

Telling the Easter Story.

Early Years simple retelling of Easter story

This is a story from the Bible. The Bible is a special book for Christians. It tells them about God, who they believe is real. And it tells them about Jesus. Let's pretend this is Jesus. The Bible says he was really special. He had done all sorts of amazing things. He had made people better just by touching them. Once he had stopped a storm just by speaking. He had told great stories to help everyone understand how much God loved them. Most people loved Jesus. They thought he was great.

But some people didn't. They were jealous of him. And they did something very sad. They nailed Jesus to a cross, that meant he died. His friends wouldn't ever get to see him again. How do you think his friends felt?

They put Jesus in a tomb, a big cave. They rolled a big stone over the entrance. Two soldiers guarded it. 3 days later Jesus' friends went to say goodbye to him (How do you think they were feeling?). But when they got to the cave they were really surprised. The stone was rolled away, the soldiers had fallen over and there was an angel. But the biggest surprise of all was that Jesus wasn't in the tomb, in the cave. It was empty.

The angel said "Jesus isn't here, he is alive again. Go and tell his friends"

The friends ran, and as they ran they met someone. It was Jesus! He was alive! He had been dead but now he had really come alive again. Wow! How do you think they felt now?

Telling the story of Psalm Sunday

I don't know if you know much about Jesus, but Christians believe he was someone really special. They believe he was the Son of God. That God was his dad. The Bible says he did some amazing things when he had been living on earth. Like changing water into wine, making enough food to feed 5000 people from just 5 loaves of bread and two fish, making a storm stop just by speaking. And he had been telling everyone great stories, all about how much God loved them. Most people thought he was great.

One day Jesus and his friends (we call them the Disciples) were going into the big city of

Jerusalem. (Invite one child to be Jesus, and a few others his disciples.)

As they got near, Jesus spoke to a couple of his disciples and said “Go to the village, take the donkey you see. If anyone says “what are you doing?”, tell them it's for the Lord.” (If “Jesus” is a good reader, ask them to read this)

Jesus' friends were used to him doing odd things, so they went to the village and found the donkey. They told it's owner “it's for the Lord” and brought it back to Jesus. (Find a volunteer (with waterproofs on if outside! Or willing to give a piggy back)

They put their coats over the donkey's back and Jesus sat on it. (act this out!)

As they got into Jerusalem there were loads and loads of people. They were so excited to see Jesus. (Arrange class into two, as if on either side of a road) They put their coats down on the road (tarps underneath if wet and muddy!) just like a red carpet. And got palm leaves (everyone find a leaf) to wave like flags. As he came closer the crowds wave their leaves and started to shout “Hooray for the King, Here is the one to save us”.

They all followed him into the city still waving and shouting. The whole city came out to see.

Garden of Gethsemane, arrest, trial and crucifixion.

(Get kids to sit down to listen. Use pictures/props to illustrate story as you tell it?)

A week later everything had changed. The leaders were jealous of how much everyone liked Jesus. They wanted Jesus dead. They had paid one of his own friends, Judas, to betray him. Judas was going to lead the soldiers to Jesus.

Jesus knew all this. He went to a garden to pray. He wanted peace and quiet to talk to his dad. He took his friends and told them I am so so sad at what's going to happen. Stay here and keep watch with me.

Jesus moved away and bowed down to the ground and prayed. “Father, if it's possible please stop this happening.”

He went back to his friends. But they were sleeping. “Wake up, keep watch and pray.”

He left them again and prayed "If this has to happen for your plan, I'll do it"

He found his friends still sleeping. He prayed again, and for a third time when he came back his friends were still sleeping. He woke them up saying "They've come to get me". Judas arrived with the soldiers. Jesus was arrested and taken to the Leading Priests (the people in charge of the temple). They knew he had done nothing wrong but they found people to lie about him. Then they said "are you the Son of God?". Jesus said "yes." They were so angry. They said he was guilty and took him to Pilate to sentence him.

Pilate, the Roman Governor. He heard everything they had to say and knew he was innocent. But the leading priests got the crowd to shout at Pilate and eventually he said "ok, if you say so, take Jesus away to be killed".

The soldiers beat Jesus, and made him carry his cross. Then they nailed him to the cross. It must have been horrible. So painful. Jesus died.

They took his body to a tomb, rolled a great stone in front of it and left two soldiers guarding it.

BREAK UP THE STORY - AFTER EACH "SECTION" IDENTIFY TOGETHER WHO THE CHARACTERS ARE AND HOW THEY'RE FEELING.

OR

BREAKING UP THE STORY WITH CHALLENGES

After Palm Sunday - can they create a crown out of leaves? Or can they write "Hooray for the King" using natural objects. Inside, 1 minute to design a tiny flag.

After Garden of Gethsemane - can you find objects starting with the letters GARDEN?

After Crucifixion - who can find the biggest "cross"

After Resurrection - who can find the roundest stone? Who can find the roundest object in the classroom?

Tell the story using objects as visual aids

Leaf - Palm Sunday

Plant - Garden of Gethsemane

Sword - soldiers coming to arrest Jesus

“LIES” - appearing before religious leaders, they tried to get the crowd to lie about Jesus. They had no actual evidence he had done anything wrong.

“?” Pilate gave the crowd a choice, free Barrabas or Jesus. The crowd chose Jesus.

Bowl of water and towel - Pilate when agreeing to crucify Jesus said “this man is innocent, it's your fault he is going to die”.

Thorny branch and stick - the soldiers beat Jesus and put a crown of thorns on his head.

Nails - they nailed him to the cross

Dice - they gambled for his clothes. They mocked him saying “if you're really the Son of God get down from the cross”.

black paper - it went dark for 3 hours in the middle of the day. Jesus cried out and died.

Ripped cloth - the curtain in the temple ripped from top to bottom.

White cloth - Jesus' body wrapped in cloth

Stone - rolled over the tomb

Spices - women came to the tomb

halo - found stone rolled away and angel telling them “Jesus is alive”.