

Pflaum VISIONS

April 12 & April 19, 2020
Easter & 2nd Sunday of Easter
(Sunday of Divine Mercy)

SUNDAY GOSPEL

Easter Sunday

John 20:1-9

Jesus Is Risen! Alleluia!

Narrator 1: Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to Jesus' tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the entrance, so she ran off to tell Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved.

Mary Magdalene: The Lord has been taken from the tomb! We don't know where they have put him!

Narrator 2: Peter and the beloved disciple started out on their way toward the tomb. They both ran, but the beloved disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He did not enter the tomb, but he bent down to peer in and saw the

wrappings that had covered Jesus' body lying on the ground.

Narrator 1: Simon Peter came along beside him and entered the tomb. He observed the wrappings on the ground and saw the piece of cloth that had covered Jesus' head. It was not lying with the wrappings but was rolled up in a place by itself.

Narrator 2: Then the beloved disciple, who had arrived first at the tomb, went in.

Beloved Disciple: I see, and I believe.

Narrator 1: Remember, as yet they did not understand the Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.

TALK

- 1 What do Mary Magdalene, the beloved disciple, and Simon Peter see at the tomb?
- 2 How do you think Simon Peter feels when he sees the tomb?

Catholic FAITH WORD

EASTER The day the Church celebrates Jesus' Resurrection. Easter is the high point of the Liturgical Year.



I'M GLAD YOU'RE SAD

My parents got the phone call about nine o'clock on Tuesday night. I overheard them wondering if school would be canceled.

"Staying home won't help, Monica," my dad told my mom.

"It's better to be with the other kids," my mom agreed.

Why don't you tell me what's up? I wondered. Then they did.

My friend Toby had died in a car accident. He was thirteen, like me.

It wasn't often that our entire eighth-grade class was quiet. But on Wednesday morning we were. We sat staring at our desks. Our class had only twenty students. Now it had nineteen.

Our English teacher, Mr. Laker, scrapped his lesson plan for the day. "Some of you were friends with Toby, and for



Toby and I lived next door almost our whole lives.

Toby was really good at ultimate kickball.

all of you, he was your classmate," Mr. Laker said. He stopped and took a deep breath. "I think it might help to tell stories about Toby and remember him."

The room stayed silent. No one wanted to share. No one wanted to talk about Toby in the past tense. No one wanted to be the first to say he

was gone. Eventually, Toby's best friend, Adam, broke the silence.

"Toby and I lived next door almost our whole lives," Adam said. "Our moms joked that they either had two sons or none. We were always together, running through sprinklers, trying to make homemade lemonade, pranking our dads, turning trash day into ultimate kickball..."

Adam's voice stopped, and silence took over. He fiddled with his knuckles.

We sat at a table, blank looks all around. We all felt sad. A drunk driver had just killed our friend.



He always tried to escape when we weren't allowed outside for recess.

I hope that Toby is still somewhere, that he didn't just stop existing.



Then Tomás chimed in. “Toby was really good at ultimate kickball even though I still think sometimes he cheated,” he said.

Adam laughed at Tomás’s dig. “For Christmas, his mom got Toby a Switch™ to give him something to do inside. Even if it was raining like crazy, Toby would be knocking on my window, trying to get me to come out in the rain and the thunder. His mom hated it when he came in muddy and soaking wet.”

Claire started to say something but had to clear her throat before she could make words come out. “In elementary school, he always tried to escape when we weren’t allowed outside for recess. One time, he succeeded.” She laughed. “The substitute teacher went to get something from the teacher’s lounge. As soon as he left, Toby led some of us outside to the playground.”

“I remember that!” Anne pointed at Claire with a smile. “I was too chicken to go outside in the rain. The sub came back and freaked when half the class was missing. He tried to get us to tell what happened, but we didn’t give them up. Another teacher helped him. They found Toby and a bunch of us outside puddle jumping in the mud.”

“Yeah, we had to sit through the rest of the day and a big lecture in our soaking clothes,” Claire said, grinning. “It was worth it.”

“I think we all got colds,” Adam joked.

“Except for Toby,” Tomás laughed. “Toby never got sick.”

The room fell silent again. “I’m sad that I didn’t know Toby better,” Mr. Laker said. “What do you think Toby’s doing right now? Do you think he’s in Heaven?” Mr. Laker posed the question to the class.

