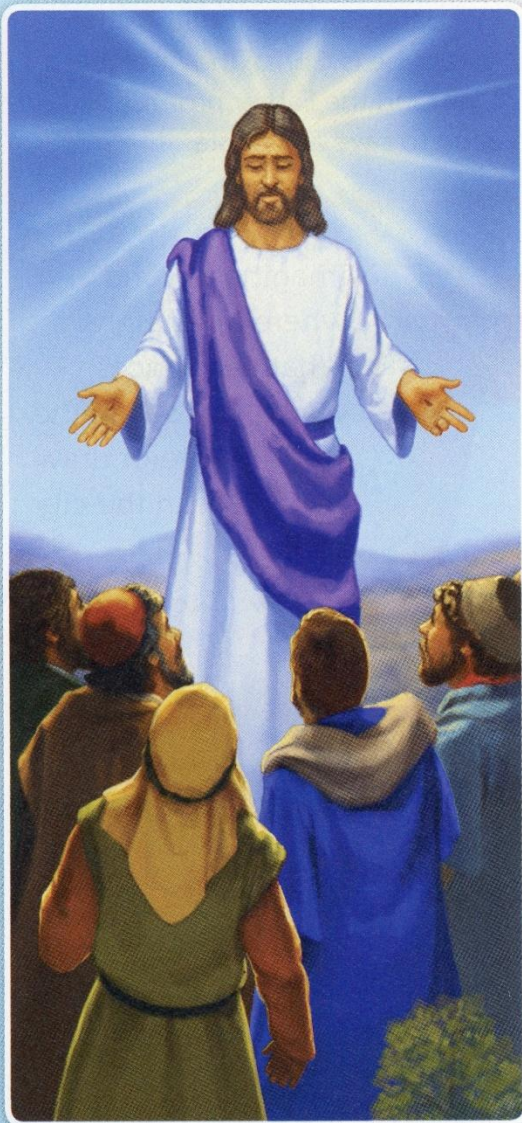




Catholics Believe

Pasch means "passing over." Jesus passed over to his Father by his Death and Resurrection. The Church calls Jesus' passion, Death, Resurrection and glorious Ascension into Heaven, the Paschal Mystery. We celebrate this mystery in the Mass.



The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

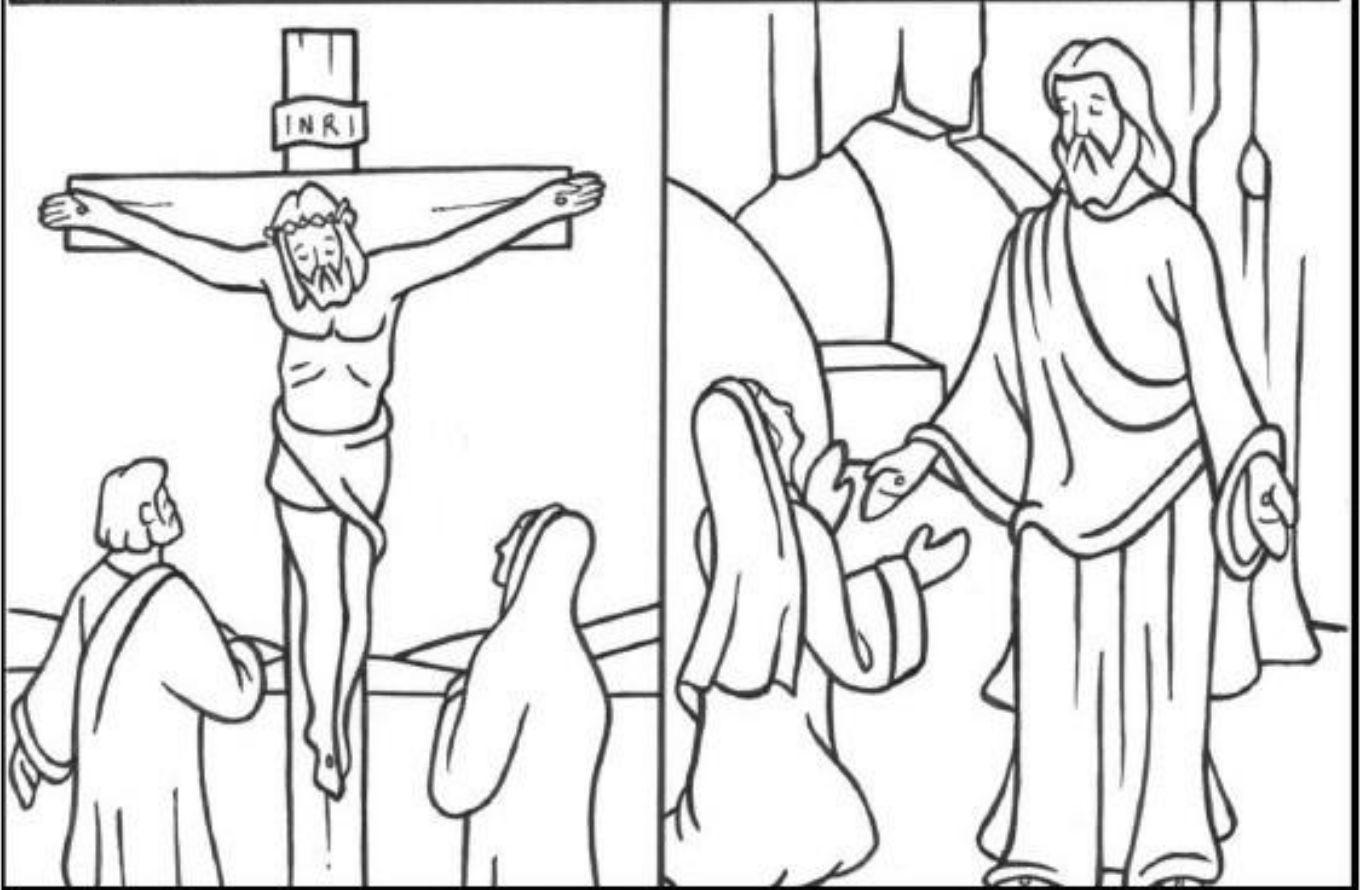
Many religious and political rulers were angry that Jesus taught and healed in God's name. They worried that he would become more powerful than they were. So some of these leaders had Jesus arrested, put on trial, and sentenced to die on a wooden cross. This form of punishment is called *crucifixion*.

