

Get **CONNECTED**

with family and friends

Jesus' Persecution

After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he had even more followers. But some people, including some of the chief priests of the Temple and the Pharisees, could not accept Jesus. Those who could not accept Jesus' teachings, healings, and miracles began to plot his death. When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, people welcomed him as their king. Soon after, however, Jesus sacrificed his life.

Activity

Angela was up all night studying for the history test. There was so much information to remember. Suddenly she got a call from Caren, someone she knew from school—not one of her closest friends. Caren knew Angela got good grades, so she asked Angela to make a cheat sheet for her for the test. Angela didn't want to refuse and become unpopular, so she asked for time to think it over. The next day, word got out, and several people asked Angela to help them get through the test. It took all of her courage, but Angela refused to make cheat sheets for anyone, even though she knew that this might make her unpopular. How would you have handled this pressure?



Do one of the following.

1. Ask your friends and members of your family to talk about a time they had to stand up for something they believed in. Was it difficult for them? How did they feel afterward?
2. You and your family can take up the cause of someone undergoing persecution who needs your help. For information on how to help, visit the Web site for Amnesty International. (See the next page.)

Trivivia

Church History

Social Studies

Arts & Culture

People & Places

Crucifixion was a method for punishing slaves and criminals in the Roman Empire. Because of the Crucifixion of Jesus, the cross is a sign of victory for Christians. By the fourth century, the Roman Empire was Christian, and the cross became a recognizable sign of Christianity. The crucifix, a cross showing the crucified Christ, became an important symbol in the fifth century.

Quotable Scripture

"And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

—Luke 11:9

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✚ Scripture Background

In the Time of Jesus

Samaria The Holy Family, along with other Jewish families, traveled to Jerusalem for major festivals, such as Passover. The long journey, on foot or donkey, would have taken them south along the fertile Jordan valley. As they traveled they would have avoided Samaria. Many Samaritans were descended from people who had settled in Israel after it was conquered by the Assyrians in 722 B.C. Many Jews despised the Samaritans for being a mixed race and treated them as enemies. In the parable found in Luke 10:25–37, Jesus portrays the Samaritan, not as an enemy, but as a compassionate friend.

Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25–37.

WEEKLY PLANNER

On Sunday

To be persecuted is to be oppressed, harassed, injured, or distressed because of the actions of other people. Pray for people you know who are being persecuted.

On the Web

blestarewe.com



Visit our Web site for the saint of the day and the reflection question of the week.

Saint of the Week



Saint Joan of Arc
(c. 1412–1431)

Joan of Arc is a national heroine of France. She was captured by the English and tried by an ecclesiastical court. She was convicted of heresy and burned at the stake by the English when she was nineteen years old. Twenty-four years later, the Church found her innocent and declared her a martyr.

Patron Saint of: France
Feast Day: May 30



A Prayer for the Week

Lord, we pray for all victims of persecution. Make us aware of people who are suffering from persecution. Grant that we may bring dignity, hope, and the love of Jesus to everyone we meet. Amen.

13 Jesus' Persecution



Christ obeyed his Father to the point of death.
Because of this, God has exalted him above every name.

