

Reflection Starters for Connecting to Jesus

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As a mother picked up her son from the first day of faith formation sessions at the parish and inquired on the way home, "How were things as you began? What did you talk about?"

"Oh, all right," he answered. "Just all right? Who is your catechist?"

"Well, I don't know," her son replied, "but she must have been Jesus' grandmother. He was all she talked about."

Our challenging privilege as parents and teachers is to accompany children/youth (and their families) on their journey of relationship with Jesus. It's not just about knowing things about Jesus, knowing the facts of his life and ministry. That is important; that is part of it. But it doesn't stop there.

Our faith depends upon being in relationship with Jesus. Not only do we desire as believers to have a "head" knowledge of our Savior, but also a "heart" knowledge. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we need to be about building our faith and growing in understanding of what He by grace alone has done for us.

Our children/youth (all of us) need the time (and sometimes the help) to personalize and integrate

- what we have learned
- what we have witnessed in other people
- what we have experienced in worship

so that our relationship with Jesus is just that, an intimate relationship – not just book knowledge about a distant historical figure.

Listed here are some questions and open-ended sentences. They are not questions that help recall information related to Scripture stories about Jesus. Rather, they are for personal reflection; how to think about how Jesus is connected to our lives.

They are not meant to be used all at once. Some children might want to use them in journal writing; some may just want to be quiet with them in prayer and reflection. Throughout the year, at various times, choose one to give them time to ponder – as they continue to grow in their friendship with Jesus.

- When do I know that Jesus loves me?
- What if Jesus returned to earth tomorrow?
- I wonder if Jesus _____.
- What if I could ask Jesus three questions?
- If I were Jesus and hear someone pray this psalm, “Why are you so far away, O Lord? Why do you hide yourself when we are in trouble?” (Ps 10:1), how would I answer the person?
- I wonder why Jesus' cross looks like a plus sign.
- How have my hands helped Jesus' hands?
- My three favorite words for Jesus are _____.
- People see Jesus in me when I _____.
- If Jesus had three wishes for the world, I think they would be _____.
- I wonder why Jesus _____.
- What if I read something Jesus said, and believed it is especially true for me?
- When has Jesus been a comfort to me?
- When has Jesus been a challenge to me?
- I wonder what made Jesus most sad.
- Sometimes the color, _____, reminds of Jesus because _____.
- When I think of Jesus' life, what three verbs (action words) come to my mind? What three verbs (actions) is Jesus doing in the world today?

- What does Jesus' touch feel like to me? How can I help Jesus touch our world?
- When Jesus talks to me, _____.
- When do I think about Jesus?
- A symbol ("real" or an invented one) that describes Jesus for me is _____.
- I wonder what Jesus would do if _____.
- Jesus' words in Scripture that I especially like are _____.
- What are Jesus' dreams for me?
- What are Jesus' dreams for our world? Can I help make those dreams come true?
- This past week I felt Jesus with me when _____.
- I believe Jesus gives to us _____.
- Jesus thinks I am _____.
- Read Mark 8:27. How would I answer Jesus?
- There are some people in my life who remind me of Jesus. They are _____.
- I think someone who needs Jesus' love today is _____.
- Jesus' words in Scripture that I'd rather forget about are _____.
- I think the place that needs Jesus love today is _____.