

WHY CELEBRATE PALM SUNDAY!

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week, a solemn week focusing on the final days of Jesus' life. Holy Week culminates on Easter Sunday. On Palm Sunday, Christian worshipers celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into the city of Jerusalem, an event that took place the week before the Lord's death and resurrection. . Palm Sunday is often referred to as Passion Sunday, marking the beginning of Holy Week, which concludes on Easter Sunday. The biblical account of Palm Sunday can be found in all four Gospels: Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; and John 12:12-19.

Palm Sunday History - The date of the first observance of Palm Sunday is uncertain. A detailed description of a palm processional celebration was recorded as early as the 4th century in Jerusalem. The ceremony was not introduced into the West until much later in the 9th century. However it is known that Jesus traveled to Jerusalem knowing that this journey would end in his sacrificial death on the cross for the sins of all mankind. Before he entered the city, he told his disciples to *"Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it."* (Luke 19:29-31) The men brought the colt to Jesus and placed their cloaks on its back. As Jesus sat on the young donkey, he slowly made his humble entrance into Jerusalem. The people greeted Jesus enthusiastically, waving palm branches and covering his path with palm branches shouting, *"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"* (Matthew 21:9, NIV) The shouts of "Hosanna" meant "save now," and the palm branches symbolized goodness and victory. On this inaugural Palm Sunday, the celebration quickly spread throughout the whole city. People even threw down their cloaks on the path where Jesus rode as an act of homage and submission. Immediately following this great time of celebration in the ministry of Jesus Christ, he began his journey to the cross.

How Is Palm Sunday Celebrated Today? – Palm Sunday, or Passion Sunday as it is referred to in some Christian churches, is the Sunday before Easter. Worshipers commemorate Jesus Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. On this day, Christians also remember Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, praise God for the gift of salvation, and look expectantly to the Lord's second coming. Many churches distribute palm branches to the congregation on Palm Sunday for the customary observances. These observances include a reading of the account of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, the carrying and waving of palm branches in processional, the blessing of palms and the singing of traditional hymns. Palm Sunday is both joyous and yet sad as Christ sacrificed his life for each of us.

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