

Holy Week

(at home)

Holy Week is one of the most important times of the Christian year. This coloring page packet includes information about Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter, and is designed for use by Christians and by people of other faiths or no faith. Use these pages during Holy Week to share with your family about the purpose and practice of these special days. On the final page, you will find questions designed to spark conversation about each day's themes.

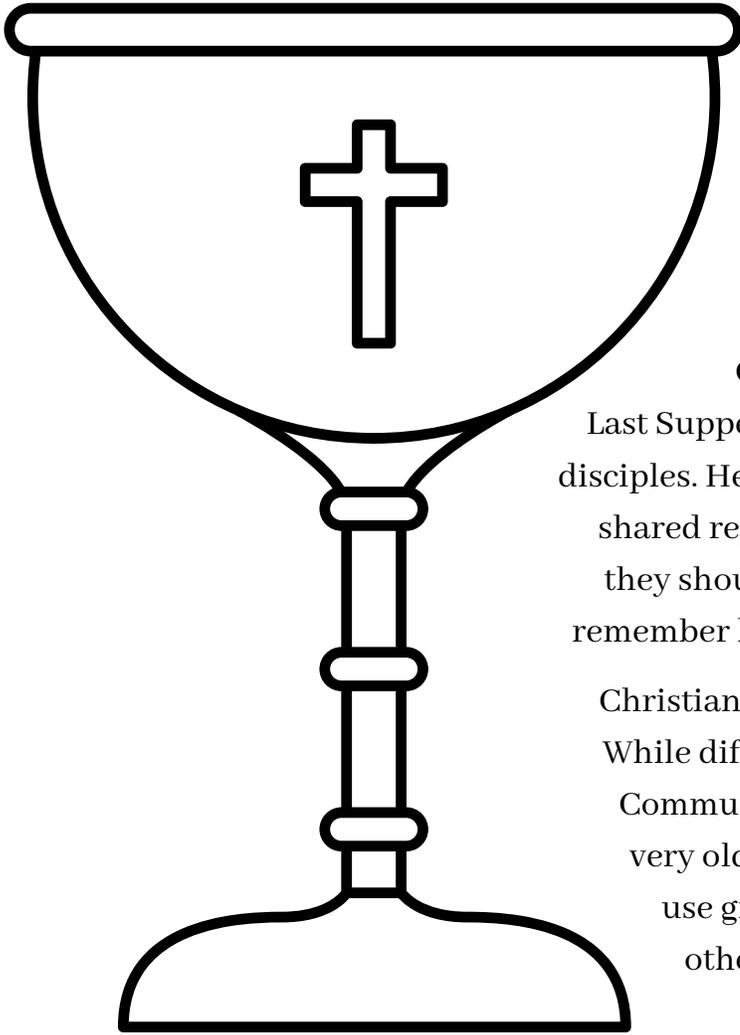
Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter Sunday, and it is the start of Holy Week. On Palm Sunday, Christians retell the story of Jesus returning to Jerusalem from traveling and teaching in other places. When he arrived, he rode in on a donkey, and people waved palm branches and placed their coats on the road in front of him.

These are signs of the great respect and love that these people had for Jesus.



In church on Palm Sunday, Christians today often wave palm branches as the worship procession (the cross, candles, Bible, and worship leaders) comes by. These palm branches may be kept, dried out, and burned to create the ashes for next year's Ash Wednesday services.



