

# THROUGH THE YEAR WITH THE CHURCH



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**PASSIONTIDE**

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Illustrated by Hilary Aris.

*A colouring book for children.*

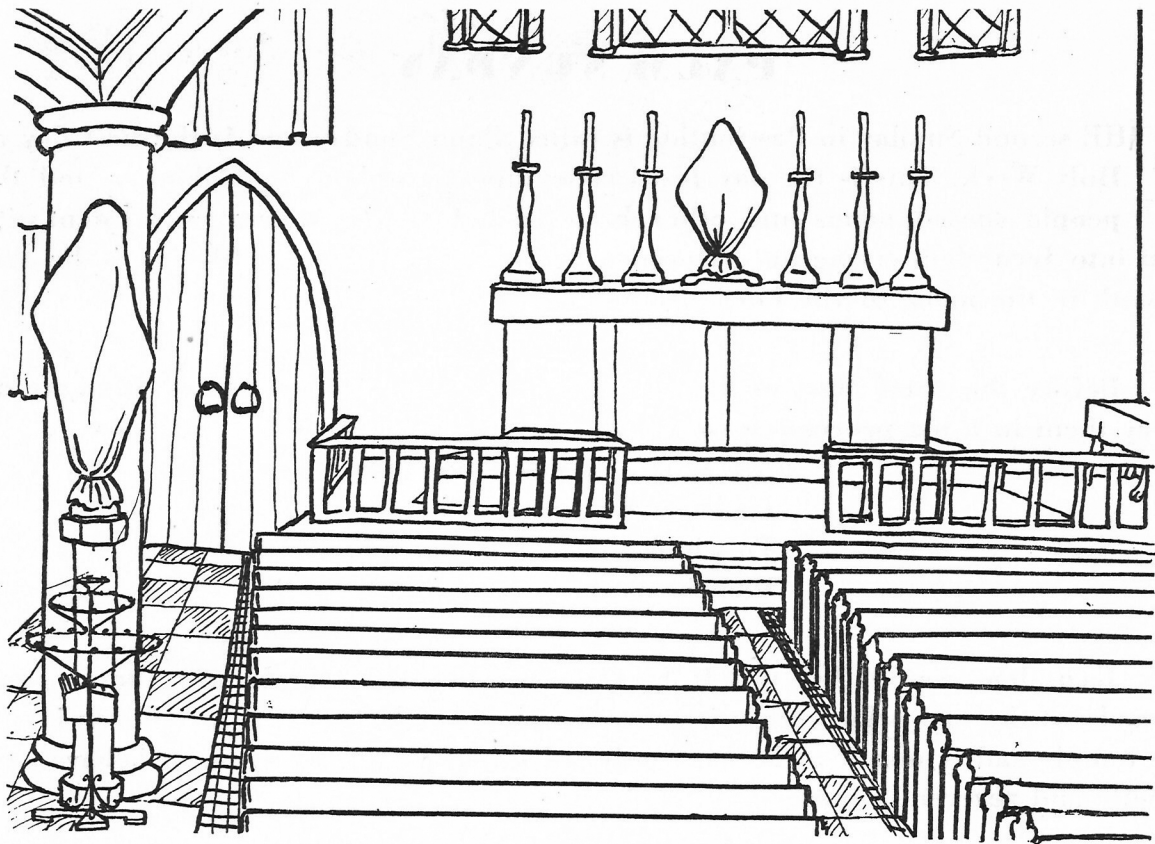
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## **PASSIONTIDE**

**T**HE last two weeks in Lent are called Passiontide. The word "Passion" means "suffering", and we think of how Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us.

It is a very sad time, and so in church we cover up all the crucifixes, statues and pictures with purple veils. The crucifixes stay covered up until Good Friday, the statues and pictures until Holy Saturday. We can still see the Stations of the Cross, though, because it is specially during Passiontide that we should be using them.

This is the time to make quite sure we are not forgetting any of our Lent rules. If we have been getting a bit lazy about them we should make a fresh start now.





