

Liturgical Year Supplemental Lesson

Lent and Easter

Correlated Materials

Student Text: p. 79, p. 81; Chapter 18, pp. 83–85; Chapter 21, pp. 93–96
See introduction to Supplemental Lessons on pp. xvi–xvii.

LESSON FOCUS

The Paschal Mystery refers to the suffering, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, as it accomplishes our salvation. The first Passover in Egypt foreshadowed this mystery. The Mass is a remembrance of the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

AIMS

- Students will compare the first Passover with the Last Supper and the Mass.
- Students will celebrate a Seder meal or read through the prayers of the Seder meal.

MATERIALS

- Bible
- White board and markers
- Handouts of Passover/Last Supper/Mass chart (see p. 255)

Optional:

- Seder meal (see Life Application; needed materials listed in Appendices B-16–20)

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (5 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

SCRIPTURE: Student Text, p. 79

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53).

The Last Supper was the first Mass. At Mass we receive the Body and Blood of Christ so that we may be nourished with new life.

SACRED ART: Student Text, p. 81

Last Supper, Roselli

Jesus celebrates the Passover feast at the Last Supper. At the Last Supper, Jesus institutes the Eucharist and the priesthood.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Anima Christi, Student Text, p. 151

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

The Paschal Mystery refers to the suffering, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, as it accomplishes our salvation. The first Passover in Egypt foreshadowed this mystery. The Mass is a remembrance of this mystery.

Lesson Explanation (15–25 minutes)

Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.

WORDS TO KNOW

Passover: the Jewish feast commemorating the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt

Last Supper: the last meal Jesus had with his Apostles, at which he gave us the Eucharist, the Mass, and the priesthood

Focus 1: The Paschal Mystery

- Today, we will learn about a Seder meal, which is a meal celebrating the first Passover.
 - During the first **Passover** the paschal lamb was sacrificed so that the Israelites could be set free.
 - After the **Last Supper**, Jesus was sacrificed so that mankind could be set free from sin.
 - This is a great mystery called the Paschal Mystery. This mystery is celebrated at every Mass.
- The first Passover feast in Egypt prefigures (foreshadows) the Last Supper, the first Mass.
 - **Read** about the Passover in Student Text, pp. 79–80.
 - *What was the tenth plague God sent to the Egyptians? (Death of the firstborn son or animal.)*
 - *What were the Israelites required to do in order to save their firstborn? (Sacrifice an unblemished lamb, eat the lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, and place the blood of the lamb over the doorpost so that the angel of death would “pass over” those homes where the doorpost was sprinkled with the blood of the lamb.)*
 - *What was the paschal lamb? (The lamb that was sacrificed at the Passover.)*
 - *The Passover feast in the Old Testament prefigures (foreshadows) what event in the New Testament? (Last Supper.)*
- **Compare** the Passover, Last Supper, and Mass.
 - Use the chart on the next page to review the similarities of the first Passover, the Last Supper, and the Mass. Make handouts prompting students to see if they can recall the similarities.
 - *What was the event in the Old Testament that prefigured the Paschal Mystery? (Passover feast.)*
 - *What do we call the event in the New Testament where Jesus was celebrating the Passover feast? (Last Supper.)*
 - *What do we call the event we celebrate today where we remember the sacrifice of Jesus? (The Mass.)*
 - When we go to Mass we are participating in the Paschal Mystery that began with the Passover feast in Egypt and was celebrated for hundreds of years. Jesus is the Paschal Lamb who “takes away the sins of the world” and redeemed mankind.

Conclusion: Jesus celebrated the Passover meal at the Last Supper; this was the first Mass.

Compare the First Passover, Last Supper, and Mass

Passover	Last Supper	Mass
Who: Moses and Israelite people	Who: Jesus and mankind	Who: Jesus and mankind
Purpose: Deliverance from bondage of slavery and death of firstborn	Purpose: Deliverance from bondage to sin	Purpose: Deliverance from bondage to sin
Sacrifice • A sacrifice of an unblemished lamb • Blood of lamb placed over the doorpost • The Israelite people had a feast and had to eat the lamb.	Sacrifice • Jesus, the Lamb of God, was sacrificed on the Cross. • Jesus' blood was shed. • Jesus blessed the bread and wine that became his Body and Blood. The Apostles ate the Body and Blood of Christ.	Sacrifice • Ordained priest offers the Sacrifice of the Mass in which the past event of the Last Supper becomes present. • Consecrated host and wine is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. • We participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and receive Jesus Christ.
Effects • Israelite people were released from their bondage to slavery; the first-born lived.	Effects • Mankind is redeemed from bondage to sin; the gates of heaven were opened, through Christ's death and Resurrection.	Effects • We receive the grace that strengthens us in order to do God's will in our life so that we may share in eternal life.

