help a grownup clean things

--make lemonade or another kind of drink

--fill a birdbath

--turn on the sprinkler and run through the water on a warm day

--wash someone else's dirty, sweaty feet.

Chances are the students will remain standing till you say the last item, and then most or all will sit down. Say, "Let's find out what Our Lord did that was a surprise."

### 3 Scripture Story

Read together "Jesus' Last Supper with His Disciples" from Section A: Children's Bible Stories in the Resource section. Make special note of the reason Jesus did this surprising thing of washing His disciples' feet--ask students what the reason was. (*He did it to give them an example of real service. He wanted them to show love by serving others.*) When this point has been made, tell students that He wants us to serve others, too.

*Also point out that when we receive Holy Communion at church, we are doing what Jesus asked us to do at the Last Supper. What we receive in Holy Communion is bread and wine. But He is with us as we receive it, in a special way that only God can be.*

*As a way of helping you explain this to your young students, here are the words of Mrs. Sophie Koulomzin in her book Our Church and Our Children: "One can say that this is the food Jesus gave to His disciples when He had supper with them for the last time, and that every time we eat this holy food, it is like Jesus Himself giving it to us" (p. 43.) The idea that Our Lord is One who feeds us is a good one to emphasize with young students.*

### 4 Holy Week Mural

Have students, in groups of four each working on a line drawing, construct the fourth panel of the mural in the same way as in previous lessons, with the icon of the Last Supper as their model. They will fill in the non-clothes parts with color, and cut felt pieces to fit the clothing parts. They will glue these on, and then arrange and attach completed pictures to the mural panel.

**Note:** Since the anointing of Jesus' feet is not included in the version of the Last Supper story used here, it has not been included in the mural. But do remind students that Jesus did this after the supper. The event is part of our Holy Thursday worship.

**Note:** While students are working on the mural, write the words of the Kathisma Hymn (slightly adapted) from Tone 1 and Tone 2 of the Vespers of Great and Holy Wednesday on the chalkboard. The words of the hymn are below, in the Closing Prayer section (6).

### 5 Wrap Up

Look at the words of the Kathisma Hymn on the chalkboard together. Remind students that you talked about several things that we can do with water. Here the hymn shows us that Our Lord Jesus Christ, with His Father and the Holy Spirit, created all water. Then, when He came to be with us on earth, He used water in a very humble way: by washing His disciples' feet.

Ask students to think about a way they can serve someone else in a humble way during the coming week. (Make sure they understand the meaning of “humble.” It means not showing off, not looking for praise, not trying to stand out or impress.) Let those who wish to volunteer suggestions do so.

Have a student mark off Holy Thursday on the wall calendar.

## 6 Closing Prayer

Use the Kathisma Hymn as your closing prayer:

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord, who loves mankind, who created the lakes, the rivers, and the seas,  
Gave us a special commandment of love when He wrapped a towel around His waist and washed the feet of His disciples; He humbled Himself in the greatness of His goodness, raising us from the depths of evil. We pray: Grant us great mercy.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 5

# Holy Friday

 (Ages 7-9)

## Overview

### Will We Be True Friends to Christ?

## Objectives

*By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:*

- Briefly describe the events of the arrest, trial, and death of Jesus Christ
- Describe how, even while dying on the cross, Jesus cared for His Mother by asking His disciple John to take care of her
- State simply that Jesus Christ rose from the dead

## Materials

- Icon of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ
- Black line drawings of the icon of the Crucifixion, one for each group of four students
- Section A: Children's Bible Stories (Resource Section)
- Simple materials to serve as "robes" for bystanders in role play; if desired, also a walking stick (for Peter) and a bowl and rag for the servant girl who questions him as Jesus is being questioned
- Materials for the Holy Week mural as in previous lessons--colored pencils, crayons, markers, felt pieces, scissors, glue, mural paper
- Chart with the words of the Opening Prayer, mounted on the wall

## Resources

### Required Resources

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

[Section A: Children's Bible Stories \(PDF\)](#)

[The Crucifixion \(PDF\)](#)

### Optional Resources

[Crucifix](#)

[Icon of The Crucifixion of the Lord \(Image\)](#)

## Procedure

# 1 Opening Prayer

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We magnify You, O Jesus, our King.

We worship Your passion and Your burial,

For by them, You have saved us from death.

