

Dear Teacher

Palm Sunday, 2nd April, marks the beginning of Holy Week, that special time within the Church year leading up to Easter. During Holy Week, all Year 4 children that are preparing to receive the Sacrament will participate in two Masses, on Palm Sunday and Holy Thursday Night. Below is an outline of what the children will be taking part in.

* On Palm Sunday, they will participate in a procession at the beginning of Mass reminding us all of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The children will carry palms and form a procession up the main aisle along with the priest to the front of the church.
* On Holy Thursday (6th April) children from each school will have their feet washed by the priest. This re-enactment is a vivid reminder of Jesus’ command to love one another as he loved us by washing the feet of the disciples during the Last Supper.
* Also on Holy Thursday night Mass all Year 4 children will be invited to the front of the Church as Mass concludes for the clearing of the Altar and again they form a procession, along with priest, and proceed to the back of the Church to the Altar of Repose (Crying Chapel), where they shall spend a few moments in quiet Adoration in front of the Holy Eucharist. This procession and quiet prayer reminds us of Jesus’ time in the Garden of Gethsemane where he asked his disciples to stay awake and pray with him.

We have drafted a letter to parents, which we hope you can distribute to all Year 4 pupils, week commencing 27th March, explaining what will be taking place during Palm Sunday and Holy Thursday Mass.

We would appreciate it also if you could incorporate some of the following points into your planned religious lessons about Holy Week with your class to help them prepare for their participation in these services.

 **Palm Sunday**

* Procession at the beginning of Palm Sunday Mass, explain how they will be participating in this re-enactment and the significance of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
* Remind the children to be in the church early and be seated by 11:45am and await directions. They will be called to the back of the church before Mass begins to take part in the procession.
* From the Chapel of Repose (Crying chapel) at the rear of Christ the King Church, the children will walk up the main aisle, carrying Palm branches, to the Altar along with the priest and Altar Servers. The Parents Group Representatives will be there to help guide the children.

**Holy Thursday**

* Washing of the Feet - Explain the meaning of the re-enactment with the children especially those chosen to participate in the washing of the feet. For the children to fully understand what Jesus did when he washed the feet of the disciples, the children may need to first understand the culture in which he lived. People walked on dusty roads, sometimes in bare feet. The custom was to have their feet washed, usually by a servant, before they sat down to eat. The disciples didn’t have servants, so they usually took it in turns to wash each other’s feet. On this occasion Jesus took up a bowl and towel and began to wash the feet of the disciples. By washing their feet Jesus was showing the disciples and all of us how Christians were meant to treat each other. This re-enactment is a reminder of Jesus asking us to love one another as he loved us by washing the feet of the disciples during the Last Supper.
* Procession at the end of Mass to Altar of Repose and Adoration (Crying Room/ Chapel of Repose) – Explain to the children how this reminds us of Jesus’ time in the Garden of Gethsemane where he asked his disciples to stay awake and pray with him.
* Please highlight the importance of being respectful during these processions and quiet time of prayer.
* Parents can rejoin the children here in the Chapel of Repose (Crying Chapel) at the end of Mass.

A Do This in Memory parent representative will let you know which Year 4 child will be participating in the washing of the feet on Holy Thursday night. If they can come to the Church 15 – 20 minutes before the Mass begins, a member of the Do This in Memory Parents Group or Priest will meet with them to do a practice run beforehand.

We hope that by having this preparation in class and with encouragement at home the children will be more aware of why they are taking part in each of the processions and re-enactments. Your help and support of the Do This in Memory activities is greatly appreciated and again we would like to thank you for your continued assistance with the programme.

Kindest regards

Do This in Memory Team 2022 - 2023