Based on Philippians 2:8-9

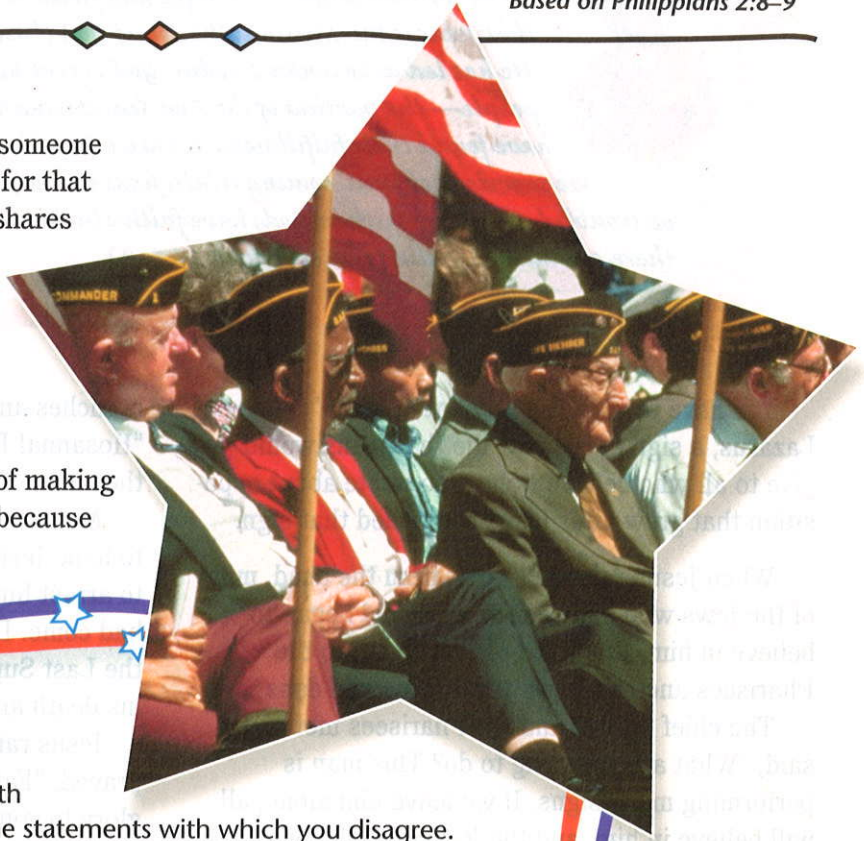
Share

When you make a sacrifice, you put someone else's needs above your own out of love for that person or group of people. A child who shares a favorite toy is making a sacrifice.

So is a teenager who mows an elderly neighbor's lawn for free.

A man or woman who decides to serve in the military makes a great sacrifice.

Being generous with what you have, including your time and talents, is part of making sacrifices. Every sacrifice is significant because it shows love and concern for others.



Activity

Write *A* next to the statements with which you agree and *D* next to the statements with which you disagree.

- I have nothing to sacrifice.
- Making sacrifices is a sign of love.
- People never appreciate sacrifices.
- A person should make a sacrifice for another person only if the other person returns the favor.
- Sacrificing something for someone can make you feel good.
- Sacrificing things is difficult.

Imagine how difficult it would be to sacrifice your own life. Yet Jesus accepted the sacrifice of his life for us. Write about a time you had to make a difficult sacrifice to help someone. Write about the good things that resulted.

What events led to Jesus' sacrifice?



Hear & Believe

† Scripture Jesus Prepares for His Sacrifice in Jerusalem



I have written about Jesus' signs and deeds so that you may know that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God (based on John 20:30-31). He has led us to a new Exodus. God's great acts to save his people—the parting of the Red Sea, the manna in the desert—have found their fulfillment in Christ (based on John 6:31). When we saw signs of Jesus' coming trials, Jesus told us, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places" (John 14:1-2).

You have read John's account of Jesus' raising of Lazarus, a sign of the new life that Jesus would give to all who believe. John also wrote about opposition that grew after Jesus performed that sign.

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, many of the Jews who had seen what he did began to believe in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

The chief priests and the Pharisees met and said, "What are we going to do? This man is performing many signs. If we leave him alone, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our land and our nation." From then on, they planned to kill Jesus.

Jesus no longer walked in public among the Jews. He went to a town called Ephraim, near the desert, and remained there with his disciples.

The chief priests and the Pharisees ordered that anyone who knew where Jesus was should inform them so that they could arrest him. Passover was approaching. People went to Jerusalem to purify themselves. They looked for Jesus in the Temple area and said to one another, "Do you think he will come to the Passover feast?"

Meanwhile, Jesus visited Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary. A large crowd of Jews followed Jesus there, not only because of Jesus but to see Lazarus, too. The chief priests then plotted to kill Lazarus, too, because many Jews were believing in Jesus because of him.

