A JOURNEY THROUGH
HOLY WEEK

An Act of Collective Worship
for
EYFS, KEY STAGE 1 and KEY STAGE 2
A JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK

Theme – The Easter Story

This Act of Worship is intended for the whole school but it can be adapted depending on the age range. Most schools study different parts of the Easter story with different year groups and so this is meant to represent a culmination of the work on Easter that will be carried out in religious studies.

Purpose

To enable the pupils to reflect on the last few days of Jesus’ life and the Christian concept of ‘Resurrection’.

Preparation

This Act of Worship can take place in a classroom, the hall, church or in different parts of the school depending on the layout of the building and of course the weather.

It is based on the idea of Stations of the Cross but broadening the idea to encompass the whole of Holy Week.

If the worship is carried out in the school hall or the church you may wish to use an interactive white board screen or Powerpoint at the front to project images throughout.

Creating an Atmosphere for Worship

Set up different stations using artefacts from the Bible story and other artefacts/food used by the Christian community today in the shape of a cross as pictured below. If you are using the school hall you might mark out the shape of a cross on the floor and the pupils can sit around it.

(see below)

Set up a table/altar at the front with a white/gold cloth for Easter. Have a large white candle to light. You may also want some spring flowers as a symbol of new life; an egg etc.
A Journey through Holy Week

Holy Saturday

Good Friday

The Garden of Gethsemane

The Last Supper

The Washing of the Feet

The throwing out of the money changers in the Temple

Palm Sunday
**Introductory Music**
Something suitable for the Passion Story - for example:
Allegrì  Miserere Mei
Frank  Panis Angelicus
Bach  Pieces of The St Matthew Passion
Lloyd Webber  Pie Jesu

**The Act of Worship**

As the pupils arrive you could show a Powerpoint presentation of images from Holy Week or a film clip without the sound.

Do not light the candles beforehand.

As the images on the slides change, one or two pupils from each class go to their station carrying an appropriate artefact, read a short version of this part of the story and then a prayer is said. The pupils may like to write a prayer or you could use a simple repetitive prayer (see pages 5-7). A votive candle is then lit at each station.

**Suggested Artefacts and Images**
Palm Sunday-  Palm cross and palm branches
Jesus throwing out the money-changers – coins

The washing of the feet – A jug, bowl and towel (terracotta bowls and jugs can be bought from garden centres)
The Last Supper – Items from a Seder meal

The Garden of Gethsemane – Olive branches or olive oil (The word Gethsemane means olive press)
Good Friday – Nails, wood, hammer, a scourge, a crown of thorns, hot cross buns
Holy Saturday - A Pascal Candle, a pot for anointing the body

Easter Day - A piece of white linen
Schools may like to decide whether or not they wish to end the service with the station for Good Friday, e.g. the Crucifixion or the Pieta, or to introduce the resurrection before Easter.
Ending with the Pieta or the closed tomb would enable them to begin the new term with the theme of resurrection, new life and beginnings. You might also consider having the station for Easter Day and the resurrection outside at the environmental garden or pond.

Some schools may like to add in ‘The Sounds of Holy Week’ (see Page 13).

**The final prayer Station 8**
Light the candle on the main table and ask the children to reflect upon the whole story of Easter

**The final music**
This will depend on at which station you intend to finish your worship.
Examples for Good Friday could include:

Jesus Christ Superstar or ‘When I Survey the Wondrous Cross’.

For Easter it might be:
Handel - The Hallelujah Chorus or one of the Easter hymns
SUGGESTED HYMNS AND SUPPORT MATERIAL

If you wish to include a hymn the following are for Easter:

Come and Praise pages 215 – 220
Out of The Ark Series Songs for Every Easter
It is a thing most wonderful  W. Walsham How 1823 – 97 English Hymnal 84
There is a green hill far away  C Alexander 18 – 95  Eng. Hymn. 92
Were you there when they crucified my Lord  Negro Spiritual  Eng. Hymn. 93
When I survey the wondrous cross  Isaac Watts 1674 – 1748  Eng. Hymn. 95
Jesus Christ is risen today  Lyra Davidica  1708  Eng. Hymn. 110
The strife is o’er, the battle done  Francis Pott 1832 – 1909  Eng. Hymn. 119
Thine be the Glory  Edmond Budry 1854 – 1932  Eng. Hymn. 120

NB. Your Parish Priest will have access to ‘Common Worship’, which has prayers
and readings and probably ‘Lent, Holy Week and Easter’ Church House
Publishing, which also contains dramatisations of the Easter Story for churches.
These are suitable for Key Stage 2 pupils. (Pages 143 – 175)

The Lion Easter Book
Inspire
Teaching Christianity at Key Stage 1  Alison Seaman and Graham Owen
Teaching Christianity at Key Stage 2  Lilian Weatherley and Trevor Reader
Easter - The First Festivals Series  Lion (Key Stage I)
Easter – A World of Festivals  Evans Brothers
EXAMPLES OF SIMPLE PRAYERS FOR EACH STATION

NB: These prayers were originally written for church schools and depending on the circumstances and the pupils schools may wish to omit the refrain.

