

# Whose Image Do You Bear?

*A Holy Week devotion for families of all ages*

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This week is the most important week of the Christian year. From Palm Sunday to Easter morning, we walk with Jesus through his final days — and we discover something surprising along the way: this week is also about us.

All year we have been asking a big question together: whose image do you bear? A coin bears the face of whoever made it. And the Bible tells us that every person — young and old, big and small — bears the image of God. Holy Week is the week that shows us most clearly what that image looks like.

Use this devotion together as a family at whatever pace works for you — all at once, or a section each day. There's no wrong way to do it. The most important thing is that you do it together.

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## READ IT TOGETHER

### The Story of the Week

Before you begin, choose one person to be the reader — or take turns reading a sentence each. Read this slowly.

#### JOHN 12:12–15 (PALM SUNDAY)

*The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it.*

#### JOHN 13:3–5 (MAUNDY THURSDAY)

*Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet.*

#### JOHN 20:1, 11–16 (EASTER)

*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed. Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. A voice said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher).*

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## THE BIG IDEA

### What Is This Week About?

**Palm Sunday:** Jesus rode into the city on a donkey — not a war horse. The crowd cheered and waved branches. They thought he was coming to be a powerful king. But Jesus had a different kind of power in mind.

**Maundy Thursday:** At dinner with his friends, Jesus did something that shocked everyone. He got down on his knees and washed their feet — the job of a servant. He was showing them (and us) what real love looks like: it gets low. It serves. It doesn't think it's too important to help.

**Good Friday:** Jesus died on a cross. This is the hardest part of the story. But here's what the church has always believed: God didn't stay far away from suffering. God entered it. Love went all the way.

**Easter Sunday:** On the third day, everything changed. Mary went to the tomb and found it empty. Then she heard her name — and she knew. Jesus was alive. The love that went all the way into death came back out the other side.

And that's the whole story. A king on a donkey. A God with a towel. A cross. An empty tomb. And a name spoken in a garden.

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## TALK ABOUT IT

### Questions for Every Age

Pick the questions that fit your family best. Little ones can answer the first ones. Older kids and grown-ups can go deeper.

#### For little ones (ages 4–7)

- If you had to ride into a parade, would you choose a big horse or a little donkey? Why?
- Jesus washed his friends' feet. That's a pretty yucky job! Why do you think he did it?
- When Mary heard Jesus say her name, she knew it was him. Who are the people whose voice you always recognize?

#### For older kids & tweens (ages 8–12)

- The crowd cheered for Jesus on Sunday and turned against him by Friday. Have you ever changed your mind about someone? What happened?
- Washing feet was the most embarrassing, lowly job there was. What's a "foot-washing" kind of act that someone could do for you? For someone else?
- Holy Saturday is the day between Good Friday and Easter — a day when no one knew what was coming. Can you think of a time you had to wait and trust when you couldn't see how things would turn out?

#### For grown-ups & the whole family

- We have been asking all year: whose image do you bear? How does Holy Week answer that question differently than you expected?
  - Which moment of this week's story do you find hardest to sit with — and which one gives you the most hope?
  - What would it look like for your family to "get low" and serve someone this week?
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## DO IT TOGETHER

# A Family Activity: The Image We Bear

This activity works for all ages and takes about 15–20 minutes. You'll need: paper (one sheet per person), something to draw or write with, and a few minutes of quiet.

## Step 1: Trace your hand

Each person traces their hand on a piece of paper. (Little ones may need help.) This is your “image” for today.

## Step 2: Fill it in

Inside the outline of your hand, write or draw your answers to this question: what does the image of God look like in you this week? You might write words (kind, patient, brave, honest), draw pictures, or write a short prayer. Little ones can draw something they love or something they want to give to someone else.

## Step 3: Share

Take turns sharing what you put in your hand-outline. No wrong answers. Then put them somewhere you can see them this week — on the refrigerator, a window, or the dinner table.

## Step 4: A Holy Week practice (optional)

Each day this week, pick one person in your family to do a small “foot-washing” act for — something kind and humble, like making their bed, bringing them a snack, or writing them a note. You don't have to tell anyone. Just do it.

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## PRAY TOGETHER

# A Family Prayer for Holy Week

You can read this prayer together out loud, with one person reading and others echoing each line, or in whatever way feels right for your family.

*God of Palm Sunday,  
teach us to follow the king who came on a donkey.*

*God of the towel and basin,  
show us how to get low and serve one another.*

*God of the cross and the darkness,  
hold us when we are sad or scared or don't understand.*

*God of the empty tomb and the spoken name,  
remind us that love always gets the last word.*

**We bear your image. Help us show it. Amen.**

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*From our family to yours — may this be a holy and hope-filled week.*

**Pastor Becky Sundquist**