The next day, the great crowd heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. They took palm

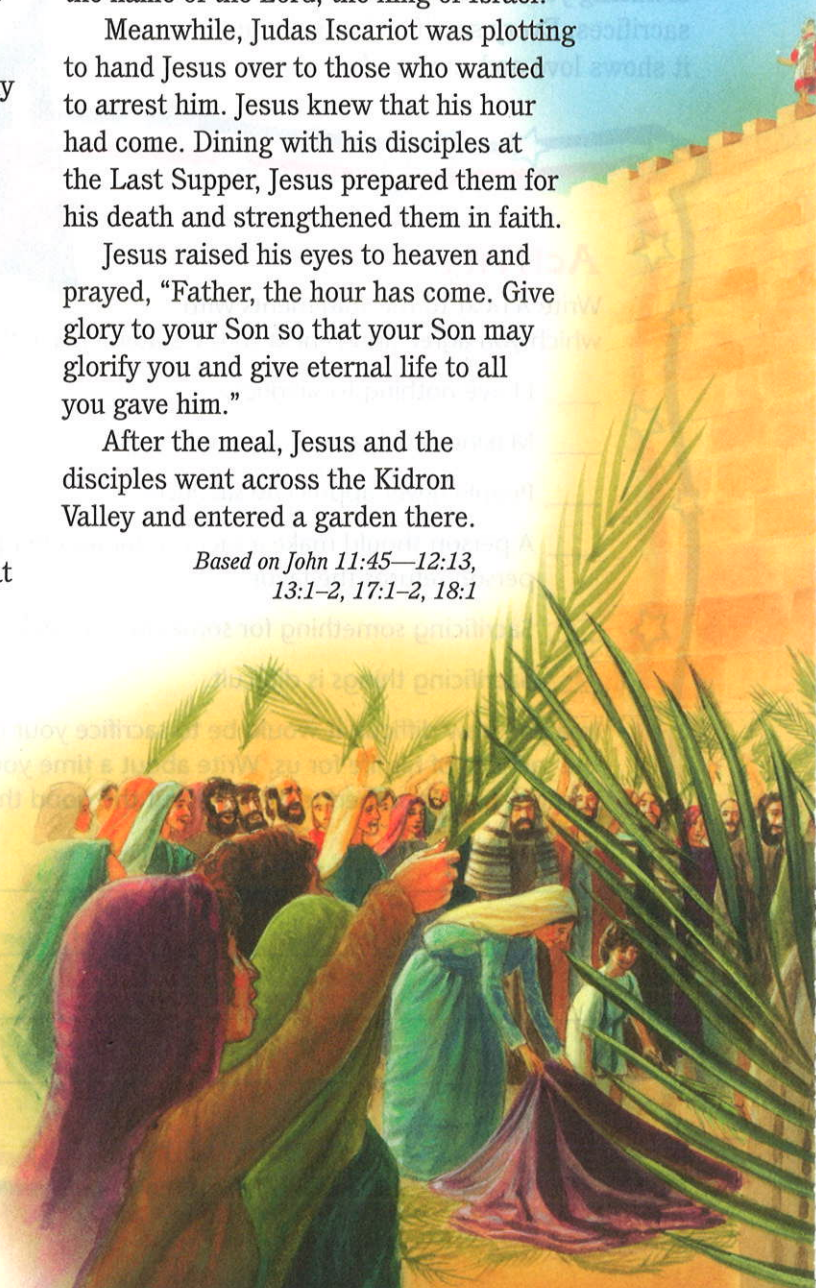
branches and went out to meet him, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel!"

Meanwhile, Judas Iscariot was plotting to hand Jesus over to those who wanted to arrest him. Jesus knew that his hour had come. Dining with his disciples at the Last Supper, Jesus prepared them for his death and strengthened them in faith.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and prayed, "Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son so that your Son may glorify you and give eternal life to all you gave him."

After the meal, Jesus and the disciples went across the Kidron Valley and entered a garden there.

*Based on John 11:45-12:13,
13:1-2, 17:1-2, 18:1*





Jesus' Suffering and Glory

Jesus prepared his disciples for his coming suffering, Crucifixion, and Death. We know that Jesus' suffering on the cross marked his victory over sin and evil. The story from John's Gospel reveals signs of this triumph of Jesus. For example, in John's account of Jesus' meal with Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, John writes that Mary anointed Jesus' feet with expensive oils and wiped his feet with her hair—actions that represented the anointing of a king and messiah.

Palm branches, which the people in Jerusalem used to greet Jesus as he entered their city, were used in Jesus' time to welcome great conquerors. As the people welcomed Jesus, they called him the "king of Israel" and cried, "Hosanna!" *Hosanna* means "O Lord, grant Salvation" in Hebrew. When the time of Jesus' suffering came, the chief priests would condemn Jesus for being known as "the King of the Jews."