Everyone looked at each other. I suppose we all had that question. Did we believe in Heaven? We go to Catholic school. Most of us are Catholic. Aren’t we supposed to believe in it? I thought we did. But until now, I had never really thought about it.

“I hope Heaven is real,” Wyatt whispered aloud.

“Why do you say that?” asked Mr. Laker.

“Because I hope that Toby is still somewhere. That he didn’t just stop existing.”

I saw a tear run halfway down Wyatt’s face.

“I don’t feel like I knew Toby very well,” Wyatt added, quickly wiping his cheek. “It

doesn’t make sense to be crying. We weren’t really friends, just classmates. But now that he’s gone, I feel sad he’s not here.”

“It doesn’t matter how well you knew him,” Adam said. “We were a part of his life. And that’s important. I’m glad you’re sad.”

“I’ve never really thought about Heaven before,” Tomás said. “It has to be real though. Toby’s life can’t just be over. Maybe he’s up there right now teaching all the Apostles how to play ultimate kickball.” Everyone laughed, even Mr. Laker.

“That’s a wonderful picture,”

Mr. Laker said. “It’s OK not to have all the answers. Our religion leaves room for questions. Our faith tells us Toby is with God. This circle right here,” he said, gesturing to us in our seats, “is also what religion is about. We can be support together so we don’t feel alone. A big question like death doesn’t have an answer. It’s where faith begins. Sharing helps us treasure Toby’s life with us.”

“Do you guys remember that time Toby brought his rat to show the preschool kids?” I heard myself say.

“TALK”

1 When have you experienced the loss of someone close to you? What was it like? How did you find support?

2 Why is it comforting to tell stories about a person who has died?

3 What do you believe about Heaven?



SUNDAY GOSPEL

2nd Sunday of Easter (Sunday of Divine Mercy) John 20:19–31

Jesus Appears to His Friends and Disciples

Note: The Gospel for the Second Sunday of Easter follows the account of Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene (John 20:10–18).

Narrator 1: Peter and the beloved disciple left, but Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb. She saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet.

Angels: Woman, why are you weeping?

Mary Magdalene: They have taken Jesus away, and I do not know where they have laid him.

Narrator 2: Then Mary turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was he.

Jesus: Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?

Narrator 1: Mary thought Jesus was the gardener.

Mary Magdalene: Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus: Mary!

Mary Magdalene: Rabbouni!

Narrator 2: This word means "teacher."

Jesus: Do not hold on to me because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my friends and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

Narrator 1: Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples:

Mary Magdalene: I have seen the Lord.

Jesus Appears Again

Narrator 2: On the evening of that first day of the week, even though the disciples had locked the doors of the place where they were for fear of the officials, Jesus came and stood before them.

Jesus: Peace be with you.

Narrator 1: When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced.

Jesus: Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.

Narrator 2: Then Jesus breathed on them.

Jesus: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of others, they are forgiven them; if you hold them bound, they are held bound.

Narrator 1: It happened that one of Jesus' followers, Thomas (the name means "twin"), was absent when Jesus came.



and DOCTRINE

Connecting GOSPEL

Jesus Gives Us Joy and New Life

On Good Friday, we feel the fear of Jesus' friends. They walked with Jesus, their good friend, and saw him beaten, bullied, and killed. On Easter Sunday, they find that he is not in the tomb, and they fear that his body has been stolen. Imagine Mary Magdalene's joy when Jesus calls her name. Think of the excitement when the Risen Jesus appears to his frightened friends in the locked room.

The joy of Jesus' rising is just as real on this Easter as it was the day he rose from the dead (CCC, 656). We call ourselves "Easter people." We are connected to Jesus' friends

who became Easter people more than 2,000 years ago.

We celebrate both Jesus' Death and his Resurrection. "The Paschal Mystery has two aspects: by his death, Christ liberates us from sin; by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life" (CCC, 654). But the Easter story is not yet complete. God's plan for our salvation includes Jesus' suffering, Death, Resurrection, and his Ascension to God in Heaven. This is why we celebrate the Easter season for fifty days.

“ ” **1** The Gospels we read during Holy Week and Easter bring up a lot of emotions even as we hear them today. List examples of how Jesus' friends felt throughout his Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

2 Imagine yourself as one of Jesus' friends and followers. How do you think you would have reacted to the news that Jesus was not in his tomb on Easter Sunday?

Easter Calls Us to Be Witnesses

Other Disciples: We have seen the Lord!

