



Paschal Mystery

The Paschal Mystery – Jesus’ Life, Death and Resurrection – is a living reality for Christians.

It is not just an event that happened 2000 years ago; it is the presence of the Risen Jesus, his Spirit and his Kingdom, today and always. The Paschal Mystery is the promise of life for Christians which we receive at Baptism.

The word ‘Paschal’ comes from an ancient Aramaic word, *pasha* (Hebrew, *pesah*) meaning ‘Passover’. It refers to the fact that Jews believe God ‘passed over’ the houses of the Jews when the slaying of the firstborn occurred in Egypt. In English, the holiday is known as Passover. *Pesach* is also the name of the sacrificial offering (a lamb) that was made in the temple on this holiday.

The Gospel of John makes a clear reference to Jesus’ *pesah* – his passage – from this world to the Father (John 13:1):

¹ Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father.

The Paschal Mystery continues to draw people into union with God. Catholics experience this union in the most profound way when they receive Jesus in Holy Communion. Jesus’ followers come together in unity, share life and receive the spiritual food – Jesus himself in the Eucharist – that gives them the strength

and energy to reach out to others in love and compassion.

The Paschal Mystery, therefore, enables Christians to know Jesus in a relationship that grows ever more loving and ever more life-giving.

Reflection and Discussion

Read Luke 23:44-46 and reflect on and discuss the following:

- What did Jesus mean when he said he was the Bread of Life?
- What does the Resurrection mean for believers?
- What does the Resurrection mean for you?

View the YouTube clip of Pope Benedict XVI [Explaining the Easter Triduum](#)

How does participating in the liturgies of the Easter Triduum draw people closer to God?

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