The joy that marked Jesus' welcome into Jerusalem soon turned to sorrow, but with the sacrifice of his life, Jesus Christ conquered sin and death. Despite his pain and humiliation, Jesus freely offered his life for our Salvation. We refer to Jesus' suffering and death as his **Passion**.

Life Without End

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was fully human in all ways but sin. In the Nicene Creed, we profess that Jesus "suffered death and was buried," which means that Jesus truly experienced death and suffering for sin. Through his death and **Resurrection**, Jesus freed us from the power of sin and everlasting death.

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross made it possible for us to have **life everlasting**. Jesus

Christ rose from the dead and lives forever.

Because of Christ's Resurrection, we wait in hope for our own resurrection.

Our bodies decay at our deaths, but our souls live forever. At the end of time, we must appear before Christ, our judge, and give an account of how well we have followed him. If we chose to love God and others, God will transform and glorify our bodies, and we will live in God's everlasting kingdom of happiness. This new life given to us when our bodies reunite with our souls at the end of time is called "the resurrection of the body." This is a doctrine we profess each time we pray the Apostles' Creed.

All the faithful followers of Christ—living and dead—are part of the Church. This is what we mean when we say that the Church is the **Communion of Saints**.

Pat Kelly ☪ Uncle Joe ☪ Mr. Kim

Activity

Below, list the names of family members or other people you know who have died and who belong to the Communion of Saints.

Maria Caruso

Abuelo Lopez

Aunt Stella ☪ Miss Katie Kline

Faith Words

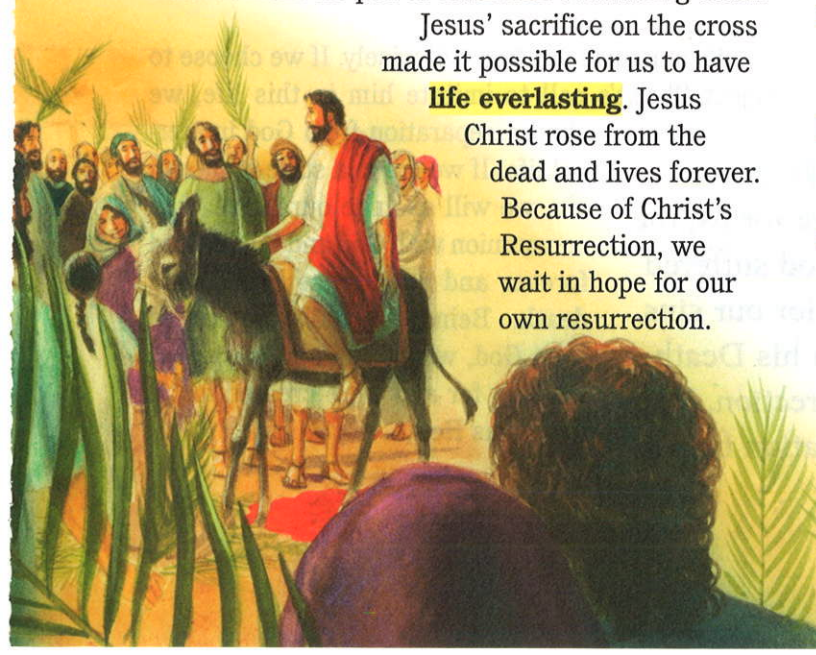
Passion Jesus' Passion is the suffering, Crucifixion, and death he endured for our sins.

Resurrection The Resurrection is Jesus' victory over death by his rising to new and glorified life three days after his death.

life everlasting Life everlasting is the eternal life with God that all Jesus' faithful followers will share for all eternity.

Communion of Saints The Communion of Saints is the unity in Christ of all the redeemed, those on earth and those who have died.

How can we respond to Jesus' sacrifice of love?



Hear & Believe

Scripture The Judgment of the Nations

The Salvation Jesus won for us through his death is a gift that is freely given. However, we can choose to accept or reject this gift. The way we treat others is a clue to how we treat Christ's gift of Salvation. Jesus explained the Final Judgment in this way:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, all nations will stand before him. He will separate the good people from the wicked, placing the good on his right and the wicked on his left.

The Lord will say to those on his right, "Inherit the Kingdom of God. For whenever I was hungry or thirsty or otherwise suffering, you cared for me."

Then they will say to him, "Lord, when did we ever see you in such need?"