Thomas: I'll never believe it without probing the nail prints in his hands, without putting my finger in the nail marks and my hand into his side.

Narrator 2: A week later, the disciples were once again in the room. This time, Thomas was with them. Despite the locked doors, Jesus came and stood before them.

Jesus: Peace be with you. Take your finger, Thomas, and examine my hands. Put your hand into my side. Do not persist in your unbelief but believe!

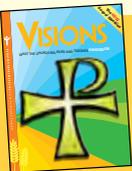
Thomas: My Lord and my God!

Jesus: You became a believer because you saw me. Blessed are they who have not seen and have believed.

Narrator 2: Jesus performed other signs as well—signs not recorded here—in the presence of his disciples. But these have been recorded to help you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, so that through this faith you may have life in his name.

TALK

- 1 How does Mary Magdalene recognize Jesus?
- 2 Why does Thomas refuse to believe Jesus is risen? What causes him to change his mind?
- 3 What Church traditions for celebrating Easter help you understand your Christian faith?



Easter Sunday is first and foremost about Jesus' Resurrection. It also marks the founding of Christianity. From the moment that Jesus' body

is discovered missing from the tomb, his followers gather together. The word *church* means "gathering." Turn to page 12 in *What the Church Believes and Teaches* to discover who belongs to the Church, the Body of Christ.

Jesus' friends become witnesses of his Resurrection to new life. Mary Magdalene becomes Jesus' first witness. When she recognizes him in the garden near the tomb, Jesus sends Mary Magdalene to tell his other disciples that he is risen.

Mary Magdalene, Peter, John, and later, Philip, Paul, Barnabas, Priscilla, Aquila, and countless others go from city to city, proclaiming the Good News of Jesus' Resurrection.

Jesus' friends hear Mary Magdalene's witness that she has seen Jesus, but they are still afraid. Among them is Peter, who told people he didn't know Jesus, and the other disciples who fled for their lives when Jesus was arrested. Jesus comes among them and establishes a tradition of peace. He breathes the Spirit upon his frightened friends, just as the Creator breathed the life of God into the first human being. Jesus forgives them and commands them to become a community that forgives and makes peace.

In early Christian times and in courtrooms today, witnesses speak face-to-face with listeners who can judge how true their words are. People throughout the world believe the witnesses of Jesus' Resurrection, like the disciples believed Mary.

Today, missionaries continue throughout the world proclaiming the Good News of Jesus' Resurrection and its promise of new life for believers. Every Christian who lives and loves like Jesus testifies to his new life. We become missionaries to one another.

What are ways that you and your family continue Jesus' tradition of forgiving and making peace?

How can missionaries today influence people to believe in Jesus?

- ___ By doing the good works Jesus did
- ___ By living among people as one of them, eating what they eat, speaking the language they speak
- ___ By following Jesus' way in how they live
- ___ By teaching them

What is a way you can be a missionary right now where you live?



A to Z

Jesus Crossword Puzzle

Near the end of the Book of Revelation, Jesus speaks and says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Revelation 22:13). *Alpha* is the first letter of the Greek alphabet; *omega* is the last. Jesus is the A

and the Z, the one who shows us the meaning of human life from the beginning of time to the end.

Review some of what you already know about Jesus and learn more about him by

completing the A-to-Z Jesus Crossword Puzzle on these pages. The answers will begin with the same letters as the letters of the clues. Use the Scripture references to help you.

A The mystery of the Risen Jesus leaving Earth to be with God.

B Jesus praises people who are poor, lowly, meek, merciful, pure of heart, and hungry for justice in sayings that each begin with the words, “Blessed are ...” (Matthew 5:3–12).

C A humiliating form of public punishment the Romans used for slaves and non-Romans who committed terrible crimes such as murder, treason, and rebellion. The way in which Jesus was executed.

D Israel’s greatest king and ancestor of Jesus (2 Samuel 7:8–16).

E The sacrament that celebrates Jesus’ body broken for us and blood poured out for us. Its name comes from the Greek word that means “giving thanks.”

F Trust in and commitment to a person; firm belief in someone or in truths.

G The story of the life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. The word means “Good News” and is the name of the first four books of the New Testament.

H Jesus has two natures—one is divine; the other is _____.

I The mystery of God becoming human.

J Catholics are Christians. Jesus was a _____.

K The Reign of God that Jesus came to establish on earth. We pray for its coming in the Our Father or the Lord’s Prayer.

