



Easter

OK. I need to be a little bit awkward. We may need some of the helpers' help: I need you in more of a semicircle, so if the people in the middle shuffle back a little bit because I'm going to be sitting on the floor, as it might make it a bit easier for me and I need you all to be able to see. Little ones, you might want to come to the front if you can't see.

"I'm a little one!"

You are a *very* little one, so you can come right to the front. As you all know this is the last Razzmatazz which is very sad, and I'm afraid I've got a bit of a sad story to tell you, but it has an eggcellent ending!

Can everyone see? I've got some eggs here which are going to help us with the story – I'll hold up the first one. I'm going to be telling the Easter story today – so who knows what the Easter story is about? Who is it about mostly?

"God."

Yes, God, and in particular, who?

"Jesus."

Jesus – it is indeed. OK, so every egg I have here tells a bit of the story. Here is the first one – take a sniff of that: does it smell nice?

"Yes".

So we start off the story with a woman called Mary, and what she does is she brings this big jar of really, really expensive perfume and she pours it all over Jesus and anoints Him. That's what you do when someone is going to die or they have already died. That's a bit scary, a little bit weird, isn't it. That's the first part of the story, we'll have questions at the end if you have any. What's going to be in the next egg? We've got some money in this one, because Jesus had a disciple called Judas, and Judas did something very naughty indeed, didn't he. He went and told the people who didn't like Jesus where He was for thirty silver coins. The next thing we have is a bit of red cloth, because the people came and Judas took them and kissed Jesus on the cheek and that was to signify that He was the one they were looking for, and they took Him away and put this red cloth on Him, because red's quite a royal colour and He was saying that He was the Son of God, He was the King. But they didn't believe Him so they were making fun of Him by putting this red robe on Him and saying 'Oh you think you're the King of the Jews but we don't really believe you.'

And then; can everyone see this? I'll hold it in front of a bit of paper. It's spikey thorns, and they put some of these together and made it into a crown and they put it on His head and it must have really hurt, mustn't it – you know how sharp thorns can be.

The next thing that we have – ooh, my egg's fallen off! Thank you very much. The next thing is a whip, and they whipped Him, and it had bits of metal in the ends, and it was really sharp again and they really, really hurt Him and Jesus just remained silent throughout all the time they were being really nasty to Him. And then the main part of the story; they then nailed Him to a cross which was a type of torture and a way that they used to kill people back in those days, and it was the most painful death in the world, and Jesus went through all of that and He stayed there for a long time. And then – oh dear, this is in the wrong order – so what did they do on the cross, they nailed His hands and they nailed His feet. Imagine how much that must have hurt – it must have been horrible. The next egg – Jesus had

clothes on and they decided they wanted to play 'lots', so they rolled dice to see who would take them home. They threw the dice and whoever won, got to take His clothes home. In the next egg we've got a bit of sponge. Jesus said "I thirst!" and they put a sponge in some wine and water and they gave it up to Him to drink, but He refused to drink it.

The next egg, we have a spear. After Jesus died, what they did was to make sure He had died, they stabbed Him; they put a spear through His side to make sure that He wasn't still alive. So they were really nasty to Him weren't they: these were awful things. And then Jesus got taken down after He had died and He got put in a tomb and they put a big rock over the tomb so that nobody could get in to take His body away because they thought that some people would come and put Him somewhere nicer and go and see Him. And then three days passed and Mary, His mum, went along to the grave, perhaps to put some flowers there, like we do; and then, what do you think they found – in the last egg? Nothing! It was empty, because after three days of being dead, God raised Jesus back to life! That's a pretty cool story isn't it?

But sometimes I think it doesn't make a lot of sense, so can I have three volunteers to help us understand a little bit more. We'll have some people from the back, so we'll have Billie Mai, and we'll have Charlie, and we'll have Amy. I need Charlie, you are going to pretend you are the human race – so you are every human, ever. And you, Amy, are going to be God, and Billie Mai, you are going to be Jesus. So Billie Mai, if you could come and stand with me for a minute. OK, so God creates all of us, doesn't He. But we decide to turn our backs on God when we do bad things – sometimes we do do bad things, don't we. So they turned their backs on God. And God was really, really upset about this, weren't you Amy? Yes. And you really wanted to be humans' best friend – He wanted all of us to be His best friends – we've been thinking about that haven't we; all throughout we've been singing "I am a friend of God" and I'm sure we'll sing it later as well. And God had to rack His brains, and He was like, "How am I going to do this? How am I going to bridge this big, gaping gap between Me and all the humans?" and so He thought "I know!" and in comes Jesus, and Jesus got killed on a cross, didn't He – so open your arms, Billie Mai. And it bridged the gap between all of us, and all of God. And it was really exciting, because of Easter, because of Jesus dying on the cross, and then [more importantly] coming back to life, defeating death, we can all be God's best friends. It's what we all really want, isn't it.

Thank you very much for listening. I'm sorry it was a bit hard to see for some of you. A big round of applause for you three guys

And so, as it is the last Razzmatazz, let's all remember until September when we're back, that really important thing that Jesus died for all of us; and that it's to give us a really exciting life with Him.

Oli Spence