The Lord will say to them in reply, "Whatever you did for the least among you, you did for me."

Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me into the fires of Hell. When I was hungry or thirsty, ill or in prison, or otherwise suffering, you did not care for me."

Then they will say to him, "Lord, when did we ever see you and not give you what you needed?"

He will answer them, "Amen, I say to you, what ever you did not do for the least

among you, you did not do for me. The wicked will go off to eternal punishment, but the good to eternal life."

Based on Matthew 25:31-46



Christ in Judgment, School of Rimini

Our Church Teaches

Because God loves us, he desires that we live forever with him in perfect happiness. Jesus Christ, in his death, opened the gates of Heaven for the just souls who went before him and offered himself for the Salvation of all who would come after. Jesus Christ offers us Salvation, but it is up to us how we respond. We can respond by imitating Christ. We can have compassion and mercy just as Jesus did.

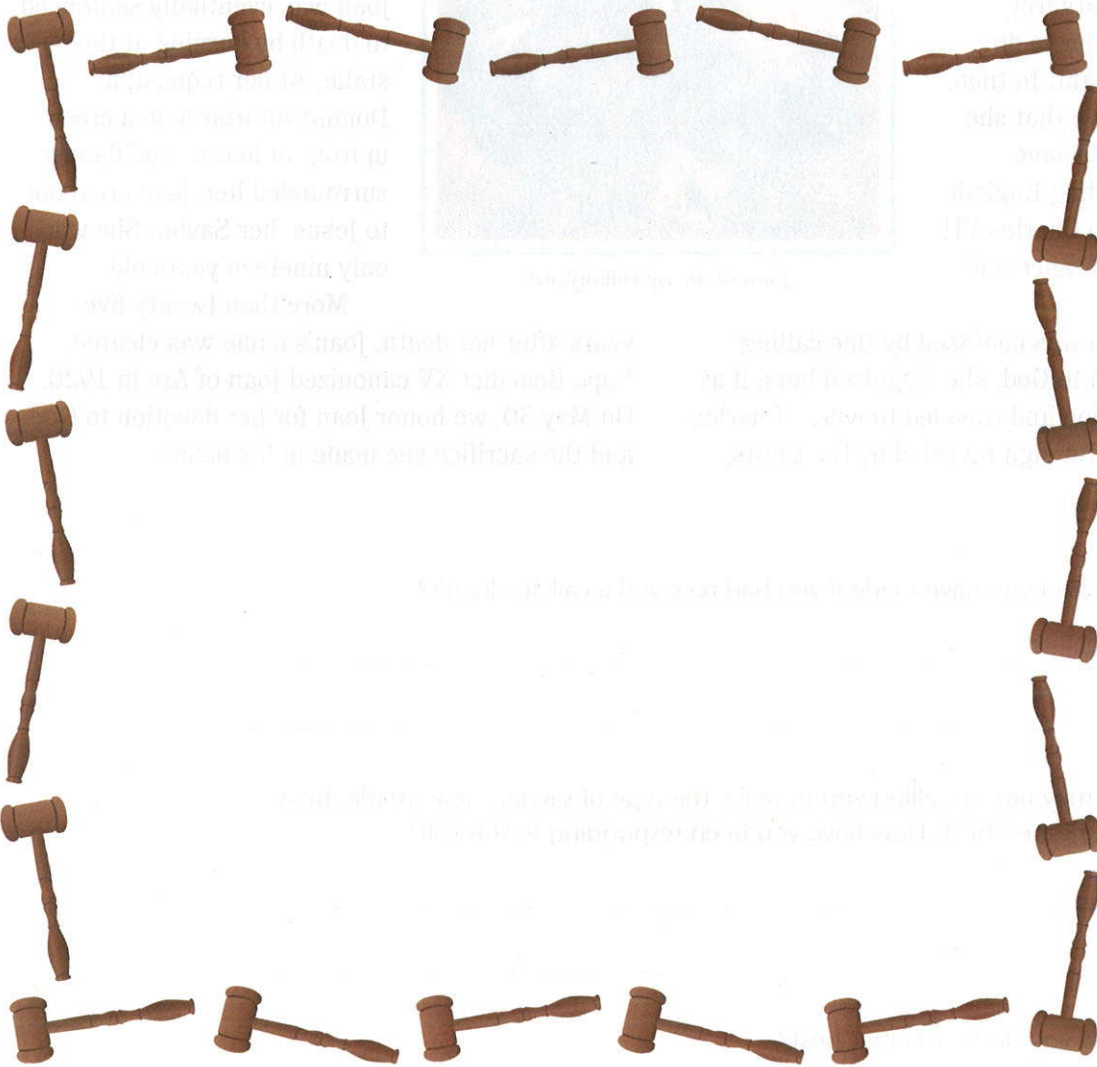
We must use our free will wisely. If we choose to reject Christ's call to imitate him in this life, we choose separation from God in eternal life. If we die in a state of mortal sin, we will exclude ourselves from communion with God and the blessed forever and experience everlasting death. Being eternally separated from God, whose life and happiness we long for and were created for, is known as Hell.

