

A PAGEANT OF VICTORY

by Arthur L. Zapel



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A Pageant of Victory

An Easter morning breakfast program

by ARTHUR L. ZAPEL

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CAST OF PERFORMERS

Pastor, Reader 1, Reader 2, Reader 3

Twelve Children: 6 boys and 6 girls *(optional)*

1. Boy with Roman sword
2. Girl with scroll
3. Girl with star
4. Boy with Seder plate
5. Girl with dove
6. Girl with walking stick and sandals
7. Girl with loaf of bread and decanter of "wine"
8. Boy with large cross
9. Boy with Roman seal
10. Boy with black robe
11. Boy with white robe
12. Girl with butterfly

PRODUCTION NOTES

This program is an informal Easter breakfast presentation for children and their parents. It is designed not to replace an Easter Sunrise Service but to give the morning an inspirational ending.

The presentation is easily staged indoors in an assembly hall or at an outdoor picnic setting. Only a few single lines need be memorized by the children. The parent-readers may do their brief narrations from the script. The children carrying the pageant symbols should all enter from the same side, walking briefly to "Center Stage" on cue with the narrative. After their biblical quotation lines are spoken they should retire in a line behind the readers.

The readers may be placed on opposite sides of the line of children if two microphones are available. Their speeches alternate from side to side.

When the narrative ends and Reader 1 asks the children what they are celebrating this day, they should all raise the symbols high as they shout, "Jesus lives!" "We live!"

The symbols may be constructed as indicated in the drawings. Other symbols may be substituted if you prefer. Costumes are optional for the children. This script was written with minimum requirements for easy staging.

1 **PASTOR:** The message of Easter has been told. Because he
 2 lives we are born anew! Our sins are forgiven, our spirits
 3 are alive and well. Because of the spirit of him who dwells
 4 within us, this day is a new beginning!

5 How did this Easter miracle of renewal and hope
 6 come to us? Using symbols of his life and victory over
 7 death, our church children and their parents now
 8 present *A Pageant of Victory*.

9 **READER 1:** In the time of Herod, all of Judea was occupied
 10 by the legions of Rome. *(Two children enter, a BOY carrying*
 11 *a Roman sword, a GIRL with a scroll.)* Caesar Augustus, the
 12 ruler of all the Roman empire, issued a decree that a
 13 census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

14 **GIRL:** *(Reading from scroll)* Everyone must go to his own town
 15 to be registered. *(NIV) (BOY and GIRL step back, form line.)*

16 **READER 1:** Joseph, being of the line of David, went up from
 17 the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem, there to
 18 be counted. And with him was Mary who was with child.
 19 *(A GIRL enters carrying a star. She stands Center Stage during*
 20 *the narrative.)*

21 While they were in Bethlehem, a bright star shone
 22 above them and the time came for the birth of the baby.
 23 An angel of the Lord appeared and said that a Savior had
 24 been born: Immanuel, which means "God is with us."
 25 *(GIRL steps back into the line with the first two children.)*

26 **READER 2:** The infant Christ became a boy named Jesus,
 27 who in his twelfth year, went with his family to Jerusalem
 28 for the Feast of the Passover, symbolized by a Seder plate.
 29 *(BOY enters carrying a silver Seder plate. He stands Center*
 30 *Stage.)* So busy and crowded was the city that Mary and
 31 Joseph and their relatives did not miss Jesus until they
 32 prepared to return to Nazareth. After three days they
 33 found him in a courtyard of the temple, among the
 34 teachers, asking questions. They were very upset and
 35 said to him, "Why have you treated us like this? We have

1 **been searching anxiously for you."**

2 **BOY:** Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I
3 **would be in my Father's house?** *(NIV) (BOY steps back into*
4 *the line with the other children.)*

5 **READER 3:** Jesus was an obedient son. When he grew to
6 **manhood he learned a trade and became a carpenter like**
7 **his father, Joseph. In his thirtieth year he left Nazareth**
8 **to be baptized by his cousin, John. When he came up out**
9 **of the water at the River Jordan, his baptism opened the**
10 **heavens** *(A GIRL enters carrying the symbol of a dove)* **and**
11 **the spirit of God in the shape of a dove descended from**
12 **above and rested on his shoulder. A voice from heaven**
13 **said, "This is my Son, whom I love. With him I am well**
14 **pleased."** *(NIV) (GIRL returns to line with symbol.)*

