HOSANNA!

Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week, when Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, as depicted in Matthew's Gospel, is recalled with processions and waving of palms. The processions traditionally include singing, and shouting of blessings and adorations such as "Hosanna!", which is an expression of praise and joy.

READ:

Matthew 21.1-11: When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, “The Lord needs them.” And he will send them immediately.’ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, ‘Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!’ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, ‘Who is this?’ The crowds were saying, ‘This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.’

WONDER:

Today is a day of rejoicing – it is the day before things take a turn and Jesus is killed – it is a day filled with hope and celebration! Take your palm and lay it flat on a piece of paper. Trace around your hand with a pencil or pen. Next, write in each finger a short prayer or word of praise. Do this as many times and you like. Cut them out, string them together, and hang them like party decorations – a reminder that though hard things happen, new life will come.

(Adapted from: “Engaging All Ages,” Planning for Rites and Rituals: Year A, Church Publishing 2019, p. 141)

PRAY:

These are the words we pray during Palm Sunday processions at church:

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy, but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Book of Common Prayer p. 272)

You can pray this prayer while walking around your neighborhood - if you have palms, wave them, or cut a small branch from a tree in your own yard. Or you can light a candle and pray in your home.