

Is my child ready for Communion?

The following illustration from Eugene Peterson might help as we think about our own children. One of his grown sons approached him one Sunday to say that he was worried about his kids taking communion because he didn't think they really understood it. "You're worried they don't understand it?" Eugene replied, "I don't really understand it... But we're still commanded to celebrate it, no?"

There is no set age for communion. Parents can prayerfully decide if their child is ready by asking: Do they profess faith in Jesus? Are they showing evidence of conversion by obeying and loving Jesus? Are they able to grasp the significance of communion?

If your child is not ready, we encourage you to still have them be present while you partake. Explain it to them. We learn by watching!

How do I explain communion? Talk through the why's and how's before inviting your children to watch or participate with you.

WHY we celebrate communion:

Before Jesus died on the cross for you and me, he celebrated the meal of Passover. Passover is the time when the Israelites remembered how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 1-15). In particular, the Israelites were meant to remember the 10th plague that God brought on the Egyptians. In order to be saved from death, each family killed a lamb and put its blood on the doorframes of their houses so that when the Angel of the Lord passed over their house the firstborn would not be put to death. When Jesus ate this meal with his followers, he did something a little different at the meal, he took the bread and broke it and said to his followers, "this is my body given for you". He took the wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." What Jesus was saying is that he was going to become the Passover lamb. He was going to be beaten and killed so that the whole world could be saved.

On that night communion began. Ever since that night followers of Jesus have gathered to remember what Jesus has done for them. (See 1 Corinthians 11)

HOW we celebrate communion:

When we drink the cup and eat the bread we **remember** Jesus took the punishment for our sins. We **accept** his grace. We can **thank him** for the ways he saves and blessed us. Just like our bodies need food and drink, taking communion reminds us that we need Jesus every day to save us from our selfishness and give us the strength to live for him. Taking communion says "**I choose** to live Jesus' way! He is my King and I will follow Him as best as I can."

Tips on helping your child take communion for the first time:

Have confidence. Ask the Holy Spirit to search their hearts to see if they need to ask forgiveness to God for anything or need to ask forgiveness from other people. After, share together if you need to make anything right. Finally, pray together and thank Jesus for what he has done.