15 **READER 1:** After his baptism Jesus began his ministry. *(A*
16 *GIRL enters carrying a walking stick and sandals.)* **With his**
17 **disciples he traveled to villages and countrysides**
18 **preaching the good news of his kingdom, healing sickness**
19 **and giving hope to all who came to him. So large were**
20 **the crowds that followed him that the Pharisees and the**
21 **Herodians became alarmed at his influence. They**
22 **repeatedly tried to trick him so that the Romans would**
23 **kill him. When asked if it was right for the people to pay**
24 **taxes to Caesar, he was not fooled.**

25 **GIRL:** Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is
26 **God's.** *(NIV) (GIRL returns to the line of children.)*

27 **READER 2:** But when Jesus came, at last, to Jerusalem and
28 **told the unrighteous that they had made his house of**
29 **prayer into a den of robbers, he knew that his living**
30 **ministry was nearing its end. It was on the day of**
31 **Passover that Jesus asked all of his disciples to join him**
32 **for his Last Supper.** *(GIRL enters with a loaf of bread and a*
33 *decanter of "wine.")* **It was there that he washed the feet of**
34 **all of his disciples and told them that his hour had come.**
35 **He gave them a new commandment.**

GIRL: Love each other as I have loved you. (NIV) (*GIRL returns to the line of children.*)

READER 2: Then Jesus said that he must fulfill the prophecy.

Breaking the bread, he said, "This is my body given for you." Then taking the wine, he said, "This is my blood poured out for you." Immediately he left for the Mount of Olives for prayer. It was there in the Garden of Gethsemane that he was taken by soldiers and brought before those in authority who feared him. Though both Herod and Pilate could find no basis for the charges against him, the priests and the elders demanded his death. They incited the crowd to cry out for his crucifixion. The governor, Pilate, surrendered Jesus to their will (*A BOY enters with a large cross*) and he was taken to a place called The Skull and nailed to a cross. As Jesus was dying he said:

BOY: Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. (NIV) (*BOY steps back into the line with the others.*)

READER 3: After Jesus' death, a man named Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the council, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body that he might care for it and give it a proper burial in his tomb that had been cut out of a rock. Permission given, a Roman centurion (*A BOY enters with the symbol of the Roman seal*) was assigned to supervise the burial and to have a stone rolled before the entrance to the tomb. It was then closed with the official Roman seal and it was guarded by Roman soldiers. (*BOY joins the rest of the children.*)

READER 1: It seemed to all that this was the end of Jesus' new kingdom. There was great fear and sadness among the disciples. (*A BOY enters carrying a black robe.*) They wore black robes and hid from the priests and elders lest they, too, be killed. They were ashamed of their weakness. Peter remembered how even he had been cowardly and denied his association with Jesus saying:

1 **BOY:** I don't know the man! *(NIV)* *(BOY returns to line with the*
 2 *others.)*

3 **READER 2:** As the sun rose on the morning of the third day,
 4 Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome,
 5 went to the tomb with spices to anoint Jesus' body. To
 6 their great surprise, the stone had been rolled away from
 7 the tomb. As they entered, *(BOY enters with a white robe*
 8 *and white linens)* there was a young man in a white robe
 9 standing beside the folded burial clothes. A voice said to
 10 them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"
 11 And then the young man in gleaming white said:

12 **BOY:** He is not here; he has risen! *(NIV)* *(BOY joins the other*
 13 *children.)*

14 **READER 3:** Jesus had risen from the dead as he said he
 15 would. *(A GIRL with a large colorful cut-out of a butterfly enters*
 16 *and steps Center Stage.)* As the butterfly takes on new life
 17 when it rises from its cocoon, Jesus' spirit and his body
 18 were now alive and with them again. He appeared to
 19 Mary Magdalene, to several followers on the road to
 20 Emmaus, to the disciples when they were eating and even
 21 to Thomas, the lone disciple who would not believe. Jesus
 22 said to Thomas, "Reach out your hand and put it into my
 23 side. Stop doubting and believe." After Thomas touched
 24 the wound in Jesus' body he said:

25 **GIRL:** My Lord and my God! *(NIV)* *(GIRL steps back in line with*
 26 *the other symbol holders.)*

27 **READER 1:** *(Gesturing to the line of children)* This is the
 28 miraculous pageant of Jesus, our Lord. It is his spirit
 29 risen from the dead that dwells in you. We have the
 30 victory over sin and death because we have his spirit
 31 and his life. *(To line of children)* So what are we here to
 32 celebrate this Easter morning?

