*Show picture of Last Supper*

On the day of Passover Jesus shared his last meal with his friends and family in an upstairs room.

While they were at the table eating, Jesus took a piece of bread, said a prayer of thanks, broke the bread into pieces it and gave it them.

“This is my body“ he said, “given for you”

Then he took a cup of deep red wine.

 “This is my blood” he said “poured out for you. Whenever you eat and drink, remember me”

They did not understand what he was saying.

No-one but Jesus noticed when Judas slipped out of the door into the cold, dark night.

After the Passover feast had ended Jesus lead his friends to the Mount of Olives. They found a quiet grove full of twisted trees and shadows. Maybe Jesus hoped that in that ancient garden he would feel closer to God. Jesus was afraid. Knowing that his friends were with him helped at first. But one by one they fell asleep. It is hard to be the only one awake.

Jesus knew that following the ways of God would be costly. But that he could trust God to grow something new from letting go of his life.

But Jesus felt weak. He lay on the ground and cried.
After a while Jesus heard a sound. When he looked up he could see torches flickering and bobbing through the trees.

 “Get up” he whispered to his sleeping friends “they have come.”

Guards from the temple burst into the olive grove, led by Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus with a kiss. The temple guards took Jesus and bound him with ropes. Helpless and afraid the disciples ran away.

*Show picture of Crucifixion*

The next morning Jesus was sentenced to death. The soldiers beat Jesus, put a crown of thorns on him and mocked him, and then led him out to be crucified.

Many people were gathered there. There were enemies who had come to taunt Jesus and watch him die. There were friends who had come to keep him company. There were two criminals crucified on either side of him. And a Roman soldier who stood keeping watch at the foot of the cross.

Jesus looked at all of them with love. He forgave those who put him on the cross and prayed that God would forgive them too. He told his friends to look after one another because they were family now. When one of the criminals begged Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom, Jesus promised to be with him always. From the cross gifts of forgiveness, love, hope and peace poured out from Jesus. When his work was done, with a final sigh, Jesus let go of his spirit and entrusted himself to God.

Looking on, the Roman soldier said, “Truly, this man was a son of God”