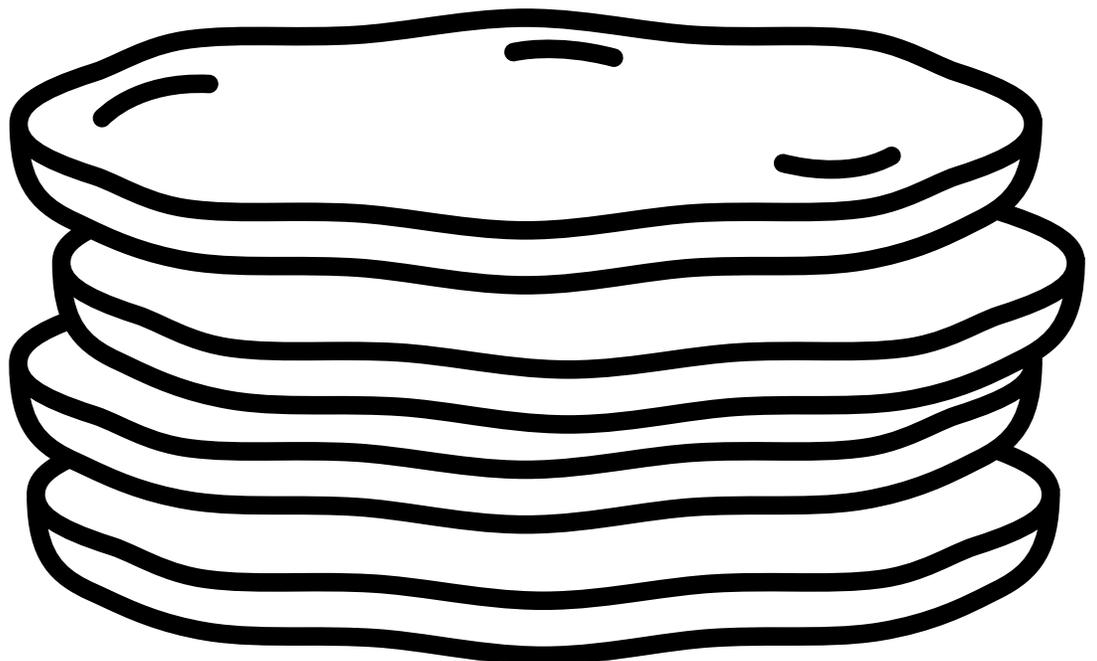
Maundy Thursday

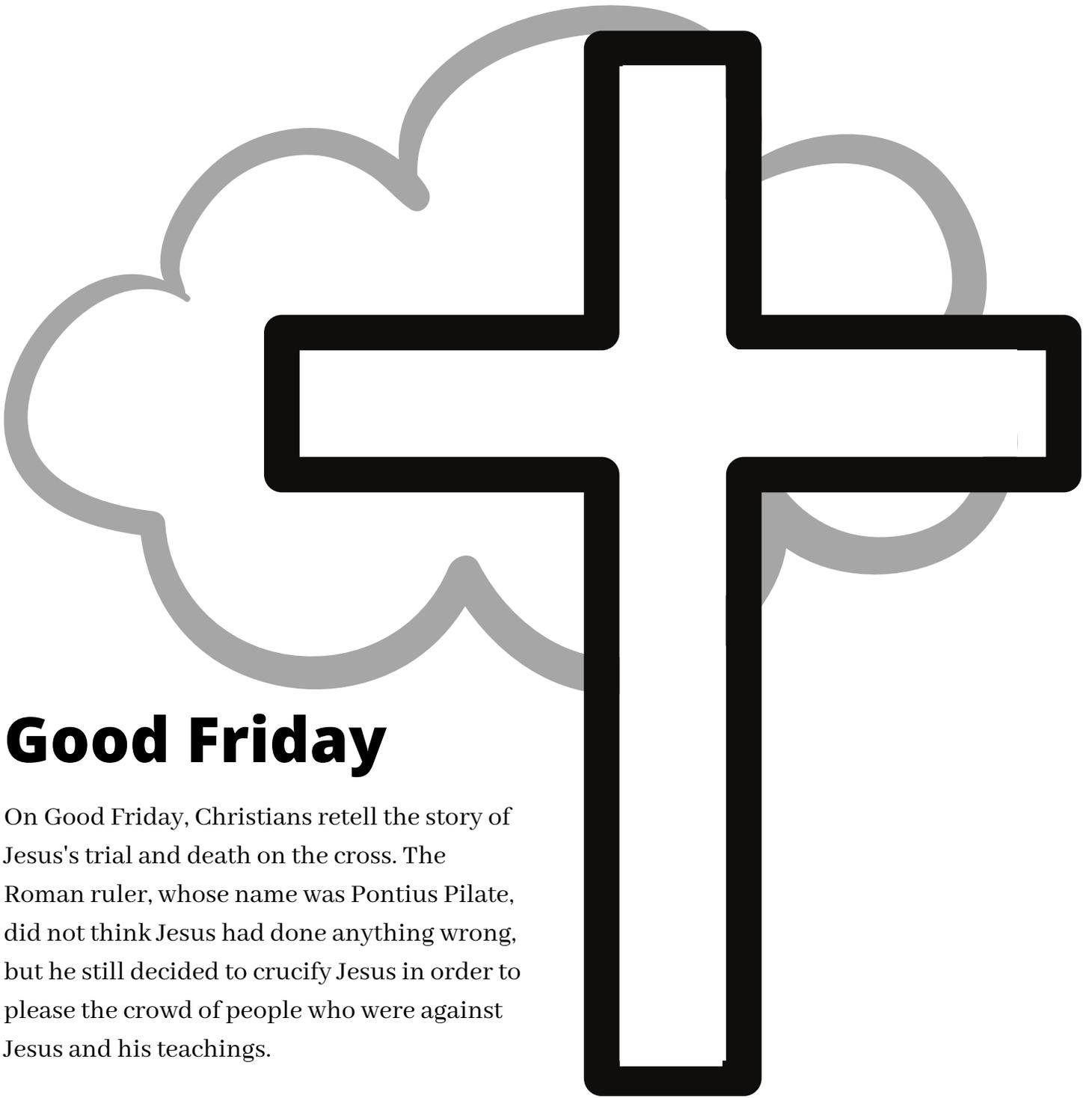
On Maundy Thursday, Christians remember the Last Supper, when Jesus shared the Passover meal with his disciples. He told them that the bread and the wine that they shared represented his body and blood. He told them that they should continue to share bread and wine together to remember him after he was no longer physically with them.

