



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

For Children Ages 7-12 Years

This activity can be used for a pre-Sunday children's Easter event. It works well with high energy kids with less church experience. There are four stations that use hands-on activities to explain Holy Week in an interactive way. It is best used with small groups of 4-12 children for an in-person activity, and can be used outdoors with minimal adjustments.

Keychains can be made to remind the children about each station. Use the template on page 3, and cut the shapes out of different coloured foam sheets. Punch a hole where directed. Attach the palm leaf shape to a keyring, and give at the first station, the cup at the second, the gavel at the third and the cross at the fourth. If you're worried that they'll lose them, give them to the children at the end to take home, and briefly revisit each station as you give them each shape.



Station 1: Entry into Jerusalem – Luke 19:28-40

You will need: Paper, pens, scissors.

Before the activities, write each letter of the Station 2 location on the back of a piece of paper (in the centre of the page); e.g. K-I-T-C-H-E-N.

- Choose a leader to wait outside. Tell the kids to think of their favourite sporting hero/ movie star. Encourage them to think how they would act if that movie star/sportsperson came through the door. Then open the door and let them act it out when the leader enters. Offer a prize for the most creative/ enthusiastic etc.
- Have a palm leaf design competition. Give each child a piece of paper (with a letter on the back) and have them make their own palm leaf. While they're making their leaf, explain that Jesus coming to Jerusalem was as if their hero/celebrity had come to visit them here. The people back then waved palm branches instead of banners etc. Don't let them take too much time (5 mins).
- When they're done, point out something good in everyone's leaf and have them turn over their leaves and rearrange the letters to guess the next location.



Station 2: The Last Supper – Luke 22:7-20

You will need: Loaf of fresh, crusty bread (un-sliced), grape juice, table/tablecloth, cutlery, plates, cups, paper, and pen.

Before the activities, make a cut on the underside of the bread, and put a piece of paper with the Station 3 location on it inside the loaf. The children shouldn't be able to see how the paper got inside the bread.

- At Station 2, have all the plates etc. ready, and have the kids set the table. (We left the legs folded down, so that the table was on the floor – you can use a tablecloth instead if desired)
- Have a leader bring in the loaf of bread, and jugs of juice. Explain that there is a message in the bread. Pour the juice and cut the bread, and give some to each child. While they're eating explain that Jesus ate this last meal with his friends, and that one of his friends betrayed him.
- One of the kids will have the paper in their bread – ask them to read out the location of Station 3.



Station 3: An Unfair Trial – Luke 22:66 – 23:25

You will need: A soccer ball

- Divide the kids into two teams. These should be clearly unfair teams (if you have 10 kids, have one team of 7 and one of three – and have more of the better players on the larger team. If the smaller team wins, you lose the point of this activity!)
- Play a game of soccer (5-7 mins.). Then, ask the kids about the fairness of the game – Was this game fair? Why not? Etc.
- Explain that Jesus was arrested, and put on an unfair trial. It was unfair just like this soccer game, but Jesus didn't complain (unlike the kids!), or talk back to the people accusing him. The judge at the trial decided to kill Jesus by nailing him to a cross.



Station 4: Crucifixion – Luke 23:26-43

You will need: A decent sized cross somewhere in the room.

- Play O-U-T (Last person to touch something green (for instance) gets an "O"! - second time they're last they get a "U"; third time they're last they're O-U-T out!). End with "Last person to get to the cross gets an "O"!"
OR
Hide small crosses around the room. Have the children look around for them, and when they've found one go and sit at the cross.
OR
If they're sufficiently worn out from the soccer, just have them sit at the cross.
- Explain that being crucified was a nasty and humiliating way to die – have they ever heard the word "excruciating"? That word comes from being crucified: EX- (out of) -CRUCI- (the cross) - ATING (makes it an adjective) (From the Latin word excruciatuus meaning to torture, torment or crucify). They were crucified outside the city so everyone coming in could see them. Sometimes it would take days to die. (Give the children details as appropriate to their age etc.) Ask them if they know how Jesus died. Don't talk long, unless the children are asking questions, etc.
- Pray with the kids, thanking Jesus for dying for them.

(Optional): Hide eggs around the room, and have an Easter Egg hunt. Finish the Stations by reminding the kids that Jesus came back to life afterwards.

