

Journey of Faith

for Easter and Pentecost

In the winter, the trees are asleep,
Ghosts of their former selves.
And the snow falls and softly
Blankets them with white.

And I thank you, God, for the
Quiet beauty of winter.

In the spring, the trees awaken
And shake off their white winter blanket.
New leaves appear,
And the winter, black and white,
Dissolves into the bright, cheerful noise
Of spring.

And I thank you, God, for the
New, emerging beauty of spring.

In the summer, the trees
Reach their leaves to the sky in praise.
They sway in gentle breezes
And shade the ground in shadows.

And I thank you, God, for the
Sparkling, sunlit beauty of summer.

In the autumn, the trees turn
Bright yellow and orange and scarlet.
The leaves say their good-byes in
Seas of color, then
Blanket the ground like the snow to come.

And I thank you, God, for the
Brilliant beauty of fall.

For all the seasons and all the days,
I thank you, God, in so many ways.

(Sarah Cannon, in *You Give Me the Sun*, pages 10–11)

Journey of Faith for Easter and Pentecost

by Mary Shrader



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The publishing team included Barbara A. Murray and Laurie Delgatto, development editors; Lorraine Kilmartin, reviewer; Mary Koehler, permissions editor; prepress and manufacturing coordinated by the prepublication and production services departments of Saint Mary's Press.

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Printed in the United States of America

Printing: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Year: 2014 13 12 11 10 09 08 07 06

ISBN-13: 978-0-88489-893-1

ISBN-10: 0-88489-893-8

Journey of Faith series

Journey of Faith for Advent and Christmas:

Creating a Sense of Belonging Between Young People and the Church

Journey of Faith for Lent:

Creating a Sense of Belonging Between Young People and the Church

Journey of Faith for Easter and Pentecost:

Creating a Sense of Belonging Between Young People and the Church

Journey of Faith for Ordinary Time:

Creating a Sense of Belonging Between Young People and the Church

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Introduction

Each year the earth goes through four seasons. Different parts of the country and of the world experience the seasons in various ways. In general,

winter is a time of cooler weather;

spring, a time of new growth;

summer, a time of warmer weather;

and fall, a time of change.

Our lives are full of still more cycles, with the school year being a main cycle in your life right now. Each year has time for newness and for change. There is time for routines such as reading, studying, and participating in extra-curricular activities. Not-so-ordinary events—big tests and the beginning and ending of the school year—also have their time.

January
December

The Church also revolves around a calendar, much like the seasons, the school year, and the twelve months from January through December. This cycle of Church seasons, this Church calendar, is called the *liturgical year*. Its purpose is to mark the celebration of the Church's liturgies. The Church calendar begins with Advent (four weeks before Christmas) and ends just before Advent begins again (usually near Thanksgiving).

The liturgical year is built around important historical events—such as

Jesus's birth, death, and Resurrection—in which God's saving power was made visible. The liturgies in the liturgical year help us remember those historical events.

The Church's calendar includes times designated as ordinary. Not surprisingly, these are called **Ordinary Time**. The liturgies celebrated during Ordinary Time include stories and practices that are good for us to routinely pay attention to. The Church calendar also includes special, or not-so-ordinary, times such as **Lent, Easter, Advent, and Christmas**.

In this book, we will take a closer look at the season of **EASTER**, which includes **Pentecost**.

Now, take one minute to write down any words that come to mind when you hear the words *Easter* and *Pentecost*. If you don't feel that you know much about Easter and Pentecost, write down something you have heard someone else say about Easter or Pentecost, or write down some questions you have about the season that you might hope to have answered in this book.

The **EASTER** season begins on Easter Sunday and continues for fifty days, until the celebration of Pentecost. On Easter Sunday, the ultimate joy of the Resurrection arrives! The stone has been rolled away, Jesus is no longer in the tomb, his burial cloths have been left behind, and everyone is stunned!

A dead Jesus is alive, sins are forgiven, life is eternal, and God has wonderful things in store for the newly charged Apostles. Life could hardly get any better! Fortunately, Jesus's message and mission are timeless.

This book in the Journey of Faith series will be your companion as you journey through the Easter season. Throughout much of the Easter season, we hear in the Scripture about the life of the Apostles after Jesus died and then rose from the dead, as well as a recounting (in John's Gospel) of the symbols, stories, and teachings Jesus preached immediately before his death. It is a fascinating saga of life, death, trial, triumph, sacrifice, and celebration.

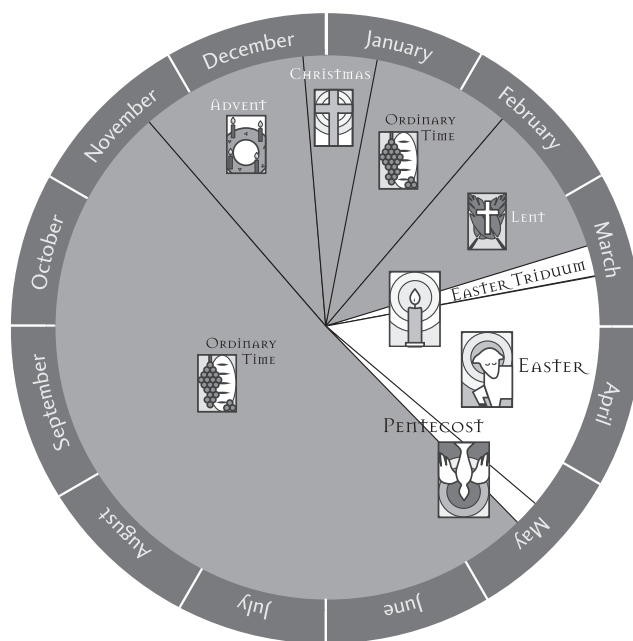
You may have heard the term *Holy Week* used to describe the time from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. This can be a confusing term, because it may make people think that Lent ends on Palm Sunday. Lent actually continues until the time when the Holy Thursday liturgy begins.

