

THE LAST SUPPER

The celebration of Eucharist was purposefully placed by Jesus in a meal setting to establish the basic necessity of this food in our lives. Not only do we need a balanced diet for good bodily health, we also require Eucharist for our spiritual well being. Jesus is food for our souls. Jesus' message then and now is that we need to be constantly nourished by Him, by His body and blood in Eucharist to grow in relationship with Him and one another in unity as the Body of Christ.

In emphasizing the Eucharist as a meal, we cannot forget that the Eucharist is also a sacrifice. In Eucharist, Jesus offers Himself to His Father by the power of the Holy Spirit, while at the same time offers Himself to us. Jesus wanted to be present to people of all times so he gave us the gift of Eucharist instituted at the Passover meal, the Last Supper, shared by Jesus and His friends at the shadow of His death on Good Friday.

As we recall from the exodus story-just as the unblemished lamb was slain for God the Father at the Passover meal-Jesus became the lamb who was nailed to the cross and slain for us....for our salvation. Christ died that He might continue to give us lifeeternal life. This was the sacrifice of Jesus. God shares His life with us in Holy Eucharist. In sharing the Eucharist we are called to join our lives to His sacrifice by offering our lives in loving ministry to others.

[Prayer Meditation for Holy Thursday](#)

[The Passion: Hillsong](#) [A moment of pause](#)

Family Prayer for Holy Week

Mother or child: From the words of Pope Pius XII On the Sacred Liturgy, Dearly beloved, in Holy Week, when the most bitter sufferings of Jesus Christ are put before us by the liturgy, the Church invites us to come to Calvary and follow in the blood-stained footsteps of the Divine Redeemer, to carry the Cross willingly with Him, to reproduce in our hearts His spirit of expiation and atonement, and to die together with Him.

Father: We ought to glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

Family: in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection.

Father: Let us pray. All-powerful, eternal God, you have chosen to give mankind a model of humility; our Saviour took on our flesh, and subjected Himself to the Cross. Grant us the grace to preserve faithfully the lessons He has given us in his Passion and to have a share in His resurrection. This we ask of You through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.

Family: Amen. Favour this dwelling, Lord, with Your presence. Far from it repulse all the wiles of Satan. Your holy angels, let them live here, to keep us in peace. And may Your blessing remain always upon us. This we ask of You through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.

Father: Let us bless the Lord

Family: Thanks be to God.

Father: May the almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless and keep us.

Family: Amen.

Developmental readiness for the catechesis of Passion by Debbie Kolacki

Ages 3-5 are "The Age of Fantasy" and this is not a time to give graphic details about the violence of the cross. "Preschoolers' budding imaginations can build such details into frightening scenes that keep them awake at night...Saying only that 'Jesus died for you' might cause a child to feel guilty. Instead, you might say, 'Jesus died because He loves you and me,' and leave it at that."

Ages 6-9 are "The Age of Questioning" and, although children can tolerate more details, "Excruciating details about the nails, scourge, and so forth are still too intense for this age group." Children can learn the sequence of events in Holy Week and some of the details. Telling them about Jesus' concern for his mother while on the cross can help children understand Jesus' humanity and love for others.

Ages 10-14 are referred to as "The Age of Intensity" and children this age are "ready to move to a deeper understanding of the daily commitment of genuine faith...Children this age have a sense of the dramatic, and learn best when their minds and imaginations are engaged. Discussions, questions, books, and Christian services with emotional impact are ideal...Watching and discussing movies together, such as "Jesus of Nazareth" or "Jesus Christ Superstar," offer teachable moments.

Whatever the age group, it's important to be aware of an individual child's sensitivity. In the classroom, I think it's best to offer very few details and let parents provide more information if their child has questions.

Some general guidelines for teaching about the crucifixion are:

- Increase realism over time.
- Increase intensity over time.
- Move from general to specific over time.
- Let your child's sensitivity lead.