

# Topic: The Paschal Mystery

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IHM

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

# Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and  
the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
Amen.

“Bless us, O Lord, and these thy  
gifts, which we are about to  
receive. From thy bounty, through  
Christ our Lord, Amen.”

# Pascal Mystery in Synoptics: Passion

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- Passion: ‘to suffer’
  - The suffering of Jesus
    - Physical: whipped, tortured
    - Emotional: abandoned, mocked
- Death:
  - Jesus crucified by Romans
- Resurrection: coming into ‘New Life’
  - NOT ‘coming back to life’
- Ascension:
  - Going up into heaven 40 days after the Resurrection



# Pascal Mystery in Synoptics: Death

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- Mk 14-15; Mt 26-27; Lk 22-23
- Charge by Jewish religious leaders: Blasphemy (claiming to be the Son of God); Brought to San Hedrin; can't give death penalty
- Sent to Romans (Pilate) on charge of Treason (claiming to be "King")
  - Pilate sends to Herod (Galilee jurisdiction)
  - Scourges Jesus; Gives choice between Barrabas or Jesus
  - Trying to avoid a riot between those who love and those who hate Jesus
- Shared by all:
  - Conspiracy; Betrayal; Passover; Gethsemane; Arrest; Trial; Death; burial
- Some Unique:
  - Pilate's acquittal & sending to Herod(Lk); mockery (Mt, Mk); guard at tomb (Mt)

# Pascal Mystery in Synoptics: Resurrection

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- On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after Jesus was buried his tomb was found empty
  - Mk 16:1-20 Mt 28:1-15 Lk 24: 1-12
- Shared by all:
  - Women at the tomb
- Unique:
  - Jesus appears to women (Mt, Lk)
- Foreshadows our resurrection





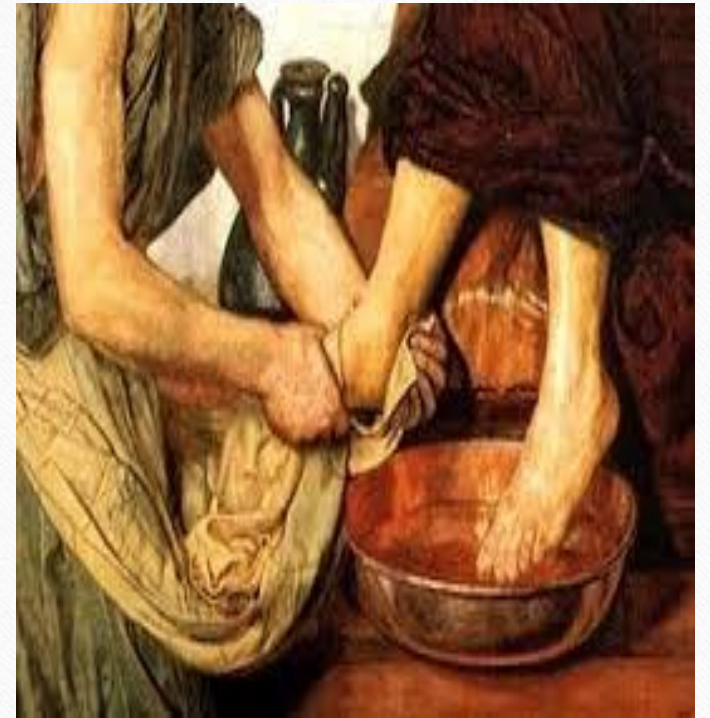
## Pascal Mystery in Synoptics: Post- Resurrection Appearances

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- Mark has none in original
- Matthew Ch. 28
  - Jesus appears to women 1-10
  - Guards report 11-15
  - Jesus appears to 11 apostles 16-20
- Luke Ch. 24
  - Jesus appears to women 1-12
  - The Road to Emmaus 13-35
  - Jesus appears to 11 apostles 36-49