We Believe
Out of love for us, the Son of God suffered and died for our sins. Through his Death and Resurrection, Jesus won Salvation for us.

Activities

1. What does Matthew's story about the judgment of the nations tell you about how God wants you to treat people in need?

2. Every day, you have opportunities to imitate Jesus and to accept his gift of Salvation. Draw a picture of an everyday situation in which a young person is showing mercy or compassion. Title your picture.



How does God call people to respond to Christ's sacrifice?



Respond

Saint Joan of Arc

Jeanne d'Arc (Joan of Arc) was born in a small village in France in the fifteenth century. Neighbors and friends described her as a generous girl who would offer her own bed to a homeless stranger. Although she could not read or write, Joan learned about God and the lives of the saints from her mother. Joan lived simply, helping her mother with sewing and housekeeping.

Quite unexpectedly, Joan felt a calling from God. When she was about fourteen, she became convinced that the voices of Saints Michael, Catherine, and Margaret were instructing her to do something important. In time, she came to believe that she was being asked to save France from invading English troops and to help Charles VII regain control of France and become king.

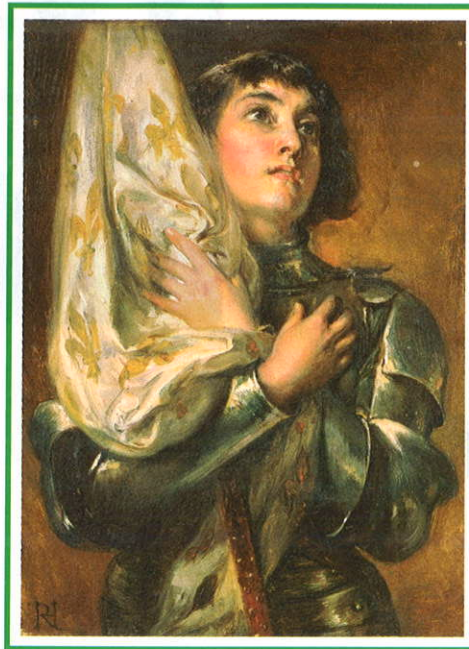
Naturally, Joan was confused by this calling. But being devoted to God, she disguised herself as a man for protection and traveled to where Charles lived. Using a secret sign revealed by the saints,

Joan convinced Charles to let her lead his soldiers into battle.

Dressed in armor, Joan carried a banner that read *Jesus, Mary*. She reclaimed French territory, including Orléans in 1492, and later stood by Charles's side as he was crowned king of France. She continued fighting for her country until she was captured and sold to the English. Sadly, King Charles deserted her, and she was put on trial by people who accused her of witchcraft and heresy.

Alone to defend herself, Joan was eventually sentenced to death by burning at the stake. At her request, a Dominican friar held a cross in front of her. As the flames surrounded her, Joan cried out to Jesus, her Savior. She was only nineteen years old.

More than twenty-five years after her death, Joan's name was cleared. Pope Benedict XV canonized Joan of Arc in 1920. On May 30, we honor Joan for her devotion to God and the sacrifice she made in his name.