At that point, we enter into the *Triduum* (pronounced TRI-doo-uhm), which literally means “three days.” In fact, many people call the Triduum just that. The three main liturgies are Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil (the night before Easter morning). Most parishes also have Easter Sunday Masses, and some even have an evening prayer service on Sunday to mark the end of the three days. These three days of the Triduum are some of the most special days in the life of the Church. It is three days but just one celebration.

Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the *Easter Vigil*

are great ways to remind ourselves of our faith, our history, and our mission as Catholic Christians. These three days are full of ritual, symbolism, and tradition.

For each week of the Easter season, this workbook has corresponding activities that include Scripture **readings**, reflection and discussion **questions, ideas** to think about, and **topics** to discuss with your fellow faith-sharers, friends, and family members. In addition, this workbook has open spaces for writing your own thoughts or for drawing images during the season.



This chart shows where the season of **EASTER**, including Pentecost and the Triduum, fits in the overall Church calendar.

Chapter 1

Holy Thursday

Service with a Smile

On Holy Thursday, we celebrate the beauty and mystery of the Last Supper. At the Last Supper, Jesus broke bread, shared wine with his disciples, and foretold his own death. The sharing of that meal and Jesus's words "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19) are at the foundation of what we celebrate each week at Mass to this day.

After sharing that sacred and symbolic meal, Jesus surprised his companions when he stood up and began to wash their feet. Though the breaking of bread and sharing of wine have become the central images of Christian worship, the washing of feet has become one of the central images of Christian life. In Jesus's time, even slaves weren't expected to wash their masters' feet. When Jesus washed the feet of the Apostles, he demonstrated an incredible act of humility and service to his friends and followers, for all time.

READINGS

Holy Thursday of the Triduum

- Exodus 12:1–8, 11–4; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; John 13:1–15

Stinky Feet

- Water
 - + Know: Jesus washed the Apostles' feet with water. Water is also a symbol of new life and rebirth.
 - + Do: Slowly pour water into a bowl.
 - + Reflect: What part of your life do you need the Lord to wash?
- Thirty pieces of silver
 - + Know: The price that Judas received to turn in Jesus was thirty silver pieces.
 - + Do: Pick up the bag and feel the weight of the coins in the bag.
 - + Reflect: Ask yourself the following questions: What do I gain from sinning? What price do I pay for sins I commit?
- Towel
 - + Know: Jesus tied a towel to his waist and knelt down to wash the feet of the Apostles.
 - + Do: Kneel down as if you are preparing to wash someone's feet.
 - + Reflect: Ask yourself the following questions: How do I serve others in my life? What areas of my life call for me to serve others?
- Bread
 - + Know: Jesus broke and blessed bread at the Last Supper. Today, the priest blesses and breaks bread at Mass.
 - + Do: Break a piece of bread and eat it.
 - + Reflect: The sharing of the Last Supper formed an even closer bond between Jesus and his disciples. How does celebrating the Mass unite you with others and with God?
- Grape juice
 - + Know: Grape juice is a symbol of the wine that Jesus blessed and poured at the Last Supper.
 - + Do: Pour and drink a sip of grape juice from a shallow bowl.
 - + Reflect: Think about Jesus's giving his life for you.
- Tablecloth
 - + Know: We clothe the altar table in preparation for the Eucharist at Mass. Tablecloths are also used for meals at home and in restaurants. Using a tablecloth often signifies a special meal.
 - + Do: As a group, unfold the cloth and place it on the table. Refold it for the next group.
 - + Reflect: Think about what happens when we prepare the altar at Mass. Pay special attention to this the next time you attend liturgy. Notice what is placed on the table, who brings up the gifts, and the special tablecloths that are laid down.
- Sandals
 - + Know: In Jesus's time, people wore sandals. These shoes easily collected dirt and dust. A sandal is a symbol of journey, service, and compassion (walking in someone else's shoes).
 - + Do: Place the shoe on your foot.
 - + Reflect: Imagine what it is like to walk miles upon miles on hills, dirt roads, and stone streets.
- Monstrance
 - + Know: This is a vessel that keeps the host visible during adoration.
 - + Do: Have the table leader show you where and how the host is placed.
 - + Reflect: Ask yourself the following questions: How important is the Eucharist to me personally? Do I show reverence when receiving communion?

Use the following questions and journaling ideas after you have completed the sensory stations and are waiting for others to finish. Or take them home with you to write while you have some quiet time later in the day.

- What is different about Holy Thursday Mass from other regular Sunday masses? (If you can't think of anything now, answer this question after you have attended Holy Thursday Mass.)

- Which table station was most interesting or insightful to you personally? How so?

- What do you think Jesus wants you to do?

- Who has served you?

- Whom have you served?

Acknowledgments

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