**Exploring Easter**

**Ideas to do at home and share**

**Monday 30th March: Hopes and Futures**

1. Talk to your children about times when they have cheered someone or got excited because a special person was coming to visit. Talk about a time when they have been cheered on, like during a sports day activity. How did it feel to be encouraged? What were you hoping for when you completed your task?

1. Read together the following text taken from Matthew 21. Explain that this is part of the Easter story, during which Jesus was cheered as he entered Jerusalem. People waved branches to celebrate him.

***Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King***

*As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”*

*4This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet:*

*5“Say to Daughter Zion,
    ‘See, your king comes to you,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
    and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”*

*6The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. 7They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. 8A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,*

*“Hosanna to the Son of David!”*

*“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”*

*“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”*

*10When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”*

*11The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”*

1. You might want to act out that part of the Easter story as a family.
2. Explain that each year, Christians on the Sunday before Easter Day, remember this part of the Easter story. Some have special processions in their churches. They remember the hope that Jesus was to the world.
3. On the palm leaves (Either use the template or make your own), write or draw your own hopes for the future - either your own or others, then make a display or act out waving them.
4. Share your palm branches on your class Instagram so we can all be encouraged together.

**Pause for thought:**

Think about the hopes and dreams you have for your future individually and as a family. Be thankful for the love that you have together and how you can encourage each other over the coming weeks.

***Tricky words: Hosanna*** *is a word that was used to mean ‘praise’, ‘or ‘rescuer and saviour’*