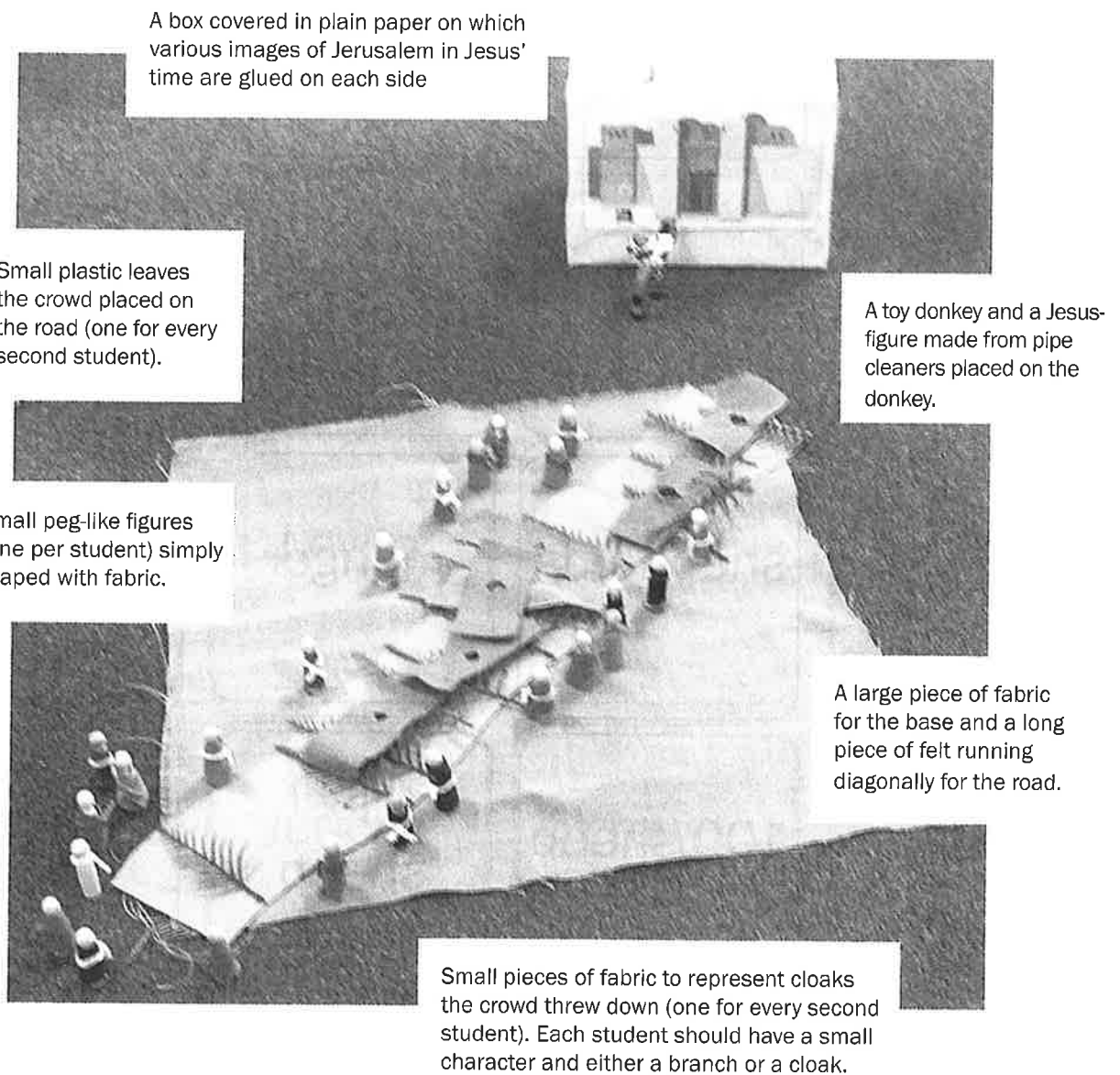


Holy Week: Palm Sunday Presentation Preparation

An ideal place to begin an exploration of the Easter story with early years students is the scripture of Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. This incident is found in all four gospels: Mark 11:1-11; Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; and, John 12:12-19. Most details in all four are quite similar and the following account is an adaptation of them. Prepare the following props to accompany the telling of the story:



Place all of these props (except the large Jerusalem cube) into a gift box.

Story Script: Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

Take out the hessian and in a deliberate and exaggerated manner spread it out. Place the large cube representing Jerusalem on one edge of the hessian.

→ The time for the Passover festival had arrived and people from all over Palestine were arriving in Jerusalem. They had come to celebrate this most important religious festival.

← *Take out the donkey and place over closer to the large cube.*

Then take out the long piece of felt for the road and place it diagonally across the hessian.

→ The road into Jerusalem through the Mount of Olives was busy.

Jesus and his friends, the disciples, had arrived.