Joan of Arc by Hillingford

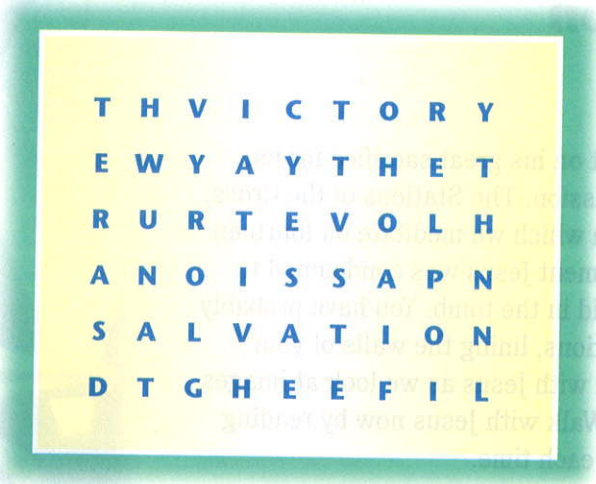
Activities

1. What choice would you have made if you had received a call like Joan's?

2. Although God may not be calling you to make the type of sacrifice Joan made, he is calling you to imitate Christ. How have you been responding to this call?

What else could you do to imitate Christ?

3. In the puzzle below, find and circle six words that describe why the cross is an important symbol for Christians. The words may appear across, down, or backward.



Now write the uncircled letters in order on the lines below to reveal a message about Jesus.

Jesus says, "I am _____, and _____,
 _____ life" (John 14:6).

4. Write a letter thanking Jesus for dying for our sins and giving us new life.

A sheet of lined paper with ten horizontal lines for writing, positioned on a background of a person's hands holding a cross.

How can we honor Jesus for sacrificing his life for us?





Prayer Celebration

The Way of the Cross

To help us live as Jesus taught, we can reflect on his great sacrifice for us. One way to do this is by meditating on the Passion. The Stations of the Cross, or Way of the Cross, is an important prayer in which we meditate on fourteen events of the Passion, beginning with the moment Jesus was condemned to death and ending with the moment he was laid in the tomb. You have probably noticed images of the fourteen events, or stations, lining the walls of your church. In the Stations of the Cross, we walk with Jesus as we look at images that help us follow the story of his Passion. Walk with Jesus now by reading each station below and praying the response each time.

Response: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Way of the Cross prayer, attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. Jesus is condemned to death. | 8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem. |
| 2. Jesus accepts the cross. | 9. Jesus falls the third time. |
| 3. Jesus falls the first time. | 10. Jesus is stripped of his garments. |
| 4. Jesus meets his mother. | 11. Jesus is nailed to the cross. |
| 5. Simon helps Jesus carry the cross. | 12. Jesus dies on the cross. |
| 6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. | 13. Jesus is taken down from the cross. |
| 7. Jesus falls the second time. | 14. Jesus is buried in the tomb. |

Which of the stations has the most meaning for you? Write a prayer reflecting on that station. Then silently pray your prayer.

A Match Column A with Column B by writing the correct number in the space provided.

A

1. Passion
2. Resurrection
3. life everlasting
4. Communion of Saints

B

- ___ what Jesus' faithful followers will share for all eternity
- ___ the union of those, both living and dead, who faithfully believe in and follow Christ
- ___ the suffering, Crucifixion and Death Jesus endured for our sins
- ___ Jesus' victory over death as he rose to new life

B Complete the following sentences.

1. The _____ Jesus won for us through his Death is a gift that is freely given.
2. When the Son of Man comes in his glory, all nations will stand before him. He will say, "Whatever you did for the _____ among you, you did for me" (based on Matthew 25:40).
3. God _____ that we live forever with him in perfect happiness.
4. Being eternally separated from God, whose life and happiness we long for and were created for, is called _____.

C Describe a sacrifice you have made recently and tell how it felt to make that sacrifice.

D Complete the sentences with words from the box.

- When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, many of the Jews began to _____ in Jesus, but some of them went to the _____ and told them what Jesus had done.
- The word _____ means "O Lord, grant Salvation" in Hebrew.
- With the _____ of his life, Jesus conquered sin and death.
- If we have chosen to love God and others, we will have new life. God will transform and _____ our bodies, and we will live in God's everlasting Kingdom of happiness.
- We can _____ on the Passion by praying the _____ of the Cross.

meditate
Hosanna
glorify
Pharisees
believe
sacrifice
Stations

E Respond to the following.

- What did Saint Joan of Arc have to sacrifice in order to answer God's call?

- In what way was Joan's sacrifice similar to that of Jesus?

- In the sixth Station of the Cross, Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. How can you apply Veronica's example in your life?