Christians today continue this tradition with Communion. While different churches hold different beliefs about what Communion means, most Christians still take part in this very old tradition. Some churches use wine, while others use grape juice. Some share big chunks of bread, while others share small flat wafers that look like crackers.

In some churches, many people drink from the same large cup, and in other churches, everyone receives their own very small cup to drink from.

Every time Christians take Communion, they remember Jesus's last supper with his disciples. They also remember the Last Supper every year on Maundy Thursday, which is the Thursday before Easter. On Maundy Thursday, Christians retell the story of the Last Supper and share Communion.



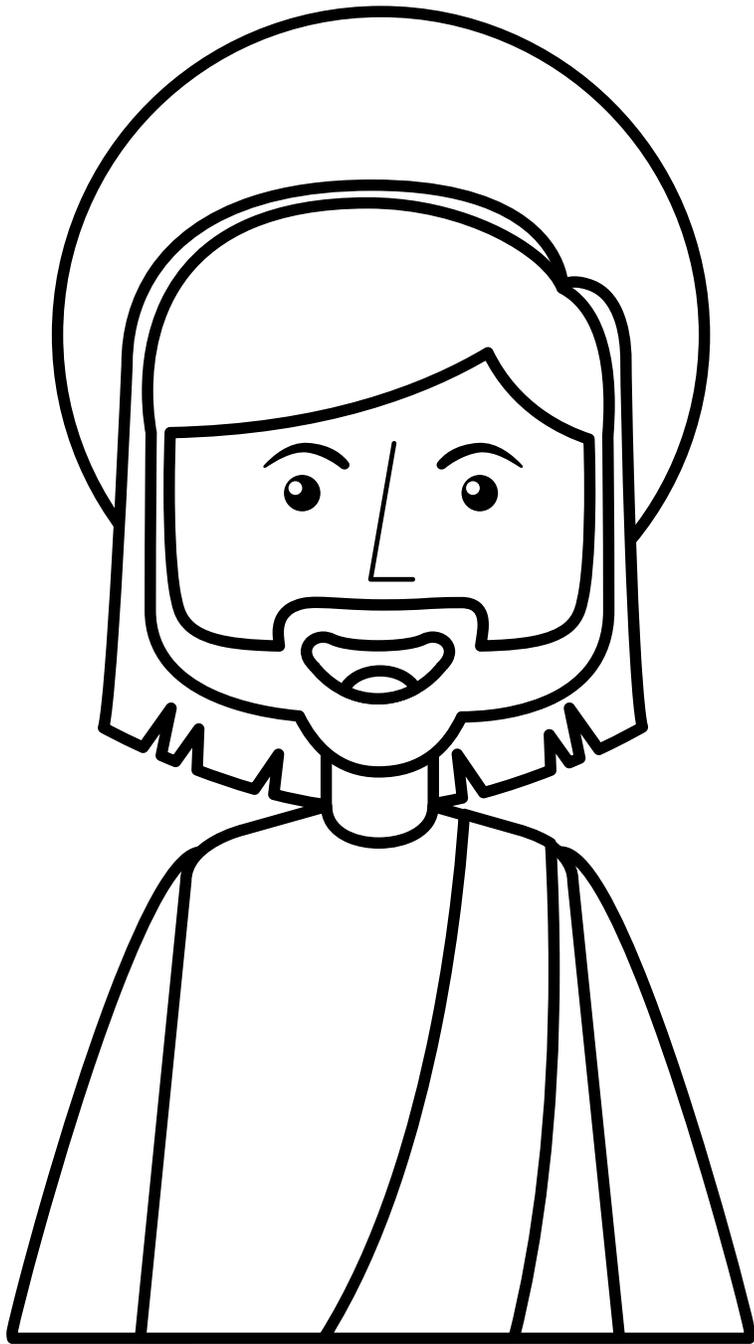


Good Friday

On Good Friday, Christians retell the story of Jesus's trial and death on the cross. The Roman ruler, whose name was Pontius Pilate, did not think Jesus had done anything wrong, but he still decided to crucify Jesus in order to please the crowd of people who were against Jesus and his teachings.

Good Friday is a very serious day in the Church calendar. On Good Friday, Christians remember that when Jesus died, his followers were overwhelmed with sadness and despair. There was no hope left. Good Friday church services reflect this sadness and hopelessness, and remind Christians that there are times when we too feel sad and hopeless, when everything has gone wrong and there is great suffering.

While Easter is a reminder that in the end, the Love of God is greater than all the suffering and death in the world, on Good Friday Christians take time to remember and honor the pain that Christ endured and that we too sometimes endure.



Easter

On Easter Day, Christians celebrate Jesus's resurrection! Christians retell the stories of Jesus appearing to his disciples. He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, who went and told the other disciples. Later, Jesus appeared to some other close friends and followers.

For Christians, Easter is the biggest celebration of the year, because it is the celebration of God's victory over death and despair. This victory reminds Christians that in the end, God's love will win over the scary and hard things that happen, and that God's peace and justice will last forever.

Eggs and other symbols are connected to Easter, because they remind us of new life, which is the promise given to all people by God in the resurrection.

Alleluia!

Holy Week

(at home)

Family Conversation Starters

Palm Sunday

- Waving palm branches was a symbol of the love and respect people had for Jesus. What are symbols of great love and respect in our culture?
- Who do you have a lot of love and respect for? How do you show it?
- Who would you be very excited to see? How would you welcome them?

Maundy Thursday

- We often connect special foods with certain events or feelings. For example, we connect cake to birthdays, which gives cake a special meaning. What foods have special meaning for you?
- What is a special meal you have shared with others? Who did you share it with? What did you eat?
- How do you remember people you love but don't get to see?

Good Friday

- We all go through times when we are very sad or struggle to have hope. Share a time when you have felt this way. What helped you get through?
- How does your family or faith tradition help you deal with difficult times?
- Pilate made a decision he didn't agree with to please other people. Have you ever done something you didn't agree with to please other people? How did it feel? Would you do things differently if you had the chance?

Easter

- Share a time when you felt enormous joy. What made that so special?
- Where have you seen "new life" happen?
- What do you think the world would be like if everyone got to live in God's peace and justice now?