33 **ALL CHILDREN:** *(Together)* Jesus lives!

34 **READER 1:** And because he lives;

35 **ALL CHILDREN:** We live!

READER 1: Praise the Lord! (*Gestures to audience for everyone to say: Amen!*)

NOTE: The numerals running vertically down the left margin of each page of dialog are for the convenience of the director. With these he may easily direct attention to a specific passage.

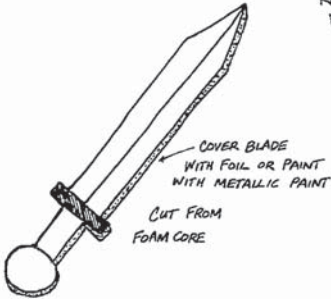
SYMBOL CONSTRUCTION

Most of the symbols carried by the children may be made with corrugated cardboard and light wood strips. Or they may be constructed of Fome-Cor, a lightweight durable material found in art supply stores.

Size is not an important consideration except for visibility. The Seder plate should be larger than normal size. The star, dove, cross and the Roman seal should be large enough to be easily identified. Items like the Roman sword, scroll, walking stick, sandals, loaf of bread, "wine" decanter, black robe, white robe and white linens may all be normal size.

Liberty may be taken in the coloring of each cardboard item. The colors should be bright rather than realistic. They are symbols, not representative props.

Some items can be real if you prefer — such as the loaf of bread, the "wine" decanter, the robes and the linens.

#1 ROMAN SWORD**#2 SCROLL**

ATTACH CURTAIN ROD
KNOBS TO THE ENDS OF
PAPER TOWEL ROLLS

CUT APART PAPER
BAGS FOR PAPYRUS

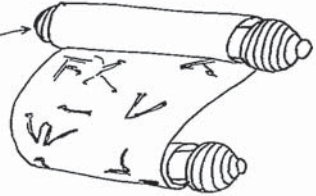
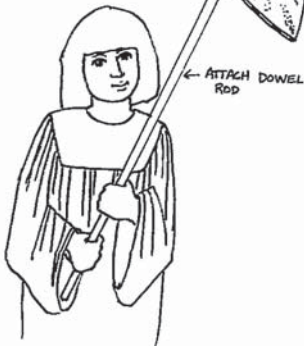
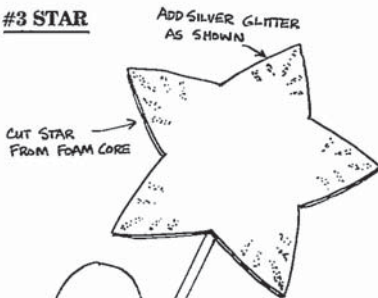
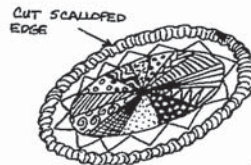
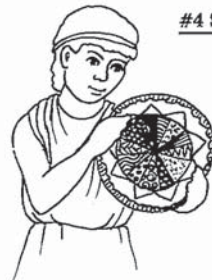
**#3 STAR****#4 SEDER PLATE**

PLATE IS CUT FROM
CARDBOARD OR FOAM CORE
ILLUSTRATE 13 ELEMENTS
INSIDE

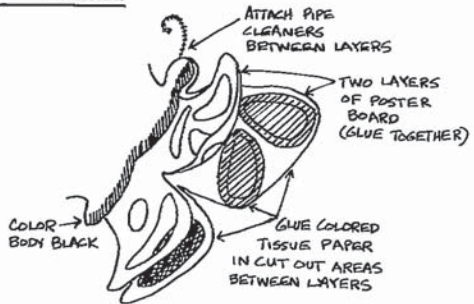
#5 DOVE**#6 WALKING STICK AND SANDALS****#7 BREAD AND WINE****#8 CROSS**

#9 SEAL

CUT AN IRREGULAR
CIRCLE FROM
CARDBOARD AND
DRAW DESIGN

#10 BLACK ROBE**#11 WHITE ROBE
AND LINENS**

USE WHITE SHEETS
AND A WHITE
BATHROBE OR
LENGTH OF FABRIC

**#12 BUTTERFLY**



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