

Palm Branches in Advent
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So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" (John 12:13)

Explanation:

The palm branches are a sign of victory. They were waved by the crowds of pilgrims who welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem. The saints in heaven are also described as holding palm branches.

Meditation:

It may seem a little strange to talk about the Palm Sunday around Christmas time. If you listen to the readings in church during Advent and listen to some of the songs that we sing, the palm branches are mentioned a lot.

Palm Sunday is important during Advent because this story shows what sort of king Jesus was coming to be.

Jesus was not going to be a strong and powerful king who wore fancy robes and an expensive crown. He did not come riding into Jerusalem on a mighty horse, but on a humble donkey. Jesus is king when He is enthroned on the cross and crowned with thorns. Jesus was a king who came to die.

The word "Hosanna" means, "Save us!" We are saved from eternal death through Jesus' death for us on the cross. We sing "Hosanna" in Advent because we are joining with the crowds around Jerusalem to welcome Jesus, who comes to save us.

In fact, every Sunday before communion, we sing these same words, "Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord." When you sing these words, picture Jesus riding in on a donkey as you wave palm branches to welcome him.

Then go thy Lord to meet;

 Stew palm leaves at His feet;

Thy garments spread before Him

 And honor and adore Him.

Hosanna, praise and glory!

Our King, we bow before Thee.

"O Bride of Christ, Rejoice" (LSB 335:5)