Station 1
Leader  Dear God,
As we reflect on this Holy Week we remember that first Palm Sunday when Jesus showed great humility by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. We also remember the crowds that welcomed Him with shouts of ‘Hosanna’. We pray that we too might show humility in our lives.
All: We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Station 2
Leader: Dear God,
As we reflect on this Holy Week we remember now that day when Jesus strode into the Temple and, in his anger, threw out the greedy money changers and those selling animals as a sacrifice. We pray that like Jesus we might show anger at injustice when we see it in our world today and that we might resist the temptation to become greedy at the expense of others.
All: We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Station 3
Leader: Dear God,
As we reflect on this Holy Week we now remember that first Maundy Thursday when Jesus shared the Passover meal with his friends and how he showed himself to be a servant through the washing of feet. We pray too that we might be good servants to others in all that we do and say.
All: We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Station 4
Leader: Dear God
We especially recall how at the Last Supper Jesus asked His friends to remember him as they shared the bread and wine together. We pray too that we can be good friends.
All: We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Station 5
Leader: Dear God,
As we reflect on this Holy Week we now remember that night
in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus prayed to you as the disciples slept. We remember the sadness he felt in His heart but also His trust in you. We remember too how Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss, revealing Him to the soldiers and enabling them to arrest Him. We pray that like Jesus we shall always turn to you in prayer.

**All:** We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

**Station 6**

**Leader:** Dear God,

As we reflect on this Holy Week we now remember that first Good Friday when Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate and condemned to death. We thank you for His courage as he was cruelly tortured and crucified. Help us to remember Jesus’ words from the cross: ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do’. We pray now for all those who like Pilate have to make difficult decisions about the lives of others. Help them to have the wisdom to see when someone is innocent. We also pray for ourselves that we are not quick to condemn but that like Jesus we have compassion and are able to forgive.

**All:** We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

**Station 7**

**Leader:** Dear God,

As we reflect on this Holy Week we remember that first Easter Saturday when Jesus’ body lay in the darkness of the tomb. We remember the disciples who were devastated by the loss of a friend. We also remember Mary, the mother of Jesus, who had stood by as her son was crucified and His body lain in the tomb. We pray for all those who mourn the death of a loved one at this time that they too might receive comfort and compassion in their hours of darkness.

**All:** We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

**Station 8**

**Leader:** Dear God,

As we reflect on this Holy Week we remember that first Easter Day when Jesus’ friends discovered the empty tomb and realised that He had risen from the dead. We join with them now as we share in their Easter Joy. We pray that this Easter Joy will remain with us and our loved ones throughout our lives.

**All:** We pray this as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.
A SOUND MONTAGE FOR GOOD FRIDAY

You will require:

a) A life-size cross or a child prepared to stand up with arms outstretched as if on a cross

b) A piece of wood to tap on the floor or a hammer to bang on the wood to show the sound of the nails

c) One child to take the part of the Centurion at the foot of the cross

d) Large cards with a variety of chants e.g.

Ha! Ha! Ha! Tell me what’s happening.
Throw the dice. What a bit of luck.
Ha! Ha! Ha! He thought he was the king.
He looks thirsty. Give him some vinegar.
If you are the king, come down from the cross.
Look, he’s talking to God. Now he’s dead.
For the Centurion: Truly this man was the son of God.

The pupils could also make up some chants to go on the cards.

Activity

Arrange all of the pupils on the floor around the cross and stand the Centurion next to the cross. (Make sure he knows what he has to say.)

Divide the pupils into groups with one child holding up the words of their chant.

Have one child beating the rhythm of the nails on wood. This is a steady ‘rap’ rhythm. Gradually introduce the chants, keeping the first one going, then the second, and so on.

Build up to a crescendo and then gradually phase out the first chant, then the second etc.

The sound of the nails will continue.

Finally stop all of the noise including the nails and the Centurion says ‘Truly this man was the son of God’.

You could also work out a sound montage for Palm Sunday etc.