



# JESUS' DEATH

Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19

## Memory Verse

**"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8 (NIV)**

## Context/Background

- The crucifixion of Jesus occurred in Jerusalem during the first century.
- Crucifixion was a brutal form of execution reserved for the worst criminals. It involved nailing or tying the condemned to a wooden cross and leaving them to die slowly from exhaustion, asphyxiation, or shock. The process was designed not only as a means of execution but also as a public spectacle and deterrent.
- Jesus faced a series of trials before both Jewish religious authorities and Roman officials, including Pontius Pilate. Accusations against him ranged from blasphemy to claims of insurrection, reflecting the tense political and religious climate of the time.

## Summary

- Jesus is betrayed by Judas Iscariot in the Garden of Gethsemane. He is arrested by the religious authorities with the help of Judas.
- Jesus is taken to the house of the high priest Caiaphas for an informal trial. The religious leaders seek false witnesses against Jesus. He is accused of blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God.
- Jesus is taken to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, for an official trial. Pilate finds no fault in Jesus but, to appease the crowd, offers to release a prisoner (Barabbas) instead. The crowd demands Jesus' crucifixion.
- Before the crucifixion, Jesus is beaten with a whip. Roman soldiers mock Jesus, placing a crown of thorns on his head and a purple robe on him.
- Jesus carries his cross to Golgotha, the place of the skull, where he will be crucified. Jesus is nailed to the cross, and the cross is raised. He is crucified between two criminals.
- On the cross, Jesus speaks several profound statements, including "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Darkness covers the land for three hours. Jesus utters his last words, including "It is finished" (John 19:30). He gives up his spirit and dies.
- Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, asks Pilate for permission to bury Jesus.
- Jesus is laid in a new tomb, and a large stone is rolled in front of it. The tomb is sealed and guarded by Roman soldiers.

## Relevance/Application **Themes: Love, Forgiveness, Hope, Rescue**

- Jesus, the innocent Son of God, was punished instead of us.

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**Younger students:**

- **God loves us:** Jesus' death on the cross is a powerful demonstration of God's love for all people.

**Older students:**

- **God forgives:** Jesus' sacrifice on the cross provides forgiveness for everyone.
  - **God provides us with Eternal Life:** Because of what Jesus did, we can have a forever friendship with God. Through Jesus' death, our eternal life was won.
  - **God saves:** God came to our rescue to save us from the power of death, the devil and sin. Because Jesus died for us, God gives us his grace – undeserved forgiveness and acceptance. That means we get to live with God in heaven when we die.
  - **God keeps his promises:** From the very beginning, God had a plan to save his people. His plan came to fruition through Jesus' death on the cross.
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**Christian Studies Framework**

**Christian Beliefs Key Idea 2: The person and work of Jesus the Christ is central to Christianity**  
**Christian Beliefs Key Idea 3: A Christian worldview is shaped by the biblical teaching of sin and grace**

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**Catechism Connections****The Second Article of the Apostles Creed**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day, he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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**Discussion/Wondering Questions:**Early Years

- How did Jesus die?
- Why did Jesus die?
- Why is Jesus' death important for us?

Primary

- Why did people treat Jesus so badly when he only did good to others?
- How might have Peter felt after he said that he did not know Jesus?
- How might have Jesus' close friends felt when they saw him carry his cross?
- Why do you think Jesus had to die?

Secondary

- Compare the four gospel accounts. What is the same in each one? What extra details do you notice? What most catches your attention?
  - What did the soldier mean when he said, "Truly, this man is the Son of God?"
  - 'Passion' is used to describe Jesus' suffering and death on the cross for us. 'Passion' means 'intense suffering'. It can also mean 'intense love'. Reflect on how Jesus' intense suffering shows his love for us.
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## Images or objects to spark discussion



- A display of crucifixes. The one pictured has one large cross, surrounded by smaller crosses that a representative from each class placed to represent God's love for all people.
- A sign at the entrance of the Worship venue saying 'It is finished'.

## Telling the Story

**Bibles:** The Beginner's Bible  
The Big Rescue Bible  
The NIV Bible

### Creative Storytelling:

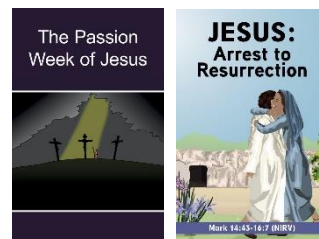
Often in learning communities the events of Holy Week are acted out in some form. You can find some scripts on the Seasonal Resources page. Be careful not to be too graphic in retelling the story with very young children. In retelling the story of Easter, make sure you don't leave students on Good Friday – always get to the Resurrection before they go on holidays.

