

Hosanna and Gum Branches

Scripture Reference: Mk 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, "Why are you doing this?" just say this, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately."' They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

'Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Bible version NRSV from <http://bible.oremus.org/>

Scene and people

This is largely a narration with two speakers but a crowd can be used to "top and tail" the narration (the narration could be one voice but would need to be *parsed* more). The contrast between the "top and tail" and the narration is to contrast the people's expectation that Christ was the Messiah, coming to free them from Roman rule, with Christ's actual entry to Jerusalem and the Cross.

The Crowd: Children from the congregation and their parents. *Parents will need to coach the children to come in waving the gum branches and shout "HOSANNA" then to march out.*

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The Crowd enters the church waving the gum branches and shouting "Hosanna".

The Speakers go and stand at the lectern.

The Crowd goes out and marches around the hall or outside – they can be heard inside but are faint. They might play follow the leader so the kids think it's a game. They need to return after 2 to 2.5 minutes – someone may need to signal them to come back inside after the narration is finished. The Priest may then talk to them and ask them what they were doing, and what happened to Jesus after his entry to Jerusalem. The Priest could then pray for the children and send them out for the Children's time (or back to their seats)

The Speakers, after the crowd exits, speak the narrative below, then place a couple of gum branches in front of the cross – a visual cue that what lays after the shouting of Hosanna is the Cross.

The narrative (*slow and reflective*)

1. See Jesus walking up the road, on his way to Jerusalem.

2. There is dust everywhere. Always is.

1. And there seems to be more dust than usual.

2. Probably is – with all the rabble travelling with him, scuffing up the dirt and gravel.

1. And the noise.

2. Their cries of *Hosanna* and *Hosanna in the Highest* just keep on going – on and on.

1. He stops at the foot of the Mount of Olives, just near Bethphage and Bethany.

2. He calls to a couple of his disciples.

1. He puts his arm around one of them and whispers something into his ear.

2. The disciples go off, heading to a nearby village.

1. The crowd continues their racket:

2. *Hosanna! Hosanna!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*

<Pause>

1. Jesus continues walking.

2. He seems to be distracted.

1. He doesn't talk much with his disciples.

2. He seems almost sombre.

1. Deep in thought.

2. Silently praying.

1. Meditating.

2. *He will be pierced for our transgressions,
he will be crushed for our iniquities.*

<Pause>

1. The two disciples return, bringing with them a young donkey colt.

2. They throw their cloaks on it and help Jesus on to its back.

1. The crowd seems to take this as some sort of sign.

2. The cheers of *Hosanna* are now at fever pitch.

1. Some of the crowd are throwing their cloaks in front of Jesus, as though he is their king.

2. The colt remains calm, even though it has never been ridden before.

1. Again, Jesus seems almost sombre.
<Slight Pause>

2. Deep in thought. <Slight Pause>

1. Silently praying. <Slight Pause>

2. Meditating. <Slight Pause>

1. *By his wounds they will be healed.*

<Pause>

2. See Jesus astride the colt

1. Riding to Jerusalem

2. Entering to a king's acclaim

<The speakers leave and place a Gum branch in front of the cross;

The children return, shouting Hosanna!>