

# Looking for love this Holy Week

It's Palm Sunday. You walk into the church, and your children spy a pile of long, pointy palms. Their dreams have come true. Finally, finally, Mass comes with something really entertaining.

Our children are old enough that I don't worry as much about anyone losing an eye during the enthusiastic Hosanna-waving. But as I watched other parents helping their children get through Mass, I remembered those days well.

The palms were still a bit of a distraction for us—begging to be held through Mass, yet another item to be fidgeted with, moving all around the pew through the whole Liturgy of the Word.

Isn't that the point, though? Palm Sunday is one final wake-up call, a reminder that if you've fallen away from your Lenten promises, or never really taken them on, this is your moment.

Jesus is riding into Jerusalem.

Here we are in the holiest week of the year.

You can sit back and watch. You can join the screaming crowds. Or you can walk right beside Jesus, moment by moment, day after day, of this powerful, emotional journey.

As I was listening to the readings on Sunday, wondering what this Holy Week would bring, our younger son sat next to me shifting and rotating his palm in his hands. Carefully, quietly, he would form his palm into shape after shape.

"Look, Mom," he would whisper. "It's an N."

"Mm-hmm," I would say, trying to stay focused on the lector.

"Now it's a saxophone," came another whisper. I had to admit that was kind of impressive. I wondered whether it was time to take the palm away.

Then a few minutes later he nudged me with his elbow.

“Mom,” he said.

I looked down and saw his smile—and, in his hands, a palm formed into a heart.

A heart. Love. The center and purpose of Holy Week. God is love. He so loved us he took all our sins upon Him and died for us on a cross.

Maybe this week can be a time for us not only to grow in love, but to be aware of the love of Jesus for each of us.