

# SAVED THE DAY

The Resurrection

## GOAL

The goal of this session is for middle school youth to understand the saving work accomplished in the Resurrection of Jesus and what it means to live in the reality of it – with everlasting hope, joy, and peace.

## Scripture

John 2:19-22, John 10:17-18, 1 Corinthians 15:55, Ephesians 2:4-7, Colossians 3:1-4

## Catechism

CCC 631-655

## Resources

### Handout

“Saved the Day” Parent Letter

### Media

Ascension Presents, “What Is Hope and Why Do You Need It?” (youtube.com)

## **GATHER**

Youth imagine scenarios where heroes with not-so-great superpowers still save the day.

## **PROCLAIM**

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- After three days in the tomb, Jesus rose from the dead. We celebrate his victory over death on Easter Sunday.
- Jesus' Resurrection proved his identity as God and opened the path to new life for us.
- We can live in hope because we know there is life after death.

## **BREAK + SEND**

Youth participate in Eucharistic Adoration as a way to encounter the continuing presence of Jesus with us.

## **WEEKLY CHALLENGE**

Next time you go to Mass, take a moment to look between the crucifix and the tabernacle, remembering Jesus' sacrifice then and now.

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## **PREP**

Collect all materials needed for the Edge Night.

The Send for this session is Eucharistic Adoration. Coordinate final details with your parish priest and music minister.

## **SETUP**

Follow the Environment suggestions for the series.

Test all audio-visual elements of the Edge Night.

Project the environment image, and play the “ES - Unsuspecting Hero” Spotify playlist as the youth enter.

## **SUPPLIES**

Prepare the following supplies:

### Gather

- Slips of paper, one per youth
- Pens, one per youth
- Large bowl

### Break + Send

- Adoration supplies

## NOTES

## CORE ASSIGNMENTS AND NOTES

This youth minister worksheet provides writing space to detail core member assignments and notes specific to running this Edge Night. Write the names of core members assigned to the roles listed.

### Highlights:

- During Adoration, disperse among the youth to provide quiet redirection or support as needed.

### Setup:

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### Opening Prayer:

### Gather - Second-Rate Heroes

- Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

### Proclaim - Saved the Day:

- Adoration Setup (2): \_\_\_\_\_

### Break + Send - Adoration

- Priest/Deacon: \_\_\_\_\_

- Musician(s): \_\_\_\_\_

- Reflection Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

### Weekly Challenge:

### Parking Lot:

## NOTES

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## GATHER

### Introduction (5 min)

Welcome the youth and introduce those who are there for the first time. Invite the preselected core member to begin in prayer. Give a brief overview of the Edge Night topic, using the following as an example:

*Heroes save the day; it is what they do! No matter what obstacles they face, a hero always does what they must to restore justice and save the city. Jesus' final act that clinches our salvation is his Resurrection from the dead on the third day. The battle is won! Our Savior is victorious! Through his life, we are brought to new life. And that is the greatest good we will ever receive.*

### Second-Rate Heroes (15 min)

Give each youth a slip of paper and a pen. Ask them to think of an absurd superpower and write it on their paper. Provide some examples from the list below:

- Possesses super strength, which can only be used while standing on one foot
- Produces hot sauce from fingertips
- Perfect hair
- Can survive any calamity – once
- Knows exact durations (when the next train will arrive, how long a candle will burn, the school lunch break, etc.)

Fold the slips of paper, and place them in a bowl. Each small group draws an absurd superpower from the bowl. Pose a scenario from the list below for the small groups to discuss how their hero's terrible superpower could save the day. After two minutes of brainstorming, ask each small group to act out the scenario. Have teams guess what the hero's second-rate superpower is. Play as many rounds as time allows.

#### Example Scenarios:

- A cat is stuck in a tree.
- An earthquake causes a tower to collapse on a busy city street.
- A fisherman is trapped out at sea in shark-infested waters.
- A young girl dropped her ice cream cone and is crying inconsolably.
- Three bullies steal lunch money from a nerdy child.
- An evil mayor decrees that school weeks will now be six days instead of five.
- A snowstorm threatens to cancel the town's Christmas festival.
- No friends show up to a child's birthday party at the zoo.

## PROCLAIM

### “Saved the Day” Teaching (10 min)

#### The Best Day Ever

Think about a scene from a movie where the main character dies. How would the story have been different if, at the end, that person came back to life? Write your own thoughts here:

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- Resurrection truly changes the story. In our faith, the Resurrection of Jesus is the biggest celebration of the entire year!
- Jesus’ followers thought the story was over when he was buried in a tomb, but on the day following the Sabbath (when no one could visit him), Mary Magdalene found the tomb unguarded and empty — not even Jesus’ body was there.

Project and read **John 20:1-10**.

#### Going Deeper

Why do we say Jesus rose on the third day if there are only two days between Friday and Sunday? There are a few principles to consider here to help us understand: the first is that the Bible regularly uses “inclusive counting,” which means including the start date when counting time. Secondly, in Judaism, the day begins when the sun goes down. This is why the Jewish Sabbath begins on Friday evenings. So, the first day is when Jesus died on Friday, the second is Saturday, and then on the third day, Sunday morning, the tomb is empty.

- The disciples did not yet understand that the story was ongoing. They missed the full meaning of what Jesus had said earlier, when he prophesied his Resurrection.

Project and read **John 2:18-22**.