Because Jesus loved us, he was willing to suffer death for our sake. He carried his cross to Calvary, the place near Jerusalem where criminals were crucified. Roman soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross. Even on the cross, Jesus was filled with love. He prayed, "*Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*" (Luke 23:34). Jesus died to save all people from sin and to bring about God's Kingdom in the world.

After his death, Jesus was buried in a tomb. On the third day after his Death, Jesus was raised from the dead. Forty days later, he ascended to his Father in Heaven. By his Death, Resurrection and Ascension, Jesus makes possible salvation for all who believe in him. Like Jesus, we too can rise to new life. We can share eternal life with God. This is God's promise to us. We celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus on Easter Sunday and at every celebration of the Mass.

ACTIVITY

Learn two words Jesus uses to describe himself and what he teaches us about eternal life. Use your Bible to look up John 11:25–26. Copy the Scripture passage on the lines.



The Good News of Resurrection



It was early on Easter morning. Mary Magdalene with some other women went to where Jesus' body had been laid. They brought perfumed oils to anoint his body according to Jewish custom.

When the women arrived at the tomb, they saw that something had changed. The rock that had covered the opening of the tomb was rolled aside. They looked inside the tomb. Jesus' body was gone.

Two angels of God appeared to the women. They said, "You are looking for Jesus. He is not here. He has been raised up."

The women could hardly believe the Good News about Jesus' Resurrection. They hurried to find the other disciples. They shared the Good News, "Jesus is not dead. He is alive! He is risen from the grave!"

Based on Luke 24:1-9

Jesus, through your
Resurrection we have
new life. Like the women
disciples, we want to
share the good news of
our faith with others.
Amen.

Jesus Returns to the Father

It had been many days since Jesus had risen from the dead. Jesus had told his Apostles that soon the Holy Spirit would come to them.

One day, Jesus led them from Jerusalem into the countryside. He said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes to you. Then you will teach others what I have taught you. You will teach in all of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth." Jesus lifted his hands and blessed the Apostles.

Then Jesus was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight. As they stood looking up, two men in white robes suddenly stood before them. "Why do you look up to heaven?" they asked the Apostles. "Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will return in the same way."

The Apostles happily returned to Jerusalem.

Based on Acts 1:6–12; Luke 24:50–53



Jesus Christ, the Apostles were happy because they saw your power and glory when you went up to heaven. Show us too the way to heaven. Amen.

The Church celebrates the Ascension of the Lord forty days after Easter Sunday. On this day we remember Jesus' return to his Father in heaven. Jesus promised us that one day we, too, will enter the kingdom of heaven.

Mother of the Church

Mary was always a loyal disciple of Jesus. Mary stood by Jesus as he died on the cross. It was at the cross that Jesus gave Mary to us as our mother. Jesus knew that the Church would need a good example for all Christians to follow. That is why just before he died, Jesus said to Mary and another disciple, “Mary, this is your son. My son, this is your mother.”

Based on John 19:26–27

After Jesus returned to the Father in heaven, the disciples and Mary stayed together. They became like a family. Mary was with the first Christians on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Pentecost Sunday is known as the day our Church was born. The first Christians loved Mary and treated her with much respect. They knew that Mary had always been faithful to God. The first Christians believed they could always count on Mary, the first disciple, to help them.

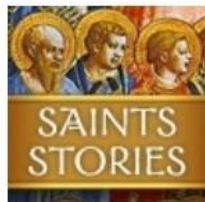
Jesus is the head of the Church. The Church honors Mary as the Mother of the Church because she is the mother of Jesus, the Son of God. Mary shows her love and care for us. She is a good example for us to follow. Mary brings our prayers and worries to God.

Mary,
Mother of the Church,
pray to Jesus, your
Son, for us. Ask him to
strengthen us to be
his followers, especially
to do the right thing.
Amen.



Saint Mary Magdalene

Feast Day July 22



Mary Magdalene was one of Christ's disciples. She has been identified with several Marys in the Gospel: Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus; Mary, the sinner who washed Jesus' feet with her tears; Mary, a woman who cared for Jesus and his apostles on their journey.

Today scholars believe that Mary Magdalene was not the sinful woman in Scripture although she has been confused with this unnamed woman for centuries.

Matthew, Mark, and John record that Mary of Magdala was present at the crucifixion of Jesus and that she was among the women who visited the tomb on Easter morning. Luke mentions her presence only at the tomb on Easter. According to John, Mary was specially privileged to see and speak to the risen Lord on Easter morning. She thought he was the gardener until he said her name.

So Mary Magdalene was near Jesus in his darkest hour and again in his most glorious hour. Moreover, she was an outstanding disciple of Jesus. Because Mary Magdalene was the one who brought the news of Jesus' resurrection to the apostles, she is called the Apostle to the Apostles. For centuries St. Mary Magdalene has been considered a model of complete generosity and of sincere sorrow for sin.

