

The Resurrection of Jesus

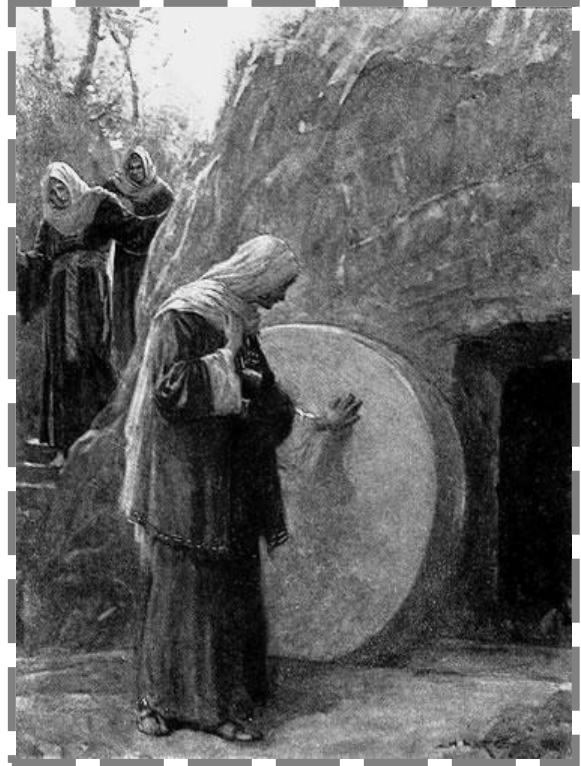
Grace: Ask for the grace to be glad and to rejoice intensely because of the great joy and the glory of Jesus.

Introduction:

For the past week you have sat in the uncertainty of Jesus' death. Your friend Jesus whom you had loved and put all your hopes has been killed. This reflection is meant to focus on the time between laying Jesus in the tomb to the moment of discovering Jesus' resurrection. Try not to rush this reflection. Allow the GOOD NEWS of Jesus' resurrection to sink in gradually. You have grieved deeply the suffering and the loss of your friend. Allow yourself time to move from grief to joy.

Start by remembering how you responded to Jesus' death? What did you say or do with Mary after Jesus was taken off of the cross? Did you help to prepare Jesus' body for burial? What did you and the disciples talk about? What thoughts and feelings go through your mind as you laid Jesus in the tomb?

According to custom, you go with Mary to the tomb only to find that Jesus' body is not there. What is your reaction to not finding Jesus? Where is Jesus? The young man in the tomb says that you will see Jesus in Galilee. How does hearing those words make you feel? Do you believe him?

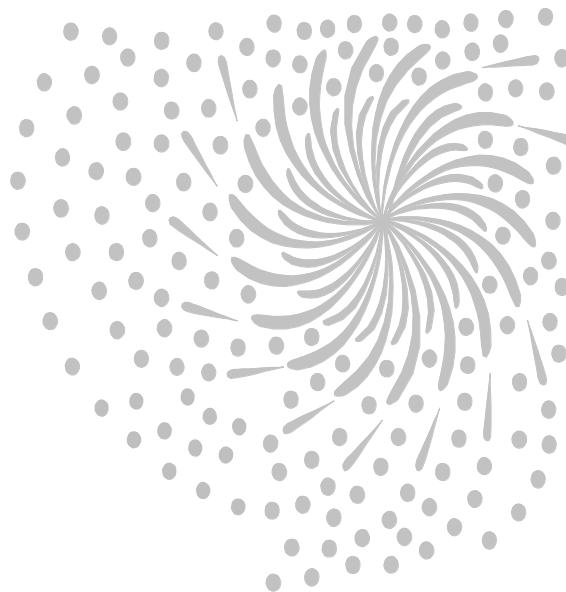


Although not recorded in Scripture, Saint Ignatius suggests that Jesus first appeared to Mary, His Mother. Talk to Mary about her encounter with the risen Jesus. Describe the expression on her face, the tone of her voice. Some others have reported seeing Jesus. What is your response to them? Does Jesus appear to you? What is response at seeing Jesus? What does Jesus say or do upon seeing you? After seeing Jesus, how do you describe your experience? With whom do you share this Good News?

You may find it helpful during the week to go back and allow yourself to repeat this prayer. Focus on the images, words, feelings and questions that really stood out to you. Remember that a repetition is much like an instant replay of a key play during a game. You do not watch the whole game again but instead slow down and look at the highlights in greater detail so that you can savor the moment and open yourself to the opportunity to receive all of the grace that God desires to share with you.

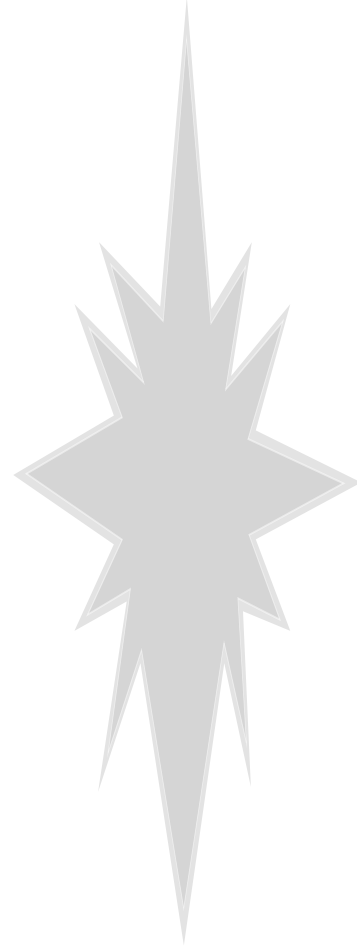
In practical, every day prayer you can stay with an image or Scripture passage for as long as you are obtaining spiritual nourishment from it. When you feel that the Spirit is prompting, then you can move on to another prayer passage.

Mark 16:1-13 The Resurrection - When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' " Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid. When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it. Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either.



Luke 24:1-12 The Resurrection - On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' " Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

In these or similar words ... When Jesus died, I was disappointed and lost. I was so sure that Jesus was the Messiah. Now that he was dead, I felt like I was betrayed. I thought I had wasted so much time and effort. I wasn't only sad about Jesus not being the Messiah. He was my good friend and we had spent so much time together. After Jesus was taken off the cross, Mary and I went home for a while. She cried a lot, but eventually we were having a great time sharing memories we had of Jesus. Mary and I watched as Joseph prepared Jesus' body for burial. It was a very solemn and quiet time. When the rock was being rolled up in place, I started to cry a little because this moment really showed that Jesus was gone. The disciples and I attempted to have a brief meeting to decide our future. We all decided that it was too early to do this because none of us knew what to do. When the Sabbath was over, I went with Mary and some other people to anoint Jesus' body. When the tomb came into view, we realized that the rock had been moved. The first thought that came to my mind was a group of people vandalized the tomb and had desecrated his body. I was extremely angry. When we entered the tomb, we found a young man in the brightest white robe I have ever seen. He told us Jesus had risen. I felt so bad for actually thinking that Jesus was gone. I felt like I had learned nothing from everything he taught us about faith. When the young man in white told us that Jesus would meet us in Galilee I was excited and wanted to go there. I thought the disciples too would be glad to hear the Good news. When others told me they saw Jesus, I was extremely jealous, but at the same time excited because the young man's claims were confirmed.



Practicing What Your Preach ... To better share in the joy of Jesus' resurrection, attend a party. After the party, reflect on what it is that you are celebrating and the ways that you expressed your joy. Think of ways that you can share the joy you experienced with others.

