

Palm Sunday
Matthew 21:1-11
Next Steps

OPENING PRAYER:

O God, whose dearly beloved Son was greeted by the crowd on Olivet with hallelujahs, but who in that same week was mocked as he went lonely to the Cross, forbid that our welcome to him should be in words alone. Help us, we beg you, to keep the road open for him into our hearts; and let him find there not another crucifixion, but love and loyalty in which his kingdom may be established evermore. Amen.
-Walter Russell Bowie (1882-1969)

BREAKING THE ICE:

- What did you agree or disagree with in the sermon this week?
- Was there something new that you learned this week?
- We all know what it's like to feel powerful - and powerless. When you think of powerful people, who comes to mind? And do you think those people use their power to positively or negatively impact the world?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

Read Matthew 21:1-11.

Notice in verse 1 that Jesus gave 2 disciples the task of recruiting the donkey and colt.

- Why do you suppose he sent two people?
- How are power dynamics affected when two people must share a task?

Notice that there is both a donkey and a colt.

- Why do you think Jesus asked for both?
- Thinking through the lens of power, what do you think those animals represent?

In verse 3, Jesus appears to describe himself as "master." That's not a word we often use in our culture.

- How does describing Jesus as your *master* make you feel?

This story is one of the more well known stories of scripture. The image of Jesus riding on a donkey is portrayed often.

- Share about how you see this image in your mind. Has it become a caricature or cartoon-like?
- Does it seem like a nice, pastoral idea, but do you find yourself thinking - this is an interesting story, but what does it actually have to do with real life - with my life?
- Then, ask each other the real question - what *does* this image of humility have to do with my real life and the way that power is set up and lived out in our real world today?

NEXT STEPS:

- How does your own power, or the power of others, impact how you live your daily life? How would specific aspects of our daily life change, if we exemplified the kind of humility that Jesus embodied?
- How would systems in our world change, if we advocated on a community, national and global level for the kind of power and kingdom that Jesus showed us?

4 EASY QUESTIONS FOR PARENTAL DISCUSSIONS WITH KIDS:

- What's your favorite superhero? What is their superpower? Why do you think that power is the best?
- What made Jesus powerful?
- How are Jesus' powers different from the power of your favorite superhero?
- What does it look like for you to share the kind of power Jesus had?

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

And so it begins, we walk through this week
From palms now to passion, it's Jesus we seek.
Each moment we walk through these days now with Jesus,
Is time to see people, the way Jesus ... sees us.

To watch for the ones, who need hope, who need kindness.
Seeking the light, not the darkness that blinds us.
As you walk through these days, may the love you now know
Be spread to each person you meet on the go.

And may God who now blesses and keeps you in love
Whose face shines upon you with grace from above
Who looks on you with such joy and such favor,
This God, three in One gives you peace — life to savor. Amen!