L A title for Jesus that honors his power and authority; it comes from the Greek word *kyrios*.

M A Hebrew word that means “the anointed one” (Acts 2:36).

N A word for the birth of Jesus.

O The last letter of the Greek alphabet.

P A man or woman during the time of Israel’s kings who spoke God’s word to the king and acted as Israel’s conscience, calling king and people to keep their covenant with God and care for the poor.

Q Governor of Syria when Jesus was born (Luke 2:2).

R The mystery that describes what Jesus’ Death and Resurrection do for all people. In Jesus’ time, the word meant paying a ransom. Today, it refers to trading coupons for merchandise (see Ephesians 1:7, 14).

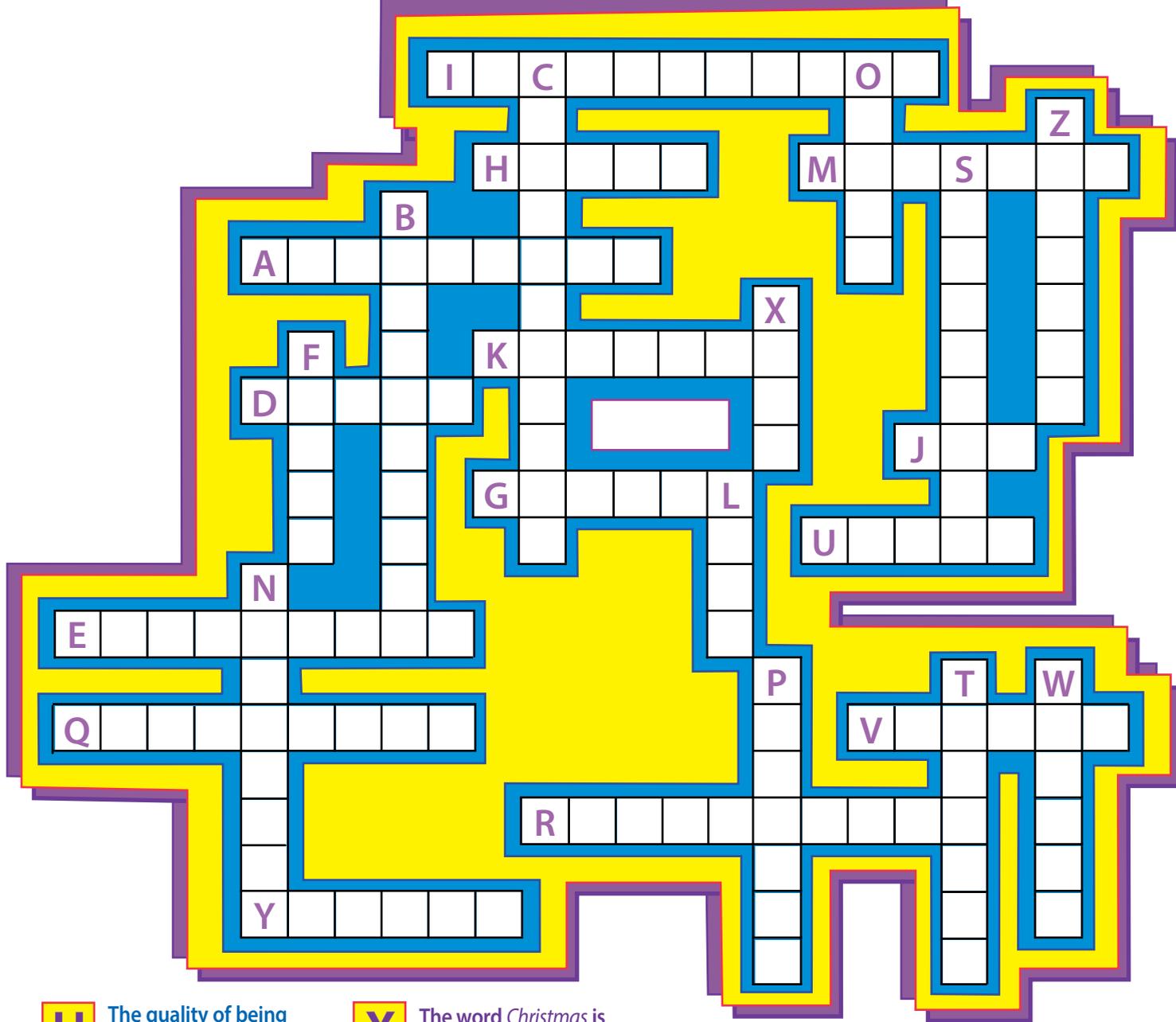
S A sign that makes present Jesus’ loving, healing, and forgiving actions for us.