### Lutheran Tract Mission

[Jesus: Arrest to Resurrection](#) – leaflet retelling the events of Holy Week. Great illustrations.

[The Easter Story](#) - A simply told story with pictures of Jesus' death and resurrection. Produced together with Aboriginal Ministry of SA. 16 page leaflet

[Passion Week of Jesus](#) - Read through with children the events that happened in Jesus' last week (Holy Week)... written in simple language with cartoon pictures. 20 page leaflet and accompanying activity booklets (junior and upper primary versions)



### GROW Ministries

[GIFT Lent](#) – a downloadable kit with many activities and worship ideas for Lent and Easter.

### Audio Stories/Podcasts

Bible.is - <https://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/audio-bible-resources/bible-is>  
Audio recordings of the Bible in many different languages and several English translations. All four gospels also available in film versions, searchable by book and chapter. Excellent resource for NESB learners.

Kids Corner – Bible Stories – [The Cross](#)

### Videos: Early Years / Junior Primary

[Jesus Died on the Cross \(Crossroads Kids' Club\) – Animated video](#)

[Jesus' sacrifice \(Saddleback Kids\)](#)

### Middle – Upper Primary

[Jesus' sacrifice \(Jesus Storybook Bible\)](#)

### Secondary/Staff

[Good Friday Devotional | Holy Week - Spoken Gospel](#)

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[Good Friday | Holy Week - Spoken Gospel](#) This version is more intense and dramatic.

[The Crucifixion of Jesus: Luke 19-23 - BibleProject](#)

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## Invocation

We gather today to remember the great love of Jesus. He gave His life for us on the cross. Let us reflect on the deep meaning of His sacrifice as we gather in God's presence.

L: In the name of the Father,

**Children: Who loves us deeply.**

L: In the name of the Son,

**Children: Who gave His life for us.**

L: And in the name of the Holy Spirit,

**Children: Who helps us understand the good news of Jesus. Amen.**

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## Prayers

### Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we gather in this sacred moment of worship, our hearts are filled with gratitude for the immense sacrifice of your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for the cross, where love and mercy met, and grace flowed like a river. We pause in awe of what Jesus has done for us, willingly bearing the weight of our sins on that rugged tree.

Lord, we thank you for the profound meaning of His death—the forgiveness we find in His wounds, the redemption in His blood, and the unyielding love displayed in His sacrifice. Help us to comprehend the depth of this gift, a gift we could never earn but is freely given out of your boundless love.

In the shadow of the cross, we find hope, knowing that through Jesus' death, we are granted life abundantly. May the power of the resurrection dawn on our hearts, bringing newness, purpose, and the assurance of eternal life.

Lord, as we reflect on the significance of the cross, instill in us a sense of responsibility—to live lives marked by love, compassion, and gratitude. May the story of Jesus' death inspire us to share this transformative message with others, bringing the light of salvation to a world in need.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

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## Blessing

May you leave this place with the assurance of forgiveness that is made possible through the sacrifice of Jesus.  
Go out into the world in hope and anticipation of the ultimate victory that comes with Easter.  
Go forth! Be Easter people!  
Amen

By his stripes we are healed.  
By his wounds, we are made whole.  
Go in the name of Jesus Christ  
and live in the salvation made possible

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by the Goodness of this Friday. Amen.

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## Music

[Lead me to the Cross \(Hillsong United\)](#)

[How deep the fathers' love for us](#)

[Amazing Grace: My chains are gone \(Chris Tomlin\)](#)

[At the cross \(Chris Tomlin\)](#)

[Man of sorrows \(Hillsong\)](#)

When I Survey The Wondrous Cross (Lutheran Hymnal 54) OR

[When I survey the wondrous cross \(Keith and Kristyn Getty\)](#)

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## Activities

### Early Years:

- Create an Easter Garden, with a tomb and a large rock to cover the entrance, as seen here: <https://www.seedsfamilyworship.com/resurrection-garden/> It would be good to prepare this with students at the start of Holy week (or even the week before), as it can take 4-5 days for the grass to sprout. When you are sharing the Good Friday story, have students roll the stone in front of the tomb. You might like to drape the crosses in black material or crepe paper.

### Primary:

- Do an Easter Prayer Walk/Stations of the Cross around the school either as a class or as part of worship. The LCA SA-NT Blueprint Ministries team worked with the Uniting Church of South Australia to develop an Easter Family Faith Trail which could easily be adapted for school use: <https://sa.uca.org.au/documents/intergen-docs/resources/Print-Easter-Family-Faith-Trail-Book.pdf> OR check out <https://www.allageworshipresources.org/walk-holy-week-prayer-stations/>

### Upper Primary/Secondary:

- Plan and act out the events of Holy Week for a worship service. Students might like to create their own drama based on the Biblical passages.
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