

Death and the Resurrection

Please read before the lesson to prepare

Most students will have experienced celebrating Good Friday and Easter and likely know the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. The resurrection from the dead is one of the central tenants of our faith, and our home in communion with God was revealed most fully through Jesus Christ. Many students will have also likely experienced the death of a family member.

This session is meant to reaffirm and proclaim the good news that Jesus has come to save us and raise us to eternal life.

Below are some Bible and Catechism quotations that will help you prepare for this lesson.

Bible Quotations

“For if we have grown into union with Him through a death like His, we shall also be united with Him in the resurrection.” – *Rom 6:5*

“Our savior Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” – *2 Tim 1:10*

“In my Father's house there are many dwelling places . . . I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be.” – *John 14:2,3*



Catechism Quotations

Article II of the Creed – “I believe in the resurrection.” – *Paragraphs 988-1019*

CCC 989 – “We firmly believe, and hence we hope that, just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives forever, so after death the righteous will live forever with the risen Christ and He will raise them up on the last day.”

CCC 991 – “Belief in the resurrection of the dead has been an essential element of the Christian faith from its beginnings. ‘The confidence of Christians is the resurrection of the dead; believing this we live.’”

Opening Prayer

Suggested prayer, modify as needed

Dear Lord, You came so that we might know Your great love for us, save us from the darkness of sin and sadness. You give us joy and prepare a beautiful home for us in heaven. We ask that You bless us today as we learn about Your death and resurrection and what it means for us all. And we pray for Your mercy on all who have died and gone before us, especially our family and friends. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

1) Proclamation

God has created each one of us to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him. He loves us so much that He wants us to know unending joy with Him and all the angels and saints in heaven, our beautiful home.



2) Explanation

For this age group, we recommend that the central teaching be done after a conversation with the students from which the most important points can be elaborated on.

Suggested question prompts:

- 1) **Q.** Who knows the story of Jesus' death and resurrection?
A. Jesus died and on the 3rd day He rose again. The word resurrection means that after we die, we will rise up again. We will come back to life . . .
- 2) **Q.** Who knows where we go when we die?
A. God loves us so much He wants us to be with Him and sent His only begotten Son Jesus to save us from sin and death, so that we might live with Him in heaven . . .
- 3) **Q.** Who knows what we call the special celebration we have when somebody dies?
A. A funeral. A funeral is a special time when we commend the person who has died to the mercy of God and, as Christians, pray for them

- that through their faith in Jesus Christ they will share in His resurrection. The body or cremated remains of the person are then taken to a cemetery where they are buried or interred until the day when Jesus returns in glory.
- 4) **Q.** When does the Church pray for those who have died?
A. At Mass, during funerals, at cemeteries, and at home or in church, we pray for our family and friends who have died and those who are about to die. On All Saints Day on November 1st, we ask for the prayers of all those saints who are alive with Jesus in Heaven. On All Souls Day we pray in a special way for all those members of our families who have died . . .

5) **Q.** How do we pray for those who have died?

A. We can pray at Mass for our family members who have died or when we say our prayers at night. We can remember them anytime we pray.

Teaching

Bible Reading

- Let's listen to a reading from the Bible when Jesus talks about the resurrection.
- Read John 14:1-6 and facilitate a brief discussion on the story.

Catechesis (main points to cover)

- Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead for us, and He went to prepare a place for us to live forever with Him and everyone else who is in heaven.
- Here on earth we learn to love God and follow Him so when our time on earth ends we can be with Him in heaven.
- In heaven everything that is been broken in us by sin will be fixed, so that we can be exactly who God made us to be.
- When someone dies there is a special way of remembering and honoring them called a funeral, which prepares the person who died to enter into new and everlasting life with Jesus, and helps the family express their sadness and seek consolation in one another.



3) Application

Guided reflection and discussion

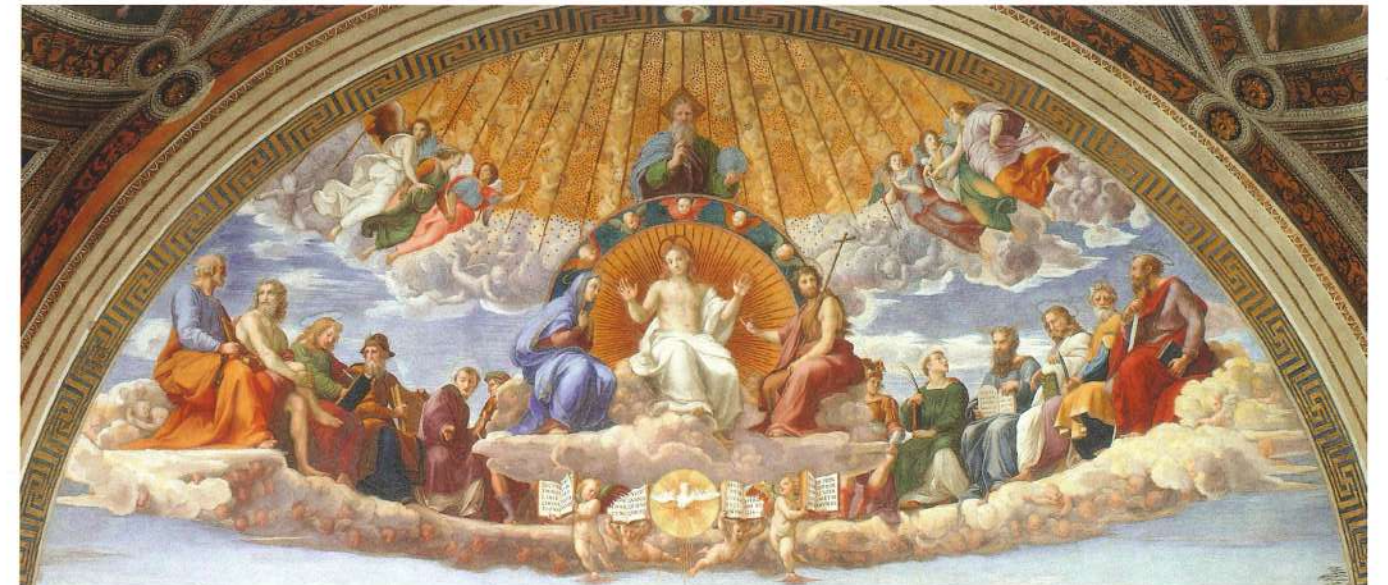
- This part of the lesson is meant to encourage kids to use their imagination about the mystery of heaven using the attached worksheet.
 - While heaven is ultimately a mystery for us now, that does not mean we cannot infer what heaven is like. Jesus talked about heaven, and many saints have described heaven. Kids may naturally have an inclination to what heaven is like.
- Prompt: Jesus loves us more than anything, right? He created us, He knows us by name, He made each of us different and special in our own way. Jesus has prepared a place for each one of us with Him in heaven. What do you imagine heaven is like? Use the paper below to draw a picture of what you think heaven would be like.
- After kids are finished drawing, have a discussion on their drawings and reinforce key points.
- Key points: In heaven . . .
 - We will be completely happy.
 - We will have perfect community.
 - There is no sadness, nothing will hurt.
 - There are no more tears.
 - We are one big family.
 - We will see all the saints and our family members who have died
 - We will see God face to face.



4) Celebration

Finish the lesson by reinforcing any key points and offering a concluding prayer inviting children to pray for any family and friends who have died, and those who have no one to pray for them.

What is heaven like? Use your imagination and draw a picture of what you think heaven is like. Who is there? What are people doing? What good things from our home on earth are better and more perfect in heaven?



Here is how a famous artist named Rafael imagined heaven. What do you think?