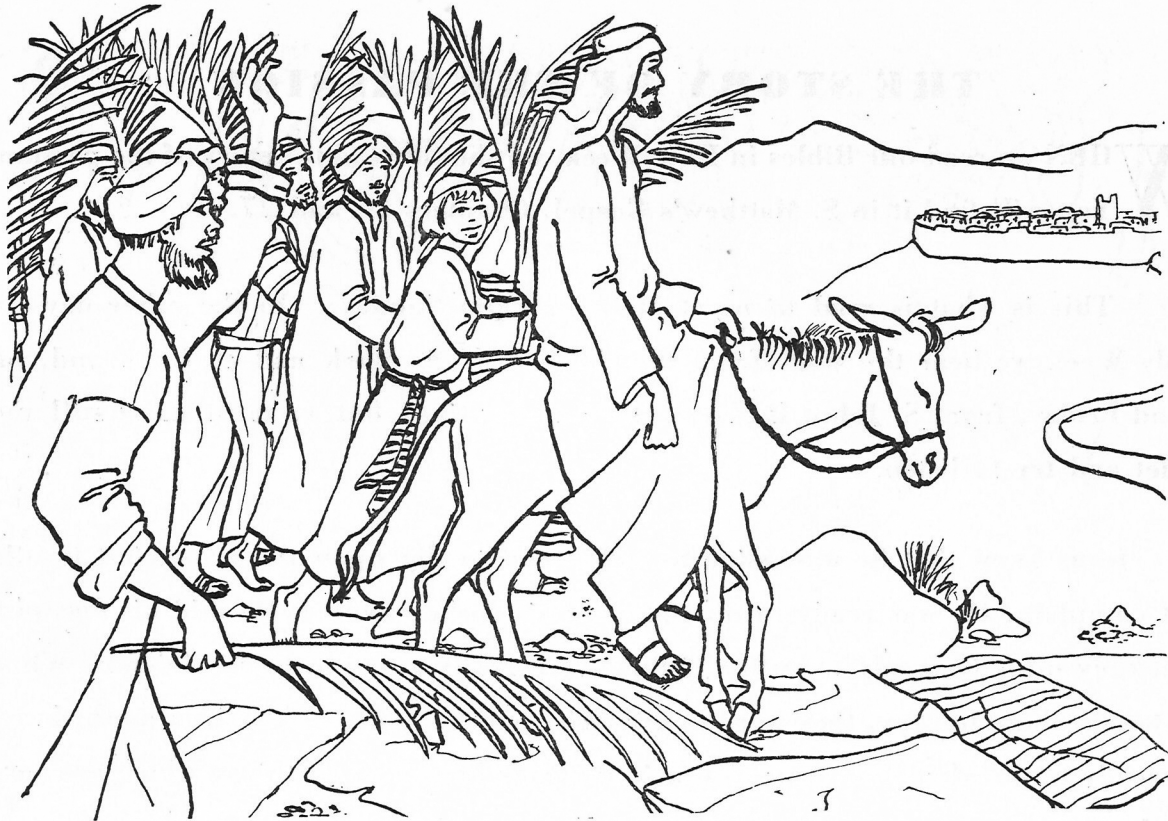
## **PALM SUNDAY**

**T**HE second Sunday in Passiontide is called Palm Sunday and is the first day of Holy Week. This is the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and the people spread palms and other branches before him. A great crowd went with him into Jerusalem crying out "Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!"

Before the chief Mass on Palm Sunday the priest blesses palms. Then we all carry them in a big procession round the church. We usually sing the hymn

"All glory, laud and honour  
To Thee, Redeemer, King,  
To whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring."

Jerusalem was called the Holy City, because the temple was there. Jesus turned out the men who were using the Temple to make money. Our church is like the temple and is meant to be used only to worship God. So we must behave very quietly and reverently there.



## **THE STORY OF THE PASSION**

**W**HEN we read our Bibles in Holy Week, we should read the story of the passion. You will find it in S. Matthew's Gospel, Chapters 26 and 27.

This is what is read to us at Mass on Palm Sunday. On the other days in Holy Week we hear the story from the Gospels of S. Mark and S. Luke and, on Good Friday, from S. John. It takes rather a long time, but we must stand still and quiet and try to listen.

Jesus knew that he was going to suffer and to die upon the cross, but he did not complain. He was ready to do whatever his Father wanted. He told his disciples that they must be ready to suffer if they were really going to be his friends. When he taught them to pray, they were to say "Thy will be done." Christians must always be ready to do what God wants, even if it means having to do things which are very hard.



