

# Read

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17,  
22-23

Colossians 3:1-4 or 1

Corinthians 5:6b-8

John 20:1-9

## LIVING THE WORD

# Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

April 5, 2026



## REFLECTION

Is there anything or anyone that you would drop everything for and physically run toward if you knew it or they were close by? Today's Gospel is filled with a sense of urgency as we see the reactions of Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John to the news that Jesus' tomb is empty. Mary Magdalene runs to tell the apostles this news. When Peter and John hear it, they run to the tomb to see for themselves. John even breaks out a little faster than Peter to make it to the tomb first.

In 2016, future Irish Olympian Phil Healy didn't yet know that she could surpass some of the fastest runners during an Irish University Athletics Association game and that she would eventually go on to participate in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics (held in 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic). The video of her coming back from behind during a race in April 2016 went viral and is evidence of how belief can inspire action. The apostles may have wanted to give up on their faith after witnessing the crucifixion on Good Friday. But like Healy saw that glimmer of possibility during her race, the apostles took the opening of hope on Easter Sunday morning and literally ran with it.



## ACTION

The apostles were afraid for their lives after seeing what was done to Jesus on Good Friday, but hope and possibility freed them to act and run toward the empty tomb on Easter morning. Take some time this week in prayer envisioning yourself as either Mary Magdalene, Peter, or John in today's Gospel passage. What would you be feeling or thinking during this moment? How can you apply these thoughts and feelings to your daily pursuit of faithful discipleship?



Watch Phil Healy's  
comeback run:

<https://youtu.be/HRa7mQg73Eg>



## QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What are you running toward? What things are you passionate about in your life that inspire you to take action?
- ❖ What are your motivations for your goals? What might be holding you back from attaining them?

# Introduction to **EASTER TIME**



## **The Season**

Alleluia! Christ is risen! The season of Easter Time is a fifty-day celebration commemorating the reality that Christ has conquered death and reigns with the Father for eternity. Through his passion, death, and resurrection, we are immersed into Christ's paschal mystery. We gaze again upon the face of love poured out, sacrificed for us and for all, the face of God that we see through Christ's life and love. And, we are taught yet again that this loving way is to be our way, the Way.

The Easter Gospel accounts bring us face to face with the mystery of Christ's resurrection, so that we, with the disciples, may move from unbelief to belief, declare our love of Christ, and recommit ourselves to sharing this love in our world.

If we have kept Lent well, Easter Time will help us solidify our commitment to Christ in our daily living. If we slipped during Lent, letting go of resolutions and falling into less-than-Christlike patterns of behavior, this season may be one of new opportunity to live in the hope and joy of the resurrection. Through Christ, we no longer need to despair: we have all we need to overcome the temptations and challenges of life. By the end of the season, we will be reminded that we are promised the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, who will guide us and remind us of all we have learned from our Lord.

There is no doubt that we need Easter's joy, hope, and love. There is much in our lives as individuals and in the world that speaks more of death

and darkness than of life and light. It is essential, then, that we linger in Easter Time, for its full fifty days, and carry it as witnesses into our lives. Christ's risen life has the power to change the world; we must carry this life through our daily living, as Easter people, now and forever.

## **Celebrating Easter Time with Teens**

While Lent has a particular sort of appeal for teens who are developmentally moving from concrete to abstract thinking, Easter Time may be a challenge, particularly for younger teens. The resounding themes of love and the assurance of the Holy Spirit provide the concrete direction needed for younger teens, while the mystery of the resurrection, ascension and descent of the Holy Spirit may be more appealing to older youth. Bring the season to life in your reflections by sharing your own examples of Christian life and love, and invite the teens to do the same for one another.

## **Preparing the Liturgical Environment**

The white of Easter Time is bright after the long Lenten bareness and penitential violet. Add an Easter lily, baptismal candle, and green plants to your environment to reinforce the focus of the season on the newness of life, which we gain through Christ's resurrection. Include a Bible or lectionary, open to the Easter narrative, and a strip of cloth or paper on which is written "Alleluia!"



April 5, 2026

# EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

## LECTIONARY #42ABC

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8

Sequence: *Victimae paschali laudes*

John 20:1-9

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

Today we celebrate the holiest day in our liturgical year, Easter Sunday. While we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with great joy, the disciples we encounter in John's Gospel were more confused. It took them a while to comprehend what had happened. They saw the stone rolled away from the tomb, the burial clothes, and the empty tomb. They had not yet met the risen Lord, but they began to believe. Their witness gives us an example to follow in our own journey of faith. Today we celebrate in joy for we know without a doubt that Jesus has conquered death and has been raised to the right hand of God.

**Q FOCUS:** *Mary Magdalene and the Beloved Disciple are examples of evangelization and faith.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

The waiting and penitential days of Lent are over! We celebrate the great joy of Easter for fifty days (ten days longer than our observance of Lent). We celebrate Jesus' resurrection and his conquering of death on the third day, then for forty days, we grow with the disciples as Jesus appears to them, explaining to them his resurrection and teaching them so they are prepared to carry on his message. Forty days into

Easter Time, we celebrate Jesus' ascension into heaven, and then ten days later, we conclude Easter Time by celebrating the disciples receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

### Church Teaching Connection

"[I]t is the Resurrection itself that opens us to greater hope, for it opens our life and the life of the world to the eternal future of God, to full happiness, to the certainty that evil, sin and death may be overcome. And this leads to living daily situations with greater trust, to facing them with courage and determination. Christ's Resurrection illuminates these everyday situations with a new light. The Resurrection of Christ is our strength!" (Pope Francis, General Audience, April 3, 2013).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

Alleluia, alleluia.

