



## RESURRECTION APPEARANCES OF JESUS

### “The appearances of the Risen One

Mary Magdalene and the holy women who came to finish anointing the body of Jesus, which had been buried in haste because the Sabbath began on the evening of Good Friday, were the first to encounter the Risen One.<sup>498</sup> Thus the women were the first messengers of Christ's Resurrection for the apostles themselves.<sup>499</sup> They were the next to whom Jesus appears: first Peter, then the Twelve. Peter had been called to strengthen the faith of his brothers,<sup>500</sup> and so sees the Risen One before them; it is on the basis of his testimony that the community exclaims: ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’<sup>501</sup>

Everything that happened during those Paschal days involves each of the apostles—and Peter in particular—in the building of the new era begun on Easter morning. As witnesses of the Risen One, they remain the foundation stones of his Church. The faith of the first community of believers is based on the witness of concrete men known to the Christians and for the most part still living among them. Peter and the Twelve are the primary ‘witnesses to his Resurrection,’ but they are not the only ones—Paul speaks clearly of more than five hundred persons to whom Jesus appeared on a single occasion and also of James and of all the apostles.<sup>502</sup>

Given all these testimonies, Christ's Resurrection cannot be interpreted as something outside the physical order, and it is impossible not to acknowledge it as an historical fact. It is clear from the facts that the disciples' faith was drastically put to the test by their master's Passion and death on the cross, which he had foretold.<sup>503</sup> The shock provoked by the Passion was so great that at least some of the disciples did not at once believe in the news of the Resurrection. Far from showing us a community seized by a mystical exaltation, the Gospels present us with disciples demoralized (‘looking sad’<sup>504</sup>) and frightened. For they had not believed the holy women returning from the tomb and had regarded their words as an ‘idle tale.’<sup>505</sup> When Jesus reveals himself to the Eleven on Easter evening, ‘he upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.’<sup>506</sup>

Even when faced with the reality of the risen Jesus the disciples are still doubtful, so impossible did the thing seem: they thought they were seeing a ghost. ‘In their joy they were still disbelieving and still wondering.’<sup>507</sup> Thomas will also experience the test of doubt and St. Matthew relates that during the risen Lord's last appearance in Galilee ‘some doubted.’<sup>508</sup> Therefore the hypothesis that the Resurrection was produced by the apostles' faith (or credulity) will not hold up. On the contrary their faith in the Resurrection was born, under the action of divine grace, from their direct experience of the reality of the risen Jesus.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 641-644*

<sup>498</sup> Mk 16:1; Lk 24:1; Jn 19:31, 42.

<sup>499</sup> Cf. Lk 24:9-10; Mt 28:9-10; Jn 20:11-18.

<sup>500</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 15:5; Lk 22:31-32.

<sup>501</sup> Lk 24:34, 36.

<sup>502</sup> 1 Cor 15:4-8; cf. Acts 1:22.

<sup>503</sup> Cf. Lk 22:31-32.

<sup>504</sup> Lk 24:17; cf. Jn 20:19.

<sup>505</sup> Lk 24:11; cf. Mk 16:11, 13.

<sup>506</sup> Mk 16:14.

<sup>507</sup> Lk 24:38-41.

<sup>508</sup> Cf. Jn 20:24-27; Mt 28:17.

# What Did You Learn About the Resurrection Appearances of Jesus?

for younger saints

1. On what day do we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection?  
a. Pentecost                      b. Passover                      c. Easter
2. Jesus continued to appear to His apostles and many others for  
a. 40 days.  
b. 40 minutes.  
c. 40 years.
3. What did Jesus do to prove to His apostles that He was not a ghost?  
a. He ate meals with them.  
b. He touched them and let them touch Him.  
c. He told spooky stories.
4. How was Jesus' new, glorified body different after the Resurrection?  
a. He could look like animals or other people.  
b. He could be anywhere, whenever He wanted.  
c. He could go through walls.
5. What would your reaction have been if you had lived during this time?  
a. I would have believed Jesus was alive.  
b. I would want to see Him for myself.  
c. I would not believe it.
6. Who was the first apostle to enter the tomb where Jesus was buried?  
a. Matthew                      b. Thomas                      c. Peter
7. Who was the apostle who said he would not believe that Jesus was alive until he  
had seen it for himself?  
a. Matthew                      b. Thomas                      c. Peter
8. How is Jesus still with us today? (Think of as many ways as you can.)
9. Recite your memory verse.

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8. How is Jesus still with us today? (Think of as many ways as you can.)

**Where two or more gather for prayer, He is there; He is present in the Eucharist and other sacraments; Jesus is present in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass; He lives in our hearts; He is present in the Pope, bishops, and priests; and in many other ways!**

9. Recite your memory verse.

***"...you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." Matthew 16:18***

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for older saints

1. On what day do we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection?  
a. Pentecost                      b. Passover                      c. Easter
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a. between His Resurrection and Ascension.  
b. between April and May.  
c. between Hanukkah and Pentecost.
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a. He could change into different shapes or forms.  
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***"...you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 16:18-19***