Review Supplemental Lesson—Liturgical Year: Lent and Easter (3 minutes)

- Our participation in the events of Jesus' life helps us to walk with Christ. Our participation in a Seder meal (Passover feast) helps us to participate in the Paschal Mystery where God's story of love becomes our story of love.

Application and Celebration (40–60 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following.

- Celebrate a Seder meal. Remind students that it was the feast that Jesus was celebrating the night before he died; we celebrate the Last Supper on Holy Thursday during Holy Week. (See appendix B-16–B-20.) Have students look for the similarities between the Seder meal and the Mass.

- If your parish is unable to have a Seder meal, you may just walk through the order of the meal and explain the comparison chart.
- Tell students that our participation in the events of Jesus' life helps us to walk with Christ. Our participation in a Seder meal (Passover feast) helps us to participate in the Paschal Mystery.
- Prayer: Have students say prayers of the Seder meal, focusing on the Israelites' quest for blessings and deliverance.

CHAPTER 17

At the Last Supper

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

John 6:53

Let us begin by reading chapter six of Saint John's Gospel.

Jesus shocked many of his followers by saying that he would give them his Body to eat and his Blood to drink, and that they would not have life in them unless they accepted it. At this many of his followers left him. Peter answered for those who remained faithful. When Jesus asked them, "Will you also go away?" Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (Jn 6:67-68).

Peter and the faithful disciples did not foresee how Jesus was going to do what he said; they did not have the slightest idea how it could be possible. But they had come to know and love Jesus; they had come to hunger for the words of eternal life that came from him; and they believed.

Just before he told them this, Jesus had demonstrated his power by feeding a crowd of about five thousand people with a few loaves and fish, and he had announced greater things to come. But he did not explain. When the time came for him to leave his Apostles, Jesus gave them a treasure of immeasurable richness—his own Self in the **Eucharist**. With the utmost simplicity he found a way to give them his Body and Blood to eat and drink:

he changed bread into his Body and wine into his Blood.

This wonderful event took place at Jesus' **Last Supper** with his Apostles the night before he died. They were celebrating one of the great festivals of the Jewish people, the Passover. With Jesus' action the sacrifice of the Old Covenant was ended and the sacrifice of the New Covenant established.

The Passover

The **Passover** commemorated God's rescue of his chosen people from slavery in Egypt. He worked great signs and wonders through his servant Moses to strike the fear of God into the hearts of the Egyptians so that Pharaoh would free the Hebrews and allow them to depart and worship the true God.

Pharaoh was very stubborn about keeping the Hebrews captive until one night the angel of death passed through Egypt, striking down the firstborn sons of the Egyptians.

The Hebrews had been instructed by God through Moses to offer a special sacrifice that night: a spotless lamb, one for each family. Every Hebrew dwelling was to be marked on the doorpost with the blood of the lamb so that

of Jesus but the whole Jesus—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity, God and man. The whole Jesus went to Andrew, to Peter, to John, to Philip, to each one. And so he comes to us, too, when we receive Holy Communion. The Apostles were united with Christ and filled with grace. So are we.

But what did the Apostles see when Jesus said, “This is my Body. . . . This is my Blood”? What they saw still looked like bread and wine. What had been bread still had the same weight, color, and taste; what had been wine still had the same taste, odor, and color. But its *substance*, the underlying reality which makes it what it is, had been changed. The looks and other properties known by the senses are called the *appearances*; the Body and Blood of Jesus kept the *appearances* of bread and wine. The **mystery** of this change in the bread and wine is called “**transubstantiation**,” which means change of substance.

The substance of bread and wine have been changed into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ. We cannot see the change but it has happened.

Why does Jesus change bread and wine into his Body and Blood but leave the appearances of bread and wine? The Eucharist is a Sacrament, a sign instituted by Christ to give us grace. The appearances of bread and wine remain as signs that Jesus is true spiritual food and drink for our souls given to us in a special way in the Eucharist. He is the source of our life as Christians.

We call Jesus’ presence in the Eucharist the Real Presence. It is called “real” because Jesus is really and truly with us. The Eucharist is no mere symbol of Jesus; it truly is Jesus, under the appearances of bread and wine.

The Everlasting Sacrifice

After the Apostles had each received Holy Communion, Jesus said to them, “Do this in remembrance of me” (Lk 22:19). When he said this he made them priests; for by telling them to do what he had just done—to change bread and wine into his Body and Blood—he gave them the power to do it.

The greatest power of the priesthood is the power to offer this sacrifice of Jesus’ Body



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CHAPTER 18

The Living Sacrifice

“ . . . for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

Hebrews 9:26

Jesus Christ, through whom all good things come to us, died on Calvary and rose again from the dead. His sacrifice redeemed the human race. Every day that sacrifice is renewed in the Holy Mass. That is what the Mass is all about. The Mass is the same sacrifice as the sacrifice at Calvary; it not only recalls that sacrifice but continues it.