## **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

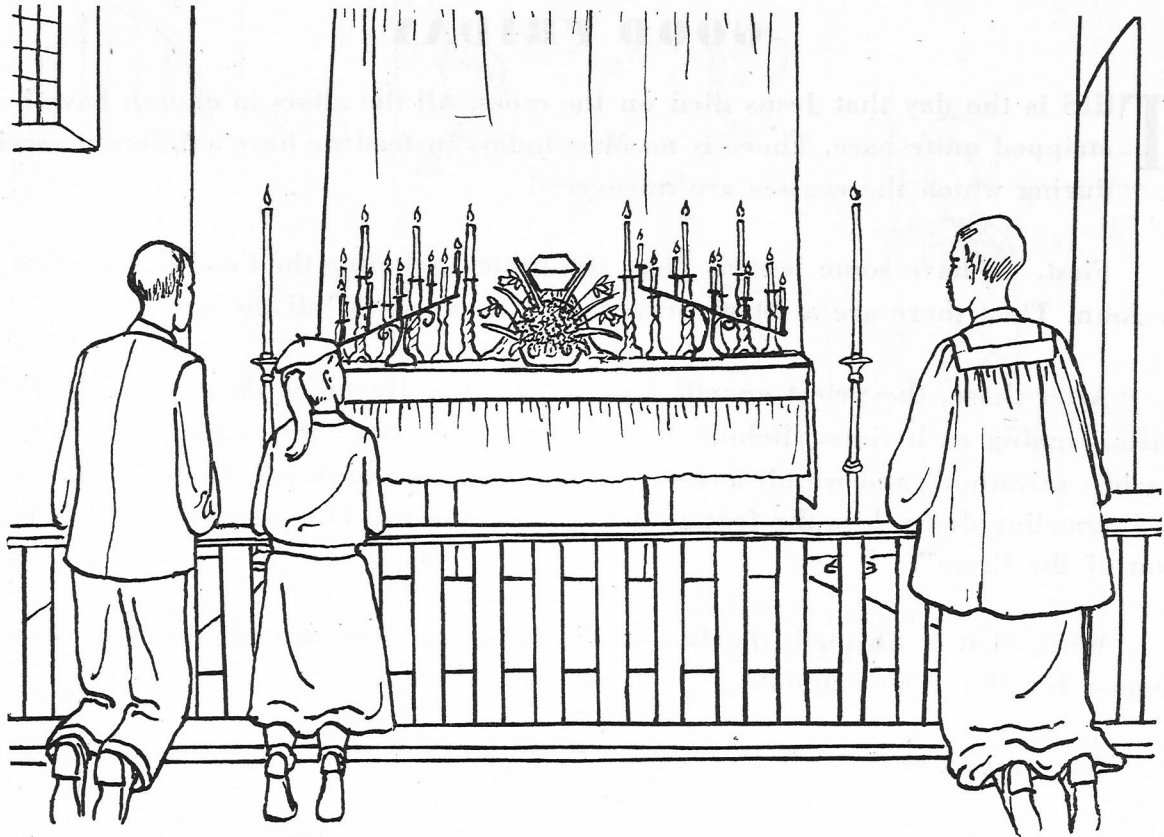
**T**HE Thursday in Holy Week is the day of the Last Supper when Jesus gave us the Blessed Sacrament. The bread which he blessed he said was his Body and wine was his Blood, and he told his disciples "Do this in remembrance of me." When we come to Mass we are doing just what Jesus said.

Also at the Last Supper, Jesus washed his disciples' feet to show them how much he loved them and he gave them a commandment that they were to love each other just as much. The word "Maundy" comes from the Latin word "mandatum", which means commandment. In some churches the priest washes the feet of twelve men just like Jesus did.

After the supper, Jesus went out into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. His disciples should have prayed with him, but they were so tired that they went to sleep.

After Mass, the Blessed Sacrament is carried to a special place called the Place of Repose. It stays there until the next day with a lot of candles burning, and people keep watch. This is to remind us of the Garden of Gethsemane.

All the church bells have to be silent now and are not rung again until Holy Saturday.





## **GOOD FRIDAY**

**T**HIS is the day that Jesus died on the cross. All the altars in church have been stripped quite bare. There is no Mass today. Instead we have a different service during which the crosses are uncovered.

First, we have some lessons from the Bible, including the Passion according to S. John. Then there are a lot of prayers for the needs of all the world.

After these, the priest unveils a large crucifix. He takes the veil off in three parts, singing each time "Behold the wood of the cross, on which was hung the world's salvation" and we all answer "O come let us worship." Then we all go up and, kneeling down, kiss the feet of the figure of Jesus. This is called the "Veneration of the Cross".

When that is finished, the Blessed Sacrament is carried back from the Place of Repose for Holy Communion.

We must keep Good Friday very quietly and try to think of Jesus on the cross.



## HOLY SATURDAY

**N**OW we have come to Easter Eve, and there are all sorts of things to be done in church ready for the long service which ends up with the first Mass of Easter.

Outside the church a fire is lit, and from this the priest lights a great big candle. It is called the Paschal Candle (paschal is another word for Easter) and stuck into this are five grains of incense in the shape of a cross. The candle is to remind us of the risen body of Jesus and it will stand up near the altar until Ascension Day.

The priest also blesses water which is put into the font and the people renew the promises made at their Baptism.

Then comes the first Mass of Easter and at the "Gloria" the bells ring again because Jesus has risen from the dead. Everyone is very happy and we are able to sing "Alleluia", a joyful word which is not used at all the whole of Lent.