### Gospel

John 20:1-9

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't

know where they put him.” So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

While there are three disciples mentioned in today's Gospel, two of them stand out as being somewhat lesser well-known than the third. We know many things about Peter, because he is mentioned frequently in the New Testament and also because our tradition names him as the first pope. But the other two, Mary of Magdala (Mary Magdalene) and the Beloved Disciple (the name scholars usually give in reference to “the other disciple whom Jesus loved”), are slightly less well-known. Nevertheless, these two disciples give us a great witness of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

► **How does Jesus feel about all his disciples, including you?**

We know that Jesus healed Mary Magdalene from seven demons (Lk 8:1–3). She became one of Jesus' most devoted disciples and was one of only a small group of disciples who remained with Jesus through his crucifixion and death, along with the Beloved Disciple and Mary, Jesus' mother (Jn 19:25–27). In

today's Gospel, we hear how Mary Magdalene was the first to arrive at the empty tomb. Her dedication and faith to Jesus was so great that she went to the tomb early to pay her respects and be closer to the place where Jesus was.

In the verses that follow today's reading (Jn 20:11–18), we also hear how Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first before all the other disciples as she sat outside the tomb weeping. Her profound love and dedication to Jesus both in his life and death is an inspiration for our discipleship today.

► **Imagine yourself in Mary Magdalene's place. You have followed Jesus throughout his ministry, and then watched as he was arrested, crucified, and died. What are you feeling after seeing the empty tomb?**

Mary Magdalene is recognized as the “apostle to the apostles,” a title given to her by St. Thomas Aquinas. She was the first to share the Good News of the resurrection with the other disciples. When she saw the empty tomb, she ran and got Simon Peter and “the other disciple whom Jesus loved” to show them the empty tomb.

► **Why do you think this other disciple is not named?**

There are conflicting opinions as to who this “other disciple,” the Beloved Disciple, is in this reading. Tradition holds that he is the author of the Gospel of John. Scholars hold different viewpoints on who exactly this person was though. Some believe it is the apostle John, while others believe the figure to be a symbolic, “perfect” disciple. Whomever he was, it is this disciple who saw the tomb and believed. While the others seemed confused and bewildered, this disciple knew. His deep faith brought him to the only conclusion possible, and he believed.

Mary Magdalene, the first to see the empty tomb and share the Good News, and the Beloved Disciple, who was the first to believe, are models of Christian faith and discipleship. And even more so, we know that they were close friends with Jesus. We know that Mary Magdalene was with Jesus for the majority of his ministry, and we can assume that if Jesus loved the Beloved Disciple, he too was with Jesus throughout his ministry. During this Easter season, we reflect on these two individuals of great faith and

contemplate how we can be more like them in our own discipleship and in our relationship with Jesus. These fifty days of Easter are an opportunity to spend time with Jesus and find joy in him, to work on becoming closer to him in faith and friendship, and to deepen our belief in his gift of eternal life, given to us through the resurrection.

## Wrapping It Up

*Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 168.*

**The disciples at the tomb are models of faith, discipleship, and friendship with Jesus.**

**The Easter season is one of great joy and an opportunity to become closer to Jesus.**

**The witness of Mary of Magdalene and the Beloved Disciple inspire us to share the Good News and trust in Christ.**

## Act on the Word

### The Love of Easter

*For this activity, you will need plastic Easter eggs, baskets, Bibles or phones or tablets, and some Easter treats.*

Today is a joyful day, and your group can celebrate with a little Easter fun. Ask the teens to find a partner and to line up about ten feet apart from each other, facing each other in rows. Give one side of teens an empty basket or bucket. Give their partners a basket filled with anywhere between fifteen to thirty plastic Easter eggs.

Have the players with the empty baskets put them on their heads (they can hold them there). When you say "go," give the players with the eggs one minute to toss their eggs into the baskets of

their teammates. When the time is up, count how many eggs are in each basket. The pair with the most eggs in the basket wins. Switch sides so the other player gets to toss, and then play again.

When you have finished playing, share some Easter treats with the group and have a brief discussion about the significance of this day. Easter celebrates the greatest love story there ever was, the love of God for us all. Invite them to share other love stories that they know, either from their lives, the news, or from history. Remind them that Jesus' love for us was greater than all of these. Have the teens work together in small groups, using Bibles or their phones, to find verses about God's love. Encourage them to write these verses in their journals or set them as reminders on their phones so that they are reminded of God's love throughout the week.

## Closing Prayer

*Almighty and ever-living God,  
today we rejoice in the gift of salvation.  
Fill our hearts with Easter joy  
and grant us abundant love and faith  
so that we may, like Mary Magdalene,  
run to share the Good News with others  
and, like the Beloved Disciple,  
remain steadfast in our belief in Christ.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
Amen.*

## For Next Sunday

*To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.*