← *Take out the figure of Jesus and ask several students to bring out their figures and place around Jesus.*

Ask two of the disciple students to go over and collect the colt and bring it back to Jesus. You place the Jesus figure onto the colt. (You could use blutac to help secure him on.)

→ Jesus asked two of them to go into the village of Bethany and collect a young colt. So of the two disciples went and collected the colt and brought it back to Jesus and his friends. They then put cloaks on the colt and Jesus sat on it.

Soon other people gathered along the road to see what was happening. There were women from the markets, the market sellers, shepherds, stone masons, tanners, some Priests; many, many people came to welcome all the visitors into Jerusalem.

← *Ask other students (a few at a time) to bring out their characters and carefully stand them along the sides of the road.*

Ask those with the branches to bring them out and carefully put onto the road.

→ They were excited and some began placing branches down onto the road as a sign of welcome for Jesus.

Others then took their cloaks and threw them onto the road as well. This was a sign of great respect to Jesus.

← *Ask those with the cloaks to bring them out and carefully place onto the road.*

Then everyone began to shout, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

← *Repeat this phrase and ask students to repeat each line after you.*

Then Jesus and his disciples entered Jerusalem.

Telling the Story: Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

Gather students into a circle and have the cube and the gift box in front of you. Pick up the large cube with images of Jerusalem and introduce the story by saying that today's Bible story is set in Jerusalem which is a big city in Israel. It has always been an important city, and in Jesus' time it was the centre of the Jewish religion. Each year many people would come from all over Palestine for the Passover and this is why Jesus had come to Jerusalem with his friends, the disciples.

Point to the images you have glued onto each face of the cube ensuring that students are able to glean tangible understandings of this city. Helpful images would include an overview of the city in these times showing the wall that was all around it, an image of the Temple as it was, one of the gates that led through the wall, some images of typical houses during this time, and so on.

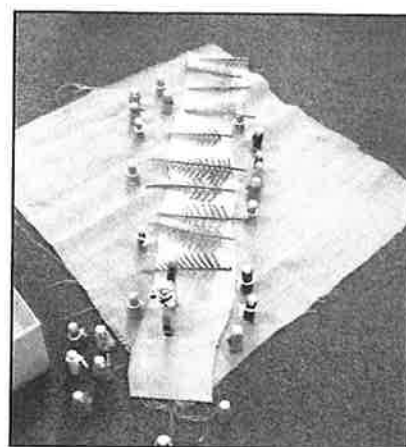
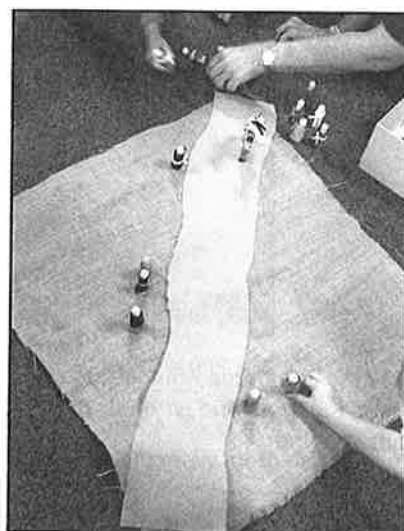
Then open your gift box. Explain that the students are going to help you tell the story today as they will build it as you go through each part. Ask if they agree to do this. Then begin by taking out the small figures representing the crowd. Hand these out to the students. Explain that some would be shepherds, others might be market sellers, others would be farmers, others would be women who were on their way to the markets, and so on.

Then take out the branches and explain that people often used these to wave during important festivals. Sometimes people would lay them on the path or road so that the person travelling on the road would be welcomed. This was often done for important people such as kings. Give these to every second student.

Next take out the small pieces of fabric and explain that they are cloaks. Explain that cloaks were very important for people living in these times as it protected them from the burning hot sun and also from the cold days during winter. If they had to sleep outside at night it also served as a blanket. Hand these out to every second student.

Now we are ready to begin the story. Listen carefully for your cue so that you are ready to add your character to the story when I say and then when to bring your branch or cloak to the story. Begin telling your story.

At the end of the story, teach students the Palm Sunday Rap and have them say it with you using the actions.



Palm Sunday Beat

1. Ask students to pretend to be on a small donkey and to trot on the spot as they say the words, "Trot, trot, trot"

Jesus rode a donkey,
Trot! Trot! Trot!
Into Jerusalem,
Trot! Trot! Trot!

3. Then, have students bend down as if laying a cloak on the road.

People waved their branches
Swish! Swish! Swish!
Some even laid their cloaks
Swish! Swish! Swish!

2. Ask students to place their arms high above their heads and wave them as if waving branches.

5. ... and wave their arms above the heads as they sing: "Hosanna! Hosanna! Welcome to our King"

Ev'ryone began to sing,
Ho-san-na! Ho-san-na!
Welcome to our King!
Ev'ryone began to sing,
Ho-san-na! Ho-san-na!
Welcome to our King!

4. Students to cup their hands around their mouth...