T The mystery of One God in Three Divine Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

CHRIST, the Alpha and the Omega, is the goal of **HUMAN HISTORY**, the focal point of the **LONGINGS** of history and of civilization, the **CENTER** of the human race, the **JOY OF EVERY HEART**, and the answer to all its yearnings.

Vatican II, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, 45





U The quality of being one, the state into which the Kingdom of God will gather all people.

V The mother of Jesus is often called the Blessed ___ Mary.

W The practical knowledge, understanding, good judgment, and skill gained from the experience of living; the books of the Bible that contain proverbs and sayings about such practical experience.

X The word *Christmas* is sometimes written this way because the letter *chi*, written like an English X, is the first letter of Christ's name in Greek.

Y The name for God that Moses learned when God appeared to him in the burning bush. The name means "the one who causes to be."

Z A boy's name that comes from the name of the priest in the Temple who did not trust the words of the angel Gabriel.

Answers are in the Teaching Guide.

FLASH CARDS Find twenty-six index cards. Cut out the definitions. Glue one each on the cards. Print the corresponding letter on the other side of each card. Divide into teams and see who can remember the most answers to the definitions.

MOBILE Create a mobile with the names of Jesus. Cut out artistic representations of Jesus from earlier copies of *Visions* and other magazines. Use the following names and others you know from songs and prayers:

Jesus
Son of God
Messiah
Savior
Son of Man

Christ
Lord
Beloved Son
Redeemer
Alpha and Omega



Easter Faith Makes All Things New

Gather in your church or in a prayer space in your room. Place the Easter candle from church or another candle in the middle of your prayer space. Have a large bowl of water ready to place on a table near the candle. Put a bouquet of flowers or a plant on the table. Then celebrate this Easter prayer service together.

Leader: Today we gather to celebrate God’s love for us.

Candle Lighter: We light our Easter candle. This candle reminds us that God raised Jesus to new life.

All: Alleluia! Alleluia! Jesus is risen.

Water Bearer: (*Places bowl of water on table.*) This water reminds us of Baptism, when we become members of God’s family.

All: Alleluia! Alleluia! Jesus is risen.

Reader 1: Sometimes, God, we believe like Jesus’ beloved disciple. We’re amazed by the new life we see around us, and we are ready to believe.

All: Sing a new song! Rejoice!

Reader 2: Sometimes, God, we have faith like Mary Magdalene. We hear Jesus calling us, and we believe. We know Jesus reaches out to us like a friend.

All: We hear God’s voice. Alleluia!

Reader 3: Sometimes, God, we believe like Peter. We know Jesus forgives us, and we believe. We gather together and praise Jesus’ name.

All: God makes all things new. Rejoice!

Reader 4: And sometimes, God, we doubt like Thomas. We need to see signs of Jesus’ love. Sometimes we need to touch and feel Jesus working in us and through others.

All: Alleluia! Alleluia! Jesus is risen.

Leader: We come with Jesus, our brother, to ask God to strengthen our faith and help us remember to love others as Jesus loves us. Let us pray the Lord’s Prayer together.

All: Our Father...

Water Bearer: (*Holds up water bowl.*)

All: You have blessed this water, God, through the power of your Holy Spirit. We make the Sign of the Cross with this water to remember that we are baptized and belong to your family.

All come forward and make the Sign of the Cross after dipping the fingertips of one hand in the water.

Girls: God loves us and helps us believe.

Boys: God gives us grace to live in his love.

All: Thank you, God. Amen. Alleluia!

 Play and sing “Easter Alleluia” (*Venture/Visions Music CD, CD-2, #1*).



With My Family and Friends

Scan here for parent resources.



Pray

Alleluia! I am filled with joy that Jesus has been raised from the dead. Help me, God, to share my joy with others. Amen.



Think

How do I share the Good News of Jesus’ Resurrection with others?



Act

We celebrate new life at Easter. Many people celebrate the Sacraments of Christian Initiation at the Easter Vigil Mass. Say a prayer for the newly baptized members of your parish and welcome them into your community.

➔ For free at-home activities, visit  gospelweeklies.com/seasonal