Be sure students understand that "magnify" here means to praise greatly. Review the word "passion" as meaning the suffering and death of the Lord. (*The verses are taken from the Praises in the Matins of Holy Saturday.*)

# 2 Scripture Reflection

Read the stories [Jesus is Betrayed](#), [The Trial of Jesus](#), [Jesus is Put to Death on a Cross](#), and [The Burial and Resurrection of Christ](#) in *Section A: Children's Bible Stories, page 8 to near the bottom of page 11*. Be sure students understand the meaning of the word "betray": to act like a friend, but really be an enemy. If students ask about the reasons for Judas' betrayal, say that Judas wanted money. Also, perhaps he did not believe that a real King would let Himself be treated badly, as Jesus did. Judas did not understand that Jesus did all this for us.

# 3 Discussion Questions

- **Do you think Jesus hated the people who hurt Him?**  
*No, He is God and loves everyone forever, unconditionally.*
- **What were some strange things that happened as Jesus was dying on the cross?**  
*It became very dark, rocks split open, saints who had died came back to life, and the curtain in the Temple in Jerusalem was torn in two pieces.*
- **How did Jesus show His love for His Mother as He was dying on the cross?**  
*He told His disciple John to take care of her, and John did so.*

Look at the icon together. Notice that there are far fewer people than there were in the crowd on Palm Sunday. Some people turned away from Jesus Christ when they no longer thought He was a powerful king.

# 4 Role Play

Have students role play the scene of Peter waiting outside as Jesus is being questioned. Students can take the roles of bystanders, Peter, and the servant girl who confronts him. Have students take turns, if your group is large. The servant girl and Peter can have their dialog, while bystanders comment on who Peter is, what is happening to Jesus, and any experiences they may have had with Jesus as He traveled, preached, taught and healed.

When they have finished, ask, "Why do you think Peter pretended he did not know Christ?" (*He was afraid of getting in trouble, and being associated with the one who was in trouble*)

Ask, "Do you think Jesus forgave Peter for pretending he was not Jesus' friend?" (*Yes. Later, after Jesus rose from the dead, Peter became a great servant of God. He traveled far, and told many people that Jesus Christ is God, encouraging them to become Christians and baptizing them.*)

## 5 Holy Week Mural

Have students, in groups of four, construct the fifth panel of the mural in the same way as in previous lessons, using the Icon of the Crucifixion as their model. They will fill in the non-clothing parts of the line drawing with colored pencils, crayons or markers, and cut felt to fit the clothing pieces. These should be glued on, and the completed drawings arranged and attached to the mural paper. The title of this panel is Holy Friday.

When they finish, have a student mark off Holy Friday on the wall calendar.

*While students are working on the mural, put the verses for the closing prayer on the chalkboard.*

## 6 Closing Prayer

Spend a few minutes having students memorize these verses, and use them as a closing prayer.

**Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. God is the Lord, and has revealed Himself to us.**

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 6



# Holy Saturday & Pascha (Ages 7-9)

## Overview

**Christ is Risen!** - Jesus Christ the Lord is Alive

## Objectives

*By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:*

- Tell in a simple way the story of the empty tomb
- Relate the icon of the Resurrection to the Troparion of the feast

## Materials

- Icon of the Resurrection
- Section A Children's Bible Stories (Resource Section)  
(1 copy per student)
- Black line drawings of the Resurrection icon, one for each group of four students
- Materials for the final panel of the mural, as in previous lessons (crayons, colored pencils, markers, felt pieces, scissors, glue, mural paper)

## Resources

### Required Resources

[Section A: Children's Bible Stories \(PDF\)](#)

[Entry into Jerusalem \(Image\)](#)

### Optional Resources

[Descent Into Hades: Line Drawing](#)

[Descent Into Hades: The Holy Resurrection](#)

[Icon of The Entry Into Jerusalem \(Image\)](#)

[Icon of The Resurrection of Christ \(Image\)](#)

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Christ is Risen from the dead,  
Trampling down death by death,  
And upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

**Note:** Make sure students know that "bestowing" means giving.

## 2 Icon of the Feast

**Look together at the Resurrection icon. Let students find the way Jesus is "bestowing life" on those in the tombs.** *He pulls Adam and Eve out from the power of death. Others who have died will be pulled out, too.*

**The power of death is shown in the gates or doors, with locks and keys, that Christ is trampling on.** *If students are not sure what "trampling" means, the icon shows it - Christ is stepping firmly on and destroying the gates or doors of death and hell.*

Ask students: How are the things we talked about in the icon related to the Troparion of the Feast?  
*The hymn mentions Christ trampling down death and bestowing life.*

## 3 Scripture Story

As a review of the last session, read The Burial and Resurrection of Christ, and then go on to Christ is Risen. The texts are in the Resource section, in Section A: Children's Bible Stories, page 11 to page 13.

