

God's Easter Surprise

Family Devotional for the Easter Season

Bring to your devotional time an open Bible, a pillar candle, and, if available, a candle snuffer.

*Have an adult light the candle and say, **“We light a candle to remind us that every time we hear one of God’s stories, Jesus is with us.”***

Read John 20:1; 11-18 out loud as a family:

Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. The angels asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

She replied, “They have taken away my Lord, and I don’t know where they’ve put him.” As soon as she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn’t know it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?”

Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “*Rabbouni*” (which means Teacher).

Jesus said to her, “Don’t hold on to me, for I haven’t yet gone up to my Father. Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, ‘I’m going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

Mary Magdalene left and announced to the disciples, “I’ve seen the Lord.” Then she told them what he said to her.



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Family reflection:

Mary Magdalene and all of Jesus' friends and family were very sad. Jesus had been killed on a cross on a Friday. After he was killed, Jesus' was buried in a tomb. It was a very sad day that turned into a sad weekend.

Mary went to the tomb very early that Sunday morning. three days later, thinking that it was going to be another very sad day. But when she arrived at the tomb, Jesus wasn't there.

Let's imagine how Mary would have looked on the saddest of mornings: the morning when she arrived at the tomb where Jesus, her Lord, had been laid but was nowhere to be found. I wonder how her face would have looked? I wonder how she would have held her shoulders? I wonder what she would have done with her hands?

When Mary thought that things couldn't get any worse, someone that she knew called her by name. It was Jesus, her Lord, my Lord, your Lord ... the Lord of the whole world! This is God's Easter surprise. That Jesus is not dead, but is alive! When Jesus met Mary, she knew that God would be with her always. We know that God will be with us always.

Wondering together:

When is a time that you, like Mary, knew that God was with you?

Praying together:

Thank you, God, for your Easter surprise. Jesus is risen! Jesus is with us always! Help us to share that Easter surprise with everyone we meet. Amen.

Have an adult, or with an adult's help an older child, extinguish the Christ candle and say:

Whenever we see a candle's light, we remember that Jesus is with us everywhere we go.

