

Jesus Dies

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 23, ages 3-4

Lesson 23 Goal

- Your child will learn about Jesus' Passion and death.

Key Points

- Some people did not know Jesus was God's Son.
- When Jesus died, this was not the end of the story. God was about to do something amazing!



Parent Reflection

The Crucifixion can sometimes be difficult for us to understand. If God is love, why would it be his will for his Son to die on a cross? Why did it take death on the Cross to restore humanity? To understand this, we need to remember that our faith teaches us that the Persons of God are one—one God in Three Divine Persons. So we should forget the picture of a hardhearted Father who demands the sacrifice of his Son. Rather, *God himself* was the sacrifice for us.

Jesus shows his love for us in his complete gift of self, and we are called to follow his example by giving of ourselves in love to God and to others. Jesus says, "Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39).

Death is very difficult for young children to understand. Developmentally, children are not able to understand the difference between body and soul, the permanence of death, causes of death, and many other concepts that are key to understanding death. However, even with these developmental limitations, it is important to introduce this very important part of Jesus' story because it is at the very center of our faith.

Reflection Question

When have I witnessed sacrificial love in another person? What are some ways in which I may need to "die to myself"?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons or colored pencils
- green construction paper
- rubber band

- Lesson 23 Activity Master – Saint Page (included with this lesson)

(Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Pray together: *“Jesus, please be with us when we are sad. Thank you for loving us. We love you too. Amen.”*

Discovering

A Sad Story. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Jesus.

Ask your child, “What do you know about why Jesus died?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. The Cross. Turn to the drawing in the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and

invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils and have him or her color the cross. Then talk together about Jesus’ Resurrection three days after his death.

2. Palms. Invite your child to create simple palms by tearing four or five long strips of green construction paper and fastening them with a rubber band at one end. With your child, parade around the room with the palm branches. You could wave the palm branches in the air as the people did during Jesus’ walk, shouting “Hosanna! Hosanna!” As an option, you can play music during your welcome parade.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Charles Lwanga and Companions. Show your child the picture of Saint Charles on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Charles to your child (see page 3).

Ask your child, “What does Jesus want us to do when we are scared?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Charles Lwanga and Companions using the Lesson 23 Activity Master.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child:

“Dear Jesus, be with us when we are sad. Be with us as we rejoice in your Resurrection. Amen.”

Saint Charles Lwanga and Companions

Protecting Each Other

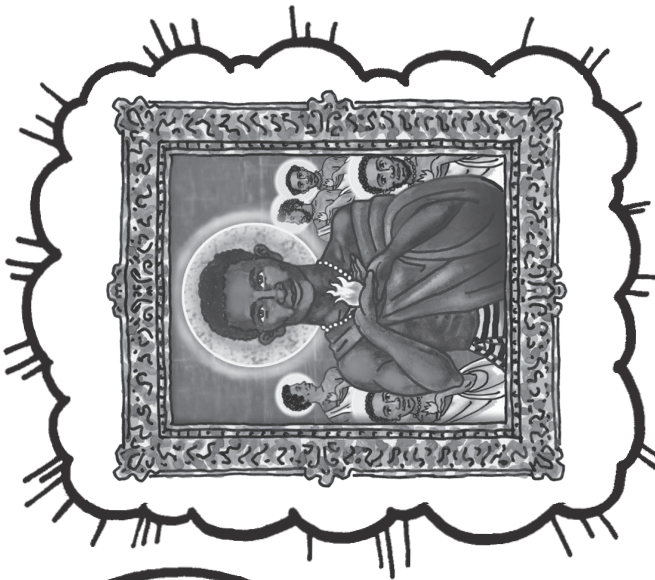
On the continent of Africa, there is a country called Uganda. At around the time your great-greatgrandparents were born, a group of missionaries traveled to Uganda to teach people about Jesus. Missionaries are people who leave their homes and live in unfamiliar countries so that they can teach people about Jesus. The missionaries' coming made some of the people in Uganda very happy. These Ugandans listened carefully to the missionaries. They learned about Jesus love for them!

There was also a king in Uganda named Mwanga. He was very unkind to the boys and young men who served him in his court. He also thought that if people loved Jesus, they would stop loving him. This was not true. But sometimes when people are scared, they do things

that are cruel.

Charles Lwanga was a man who lived in Uganda during that time. He helped the missionaries learn about Jesus, and he tried to help the boys and young men whom the king was hurting. One day, the king, Mwanga, said to the people of his court, "If you love me, stand over here. If you love Jesus stand over there." Charles Lwanga, and the other people who loved Jesus all stood together. Mwanga told them that they would die. Do you think that this made the people stop loving Jesus? No! They said, "We don't want to die, but we know that Jesus will take care of us in Heaven." They remembered that Jesus also died on the Cross, and that God took care of him.

DRAW



**Saint
Charles Lwanga,
pray for us!**