## 4 Discussion Questions

- **After Jesus was buried, some women went to the tomb. What did they talk about on the way there?**  
*They were worried that they would not be able to roll away the big, heavy stone covering the tomb.*
- **What did they find at the tomb?**  
*A bright, shining angel was there. The tomb was open, with the stone rolled away. The soldiers guarding the tomb were so frightened by the brightness of the angel that they had fallen on the ground.*
- **A little later, Mary Magdalen saw Jesus. She knew that He had risen from the dead. What did Jesus tell her to do?**  
*He said, "Go and tell the disciples that I am going to My Father."*

## 5 Memorization Review

Review with students the verses they memorized from the last session: *Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us.* (These could be written on the chalkboard.) When you have reviewed the verses, talk briefly about their meaning. Tell students that God has revealed or shown Himself to us by rising from the dead. Only God, the Lord, could do this.

## 6 Holy Week Mural and Unit Review

Have students finish the final panel of the mural. As in previous lessons, divide the class into groups of four and have each group work on a black line drawing, this time of the icon of the Resurrection. They will fill in the non-clothing parts with crayon, colored pencils and markers, and then cut felt to fit the clothing parts. They will then glue them onto the drawing, and arrange and attach the completed sheets to the mural paper. The title can be Resurrection: Christ is Risen!

Put any necessary finishing touches on it, and decide together on a place where you might display the mural so parents, parishioners, and other people can readily see it.

As a review of the unit, divide the class into two teams, and have each team stand together so that they are clearly divided. Have each team choose a name, and put the names on the chalkboard. Beneath each name make two columns titled SIT and STAND, with room to record numbers.

Be sure each student has a chair readily available. Explain that you will ask questions, and to each question you will give two possible answers. Only one answer is correct. You will tell students to sit if they choose one answer, or stay standing and raise their arms above their heads if they choose the other. Go through the following question as an example. Say, "I betrayed Jesus to his enemies. Who am I? Stand if my name is Judas. Sit if my name is John."(Judas; standers are correct.)

After the students respond to each question, you will ask them to stay sitting or standing, while you count and record on the board the number of "sitters" and the number of "standers" on each team. The eight questions are lettered from a to A to H, so you can mark each one on the board with its letter. After recording the numbers, tell students which answer was correct. The team with the most correct answers (the ones who sat or stood correctly most often) will be the winner. Remind the standers to put their hands in the air; this will make your counting easier. Be sure to have students stand after you finish counting and before you ask the next question. Read the questions slowly, and repeat them once if needed. But don't let students make you repeat them several times; they should be listening. **Questions:**

A. Jesus raised me from the dead. Who am I? SIT if my name is Luke. STAND if my name is Lazarus. **(Lazarus; standers are correct.)**

B. Jesus told a story about young women who didn't have enough of this for their lamps. What was it? SIT if it was water. STAND if it was oil. **(Oil; standers are correct.)**

C. I went to Jesus' tomb early in the morning. Who am I? SIT if I am Mary. STAND if I am Martha.

**(Mary; sitters are correct.)**

D. Jesus rode into this city on Palm Sunday. What city is it? SIT if it is Bethlehem. STAND if it is Jerusalem. **(Jerusalem; standers are correct.)**

E. I am a sister of Lazarus. What is my name? SIT if it is Elizabeth. STAND if it is Martha.

**(Martha; standers are correct.)**

F. Jesus used this to show His disciples how to be servants. SIT if it is water. STAND if it is oil.

**(Water; sitters are correct.)**

G. When Jesus was dying on the cross, He told me to take care of His mother. Who am I? (STAND if I am Mark. SIT if I am John. **(John; sitters are correct.)**

H. I was afraid, so I said I didn't know Jesus even though He was my friend. Who am I? SIT if my name is Peter. STAND if my name is Matthew. **(Peter; sitters are correct.)**

If students are interested, give them a chance to think up 2 or 3 more questions. (The winning team can go first.)

Have a student mark off Pascha on the wall calendar.

## 7 Closing Prayer

Christ is Risen from the dead,  
Trampling down death by death,  
And upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

**Note:** *If possible, sing or say the troparion in one or more languages in addition to English.*