



## iBelieve Session 5. Jesus' death and resurrection

**Creed Reference** – I believe in...Jesus Christ... Suffered under Pontius Pilate  
Was crucified, died and was buried;  
He descended into hell;  
On the third day, he rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven



### Song – Lift Your Name on High by Rick Founds

Lord, I lift your name on high  
Lord I love to sing your praises  
I'm so glad You're in my life  
I'm so glad You came to save us

You came from heaven to earth  
To show the way  
From the earth to the cross  
My debt to pay  
From the cross to the grave  
From the grave to the sky Lord,  
I lift your name on high

### Prayer

My Lord and my God,  
take from me everything that distances me from you.  
My Lord and my God, give me everything that brings me closer to you.  
My Lord and my God, detach me from myself and give my all to you.

*St Nicholas of Flüe (1417-1487, Swiss mystic and hermit)*

### Scripture – John 3:16-17

“For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour.”

## Activity | Task 1

This quick quiz has ten questions that you can adapt depending on your group. The idea of the quiz is to get people thinking about the death and resurrection of Jesus, from a scriptural/tradition stand-point. Participants can complete the quiz in small groups, and you may want to have a prize for the winning team.

1. The death and resurrection of Jesus happens at the end of which Church season?  
*Lent*
2. What special activity takes place in Mass on Holy Thursday? Clue: it's copying something Jesus did at the Last Supper.  
*Washing of the Feet*
3. What is the name of the story of Jesus' death that we hear on Good Friday?  
*The Passion*
4. What special activity kicks off the Easter Vigil?  
*The lighting of the Easter fire outside church, and the lighting of candles, especially the Easter or Paschal candle*
5. What do we celebrate at Easter?  
*Jesus rising from the dead*
6. According to Luke's gospel, what happened to Cleopas and the other disciple as they were walking on the road to Emmaus?  
*Jesus walked along with them and talked to them. (They didn't recognize him until later when he broke the bread.)*
7. According to Luke's Gospel, what sort of food did Jesus eat to prove to the disciples that he was really alive?  
*Broiled fish*
8. According to John's Gospel, which disciple doubted that Jesus had risen until he was able to put his hands into the wounds in Jesus' side and hands.  
*Thomas*
9. At the very end of Matthew's Gospel, how long did Jesus promise to stay with his disciples for?  
*Until 'the end of the age' (or 'the end of time' depending on your translation)*
10. After Jesus had risen and appeared to many people and remained with them for a time, he rose up to heaven to be with God the Father. What do we call this event?  
*The Ascension*

## Activity | Task 2

*When Jesus rose from the dead, he was not like a zombie, a body reactivated. His resurrection is not a metaphor for his spirit or influence living on, nor simply Jesus' spiritual being or soul rising to new life. His whole being is transformed into something different, something better. He is a new creation. This transformation was only possible through his acceptance of his own death.*

In this activity we will explore the idea of Jesus' death and resurrection using a tower-building challenge as a metaphor. If you do not wish to build towers, you can choose something else, as long as they get to build and then rebuild it.

Firstly, you will need to do some preparatory work in the week before the session, gathering suitable building materials. There is no set rule on what materials you use, so you should be able to use things that you already have available. Ideas include: old newspaper, empty plastic milk bottles or soft drinks bottles, cereal/tissue boxes and toilet roll centres from your recycling, drinking straws, sticky tape and modelling clay or blu tack.

You need to have a wide enough range of materials so that each small group has something different, i.e. one group gets straws and modelling clay or blu tack, another gets newspaper and sellotape, and another gets plastic bottles and sellotape. You should have enough materials for two sessions of building, so split your materials in half and keep some aside for later.

Give each group 15 minutes to build a tower. Do not give them any boundaries around how they should build it or what it should look like. Just ask them to make the best one they can.

Once their time is up, get each group to briefly show their tower to the others. Show off any features that they might be proud of, and emphasise any strengths their towers have.

Then, get each group to give their tower to another group. This will probably be a bit confusing, and they may get upset about giving their tower away. This is ok! Now, give the instructions for each group to dismantle the tower that they have been given. The idea is that they can re-use the materials, so try to make sure they don't get carried away and trash it completely.