Jesus gave us the precious **Sacrament** of the Eucharist for two reasons: so that we might have eternal life and so that we might have an acceptable sacrifice to offer continually to the Father.

As Catholic writer Frank Sheed expressed it, “The Mass is Calvary, as Christ now offers it to his Father.” The victim offered is the same—Jesus himself. He is present as he made himself present under the appearances of bread and wine at the Last Supper. The priest is one and the same; for the priest at our altar acts in the person of Jesus to change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of the Lord.

On the altar Jesus offers himself through the words and actions of the priest, without shedding his blood or dying again. After his resurrection Jesus can no longer die. But he still offers his one sacrifice on the Cross to the Father for us. The Bible tells us that he is doing that right now in heaven, as our high priest there (Heb 7:24–25; 8:1–2; 9:11–14). At the

Mass, Jesus makes the heavenly offering of his Body and Blood present on earth, under the appearances of bread and wine. We join with the priest and each other to offer Jesus to the Father, as well as offering ourselves to him with Jesus. In this way, we grow more deeply as the Church, the Body of Christ on earth.

A Memorial

A memorial is a recalling of a past event. Besides being a sacrifice, the Mass is a **memorial** by which until the end of time we call to mind the death of Christ. Christ said to his Apostles, “Do this in memory of me.”

He did not mean, however, that the Mass would be *only* a memorial. In the Mass we not only remember Christ’s death on the Cross, but Christ brings his sacrifice before us in a real and sacramental way.

Mass is a memorial of Christ’s Resurrection as well. The Church teaches that it is “a memorial of his death and Resurrection.” Here, too, the reality is more than a recollection. For the chief priest at Mass is the Risen Christ who is present in the Eucharist.

The Four Ends of the Mass

Holy Mass is the perfect prayer. So it has the same ends, or purposes, as prayer.

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1. The Mass is an act of supreme worship; it is Christ’s greatest gift to his Church. Men with nothing worthy to offer God have now been given a victim and a sacrifice of infinite value: Jesus Christ himself.

2. The Mass is a prayer of thanksgiving; the word “eucharist” actually means “thanksgiving.” We have so much to thank God for: our lives, with all that they contain of family and friends, people, places, and things. Most of all, there is the supernatural life of grace given to us by Jesus Christ, our Savior. It is through the life of grace that we have hope of reaching heaven and can enjoy great happiness even now.

Through the Mass we have the chance to thank God for all his benefits, most of all for his generosity and mercy in sending us Jesus, his

Son. And it is Jesus, his gift to us, whom we now offer back to him. God is infinitely pleased with this gift that he has put in our hands.

3. The Mass is a way to **make satisfaction** for (make up for) sins. We pray: “Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us . . . grant us peace.”

Are we asking Jesus to do something that he has already done? Are we asking him to take away the sins of the world again and again, every time the Mass is offered?

No; there is really only one Mass, and it was offered on Calvary once for all. And it is this one sacrifice that is offered on all our altars at Mass. Through the gift of the Holy Eucharist, Jesus has extended his sacrifice in time and space. Our participation at Mass is our time to be with Christ at the Cross.

4. The Mass is our best means of petitioning the Father and obtaining the graces we ask for, both for ourselves and for others. In the Mass we are offering to God the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ, the most pleasing

offering we have to give, and God will be pleased by our offering so great a gift.

Words to Know:

Sacrament memorial
make satisfaction for

Q. 66 What is the Holy Mass?

The Holy Mass is the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. This sacrifice is offered to God under the appearances of bread and wine through the ministry of a priest, in order to remember, renew, and re-present the Sacrifice of the Cross, and to be received in the sacred meal of Holy Communion (CCC 1367, 1382).

Q. 67 Is the Sacrifice of the Mass the same as the Sacrifice of the Cross?

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the same sacrifice as the Sacrifice of the Cross; the only difference is in the manner of offering it (CCC 1364, 1367).

Q. 68 Who is the priest and the victim in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass Jesus Christ is the priest, acting through his ordained minister, and Christ is the victim, offered to the Father under the appearances of bread and wine (CCC 1367).

Q. 69 What is the difference between the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass?

On the Cross, Christ shed his blood and died; in the Mass, he offers himself under the appearances of bread and wine by the ministry of a priest, in an unbloody manner and without dying; on the Cross he merited redemption for man; in the Mass, he applies the benefits of his sacrifice on the Cross (CCC 1367).

Q. 70 Why is the Mass offered to God?

The Mass is offered to God to give him the supreme worship of adoration; to thank him for his blessings to us; to make satisfaction for our sins; and to obtain graces for the good of the faithful, living and dead (CCC 1365, 1368).