- On Easter Sunday, we celebrate the risen Jesus and his triumph over death for our salvation.
- Our story as Christians does not end in sorrow at a tomb, but rather in sheer joy, hope, and wonder that Jesus rose from the dead and conquered death.
- God has done all that He had promised to do for His people; “We bring to you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this day he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus.” **(Acts 13:32-33)**

- Some skeptics may think that the Resurrection was made up, since it gives more evidence to Christianity. However, there are historical accounts that verify the Resurrection happened. (**CCC 639**)

### Going Deeper

One popular theory against the Resurrection is that Jesus did not die, but simply fainted, or “swooned,” and then later recovered. This theory is easily refuted. Firstly, Jesus could not have survived crucifixion, and Roman law threatened the death penalty on any soldier who let a capital prisoner, like Jesus, escape. Secondly, an injured, near-death Jesus would not have been able to remove the three-ton stone in front of the tomb or escape the Roman guarding it.

### A New Path

- We spoke a few weeks ago about how Jesus’ works – the miracles and healings – prove he is who he said he is. His actions proved that he actually was the Son of God. (**CCC 651**)
- Now the Resurrection is the final sign and proof that Jesus truly is the Son of God – “The truth of Jesus’ divinity is confirmed by his Resurrection.” It “shows that he was truly ‘I Am,’ the Son of God and God himself.” (**CCC 653**)
- The Resurrection has two realities that affect us directly. “By his death, Christ liberates us from sin; by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life.” (**CCC 654**)
- As St. Paul says, the wages of sin is death. Jesus took on the punishment for our sins. Then, by rising from the dead, Jesus elevates our human nature to a new level and paves the way for us to have new life after our time in this world ends. (**Romans 6:23**)
- We can have confidence when we follow Jesus because of his Resurrection. (**CCC 997**)
- Jesus shows us a new path of life and calls us to be like him. He is worthy of following, and his teachings are true.

Share with the youth one Scripture verse of Jesus’ teachings that gives them a concrete way to follow Jesus. For example, “Love one another as I have loved you” (**John 13:34**). Talk about how Jesus loved others in Scripture: he cared for the poor and the sick, he was patient and kind, etc. Then ask the youth (or give them an idea of) how they could show others love in a similar way. Write your ideas here:

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## Eternal Life

Project and read **John 11:25**:

“I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.”  
(New American Bible, Revised Edition)

Give the youth a few minutes to reflect on the Scripture verse privately and prayerfully. Asking them to reflect, do they really believe this?

- Jesus tells us directly that whoever believes in him will not die, and he shows us in the Resurrection that he has power over death. He also invites us into his own Resurrection. **(CCC 655)**

### Going Deeper

Share a story with the youth of one of the early Christian martyrs and how they gave their life for their faith, which was strengthened by the Resurrection and the hope they had in life after death. Two examples of this are Sts. Perpetua and Felicity or St. Ignatius of Antioch.

- What does this mean for us? Our earthly bodies will still die, but our souls will not. We have the hope of living in eternal happiness with Jesus in heaven forever. **(CCC 1026)**
- None of the terrible things that happen in the world, nor any of the “villains” that pursue us, can ever take away our hope in Jesus.
- Suffering and death are not the end of the story. In fact, there is no end to the story — the joy of heaven is forever and ever!

## BREAK + SEND

### Adoration (40 min)

Bring the youth into the church, and ask them to sit in the pews. Introduce the time of prayer and reflection, using the following as an example:

*Jesus' Resurrection confirms that all the promises he made were true. One of the last promises Jesus made to his disciples was that he would be "with [them] always, to the close of the age." Jesus fulfills that promise through the Eucharist, which is truly his Body and Blood. The candle that burns next to the tabernacle is a sign of God's constant presence to us in the Eucharist kept there. (Matthew 28:20)*

*While we most often receive the Eucharist in Mass, we can also participate in Eucharistic Adoration. Adoration is a sacred time to sit face-to-face with God, visible as the Eucharistic host. During this time, we adore, pray, ask, and worship God. We can talk to Jesus in prayer like the disciples did; we can ask questions, express our sorrows, and offer thanks. Jesus on the altar is the same Jesus who died and rose from the dead for you.*

*We will kneel in respect when the Blessed Sacrament is processed in and reposed (put away). Aside from those two times, you can take a posture of prayer that is comfortable for you. During this time, there will be periods of music and silence. If you find your mind wandering, allow the distraction to pass over you and refocus on the name, "Jesus."*

*A few sessions ago, we reflected on who Jesus is to us — an enemy, a stranger, a loved one, a friend. Bring that to Jesus. If you want that relationship to change, tell him. He wants to draw closer to you.*

Your priest, deacon, or Eucharistic Minister can expose the Eucharist in a monstrance on the altar. Take a brief moment in silence before beginning the music. After 30 minutes, repose the Eucharist and conclude the time of prayer with a Glory Be.

#### Suggestion

If Eucharistic Adoration is unavailable to you, pray ten minutes of silent prayer in the church or chapel before the tabernacle, followed by a party with games and sweets to celebrate the Resurrection.

#### Step It Up

Add to the environment around the altar with a multitude of flowers, reminiscent of the decorations during the Easter season.

## Weekly Challenge (5 min)

Invite the preselected core members to present the Weekly Challenge.

*Next time you go to Mass, take a moment to look between the crucifix and the tabernacle, remembering Jesus's sacrifice then and now.*

Dismiss the core members preassigned to parking lot safety.

Make announcements related to your program.

Dismiss the youth.

## NOTES