Once the towers have been taken apart, give each group the second half of their materials and ask them to build a new, better tower, using both their original building material and the material they have sourced from the other group's tower. Again, ask them to make the best one that they can. It is important for the success of the activity that their second tower ends up as an improvement on their first one, so you may want to give more time, or some construction tips – triangles being strong shapes, lighter being better etc.

Once their time is up, get each group to briefly show their new tower to the others. Show off any features that they might be proud of and emphasise any strengths their towers have. Particularly highlight where they have successfully incorporated ideas from their original tower into their new creation, and used their new resources to improve their original.

### Debrief:

For some, this activity can seem quite abstract, so your debrief is key in guiding them towards the activity as a metaphor for Jesus' death and resurrection. Some questions that you might like to ask are:

- Were you happy with your first tower? Why/why not?
- How did it feel to see another group destroy your creation?
- How did it feel to destroy somebody else's creation?
- When you were asked to build a new tower, what did you think/feel? Were you keen and excited to improve it, or annoyed and couldn't see the point?
- How is your second tower an improvement on your first?
- If we hadn't built and destroyed the first tower, and had just given you all the resources at the beginning, do you think your tower would have been as good?
- How did the experience of building, being destroyed, and re-building affect you? How did you feel about it? (*Look for answers like: 'We were annoyed or first one had been trashed, so we wanted to make the second one even better.' 'We learnt from the first one that x technique wasn't very good so we changed it for the second tower.'*)
- What lessons can you take from this and apply to your own lives?
- This session is about Jesus' death and resurrection. What do you think the link is between this and the activity we've just done? (*Jesus' life could be seen to be like the first tower, his trial and death could be like the destruction of the towers by other groups, and his resurrection could be like the rebuilding of the towers, so that they are similar but different and 'transformed' from the originals.*)
- Where do we find the resurrection in our own lives?

## Tool | Stations of the Cross

- *The Stations of the Cross follow the journey of Jesus before his crucifixion, and focus on 14 things which happened along the way. These things are known as stations, and they all have something to teach us about what Jesus did for us and about our own lives too.*
- *The Stations of the Cross devotion as we know it now probably started in the fifteenth century, but reflection on Jesus on Good Friday journey started much, much earlier.*
- *The Stations of the Cross is a popular devotion in Lent, since that is the time when we think about what Jesus suffered for us. A lot of parishes have devotions based around the stations each Friday during Lent.*
- *There is a street in Jerusalem called the via Dolorosa, which means 'Way of Grief' or 'Way of Suffering'. This is widely thought to be the route Jesus took that day and has been a popular place of pilgrimage and devotion since the earlier days of the Church.*
- *Places of pilgrimage such as Lourdes in France have large outdoor stations where thousands of people every day complete the prayer journey together. Anyone who has been to a World Youth Day will remember the live enactment of this journey as a key part of the pilgrimage.*

You may like to work with liturgy or prayer committees within your parish to arrange a suitable way for your young people to engage with the Stations of the Cross – maybe joining others in your parish to pray it, or creating a special environment for the youth group to experience the prayer. Using the Stations in your church can be a good way to turn them from being just something that's on the wall, to being something prayerful and significant.

Alternatively, you can experience the Stations of the Cross in a creative or contemporary way. You could also develop the Stations as a 'prayer stations' activity, where there is an action at each stage of the journey, possibly using the stations on the wall in your church, if you have the space. If the space isn't right, you could transfer this activity to your hall, either using the space provided to simulate the journey from stage to stage, or participate in the prayer journey in one place, using multimedia inputs.

Many resources are available online with either downloadable images or audio files that you can play with your group. Make sure you watch or listen to these thoroughly beforehand, so you know that they will work with your group.

Some websites which have useful resources include:

- YouTube clips from [Catholicyouthwork.com](http://Catholicyouthwork.com) as part of their Three One parish resource
- Short audio Stations from the British Jesuits on [Pray As You Go](#)
- Short, audio visual Stations in film clip format from [Busted Halo](#)
- Justice and peace themed Stations available from organisations such as Caritas – try [Caritas Australia](#) and [CAFOD](#) Lenten resources. These are usually tied in with a theme/issue.

If you want to get really creative, your youth group could create their own visuals for the stations, or even come up with their own prayers/reflection points for each stage. This will take much longer, and require more input, but is a great way for them to become more familiar with the themes, feel ownership of their prayer experience, and really enter into the prayers in a way that is relevant to the issues and challenges in their own lives.