



GOOD FRIDAY

Talking With Children About Jesus' Death

Death is an abstract concept and children are concrete thinkers, so kids are often not fully able to comprehend death until the teenage years, when they begin to think more hypothetically and are able to deal with the abstract more capably.

For younger children:

Jesus' death and resurrection is an integral part of our faith, and so we need to share these events with children. For preschool and younger elementary-aged children, it is sufficient to say: "Even though Jesus was very kind and good, there were some people who didn't like him. They were mean and hurt Jesus, and he died. But that wasn't the end of the story, because Jesus was God's Son, he could even beat death. He came back and saw his friends again before going to his Father in heaven."

Too many details about Jesus' suffering can be overwhelming and scary for children this age, and we don't want them to become overly focused on these details. Rather, we want them to know Jesus as a loving and powerful friend who is also God.

As children grow:

Older children and teens can handle a little more information about the Good Friday story, because they are better able to comprehend the context. Stations of the Cross and similar depictions of Jesus' suffering are more appropriate for this age group, particularly if we can relate Jesus' own suffering back to our everyday lives. It's important that children know that doing good sometimes involves suffering. Things don't automatically go well for us all the time because we are good people, but God is with us and understands suffering because he became a human being who suffered, too.