# The Johannine Passion Account

- 9 Chapters (13-21)
  - Compare to synoptics...
  - Jesus is in control; a Glorification, not devastation
- New stories:
  - Washing of the feet 13:1-20
  - New commandment 13:31-35
  - Farewell discourse 14:1-16:33
  - Piercing the side 19:31-37
- Vast additions:
  - Trial before Pilate 18:29-38
  - Crucifixion 19:17-27



# Johannine Post-Resurrection Appearances

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Christ Taking Leave of the Apostles by Duccio di Buoninsegna

- Similar to synoptics
  - Appearance to Women (20:1-18)
  - Appearance to the 11 (20:19-29)
- Additional to synoptics
  - Second appearance to apostles (21:1-14)
  - Discussion with Peter (21:15-23)
  - Beloved Disciple (21:24-25)



# Theology of the Paschal Mystery

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# Jesus as the Suffering Just One



- Isaiah's Suffering Servant (Is 42:1-7; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 53:4-5 & 11-12)
- This is the primary image of Jesus in Mark's Gospel (hence the "Messianic Secret")
- Christians saw these passages as referring to Jesus's Passion & the Paschal Mystery; like Isaiah's suffering servant/just one, Jesus innocently suffers on behalf of humanity and through his Passion, Death & Resurrection saves and redeems us from sin and death.

# Jesus as Redeemer

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- In the Roman world a “redeemer” was a person who paid the price to buy (ransom) the freedom of a slave.
- In the Jewish tradition, there was the concept of the “Kinsman Redeemer;” (ex., story of Ruth & Boaz, King David’s Great-Grandparents; YHWH redeeming the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, etc.)
- Thus for Christians to call Jesus “Redeemer” was to speak of the ransom (his Passion & death) he paid to buy back our freedom from sin/death/Satan.



# Jesus as Mediator



- Hypostatic Union=Jesus was one Divine Person with two natures (human & divine) fully united.
- “What was not assumed [in Christ] was not redeemed; whatever is united to God is saved.”—St. Gregory of Nazianzen
- In other words, because Jesus was fully God and fully human, he was able to perfectly redeem and save humanity as the one true Mediator.
- Jesus, as the perfect Mediator between God and humanity, by entering our humanity, not sinning, and living fully a life of love even unto his own self-giving Passion & death, redeems us from sin and the consequence of death.

# Jesus as the “New Adam”

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- St. Paul: “Just as through one person sin entered the world, and through sin, death, and thus death came to all...if by that one person’s transgression the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one person Jesus Christ overflow for the many” (Romans 5:12, 15).
- Death from one tree; new life from another
- Disobedience to perfect obedience
- Separation to union



# Other Soteriological Titles of Jesus

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- Savior/Deliverer/Liberator
  - Recognizes Jesus's role in saving us from sin, delivering us from evil, and liberating us from Satan.
- Jesus as Sacrifice/Satisfaction
  - Speaks to the Jewish and Pagan systems of substitution and (often blood) sacrifice.
  - Restores the balance of Justice





## Divinization/Deification/Theosis

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- Belief and emphasis (mainly in the Eastern Church) that Jesus saves us by becoming one of us (Incarnation), thus making it possible to become like Him (Theosis).
- "The Son of God became man so that we might become God."—St. Athanasius

# Discussion Questions

- Please share:

- What struck you from today's Mass readings?
- How is Jesus' life, suffering, death, Resurrection and Ascension (Paschal Mystery) a story of how deeply God loves us?
- How does Jesus' suffering help us to view our own?
- What questions did this topic and readings raise in your heart or mind?



## Closing Prayer: Anima Christi (Soul of Christ)

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Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from the side of Christ,  
wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within your wounds conceal me.

Do not permit me to be parted from you.

From the evil foe protect me.

At the hour of my death call me.

And bid me come to you,  
to praise you with all your saints  
for ever and ever.

Amen.