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CHAPTER 21

New Life

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’”

John 11:25–26

When Jesus died, his disciples, helped by Joseph of Arimathea, came and took his body and buried it in a tomb cut in rock in a garden. This was done in haste, because they had to prepare for the Sabbath (Lk 23:54).

What would happen next? Was it all over, the glorious dream, the visible evidence of the power of God? The Messiah was dead, their beloved Jesus. The Apostles were in hiding for fear of the Jewish leaders.

Then, on the first day of the week, some of the women who had travelled with Jesus and the Apostles set out for the tomb with spices to anoint the body of Jesus and to tend to the details of ceremonial burial which had not been observed the day he died. On the way they began to wonder who would open the tomb for them, since a great stone had been rolled into place to seal it.

But when they got there the stone had been rolled back and an angel from heaven was sitting on it. He informed them that Jesus, who had been crucified, had risen from the dead. He invited them into the tomb to see for themselves.

The women looked in and saw that the tomb was empty. Then the angel said: “Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the

dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him” (Mt 28:7).

The women hurried back to the Apostles, filled with awe and great joy. But the Apostles did not believe their marvelous news. Peter and John set out to see for themselves; they found the empty tomb with nothing in it but the wrappings in which Jesus had been buried (Jn 20:6–7).

When the Apostles were gathered together Jesus suddenly appeared among them. “Peace be with you,” he said.

The Apostles were in a panic, thinking they were seeing a ghost. Jesus reassured them, telling them that it was really he. He invited them to touch his flesh and asked for something to eat. They gave him a piece of cooked fish and he ate it to show that he was not a ghost (Lk 24:36–43).

In these and other ways Jesus helped them realize that he had risen from the dead and that he was really standing there before them. How they rejoiced!

Then Jesus breathed on them, strengthening them with the Holy Spirit and giving them the power to forgive sins: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are

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retained” (Jn 20:22–23). He told them that they were to be his witnesses to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Lk 24:47).

After that, Jesus did not remain with them, but he appeared to them on several occasions, putting the finishing touches to his work on earth. During one of his appearances by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus asked Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” Peter answered “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter answered “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” Jesus said to Peter the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And Peter said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you” (Jn 21:15–17).

Jesus was giving Peter a chance to declare his love three times before witnesses because Peter had denied Jesus three times before witnesses when Jesus was on trial.

When Peter had answered his questions, Jesus instructed him, “Feed my lambs; feed my sheep.” There Jesus made Peter the universal shepherd of all his followers, the first Pope. At last Jesus simply said to Peter: “Follow me” (Jn 21:19).

Forty days after his Resurrection, Jesus ascended to heaven in the presence of his followers. Before this he had instructed the Apostles not to go anywhere until he sent them the Holy Spirit, who would lead them in all truth and give them special power to extend Christ’s Church to every part of the earth. He promised to remain with his Church always, even to the end of the world (Mt 28:20).

What happened next is recorded in the book of the Bible called the Acts of the Apostles. It tells of the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of tongues of fire, of the conversion of

Saint Paul and the works of the Apostles, and of the wonderful early days of the Church and the first Christian communities.



Resurrected Life

When Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday he proved that he was truly the Son of God, as he had said. This meant that his death had not been in vain. He really had redeemed the world from sin. It also meant that the powers that he had given his Apostles were real, and so were his promises to send the Holy Spirit and to remain always with his Church.

But Jesus did more than just pay for our sins by his death on Calvary. His Resurrection on Easter Sunday was a sign that he had also brought us new life. This new life is the life of sanctifying grace, God’s own life within us, which enables us to desire and to do what God wants and what will truly make us happy.

Jesus’ Resurrection is also a sign of hope that we too will one day rise from the dead just as he did.

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Q. 79 After his death, what did Jesus Christ do?

After his death, Jesus Christ descended into hell to take the souls of the just who had died before that time into paradise. Then he rose from the dead, taking up his body which had been buried (CCC 632, 638).

Q. 80 What did Jesus Christ do after his Resurrection?

After his Resurrection, Jesus Christ remained on earth forty days and taught his Apostles all they needed to know to continue his ministry through the Church. Then he ascended to heaven, where he sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty (CCC 642, 659).

Q. 81 Why did Jesus Christ remain on earth forty days after his Resurrection?

Jesus Christ remained on earth forty days after his Resurrection in order to show that he had truly risen from the dead, to confirm his disciples’ faith in him, and to instruct them more profoundly in his teaching (CCC 642, 659).

Q. 82 What is the significance of the Resurrection?

The Resurrection proves that Jesus is God, and that all he taught and promised, including our share in the Resurrection, is true (CCC 651, 653–54).

“I am the resurrection and the life. . . .”

John 11:25

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