

Christ's Pasch

Our
Passage
to the Father



1. The resurrection of Lazarus

Chapel of the Sisters of Jesus the Good Shepherd, Rome - Italy



*"When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.'
The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with bandages, and his face
wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'"*
(Jn 11:43-44)

Just as the shepherd calls his sheep, the Lord calls Lazarus out of the tomb:
"Lazarus, come out!" In the temple of Jerusalem, the sheep were gathered in
the courtyard to be sacrificed, but God our Father doesn't ask us for sacrifices.
Rather, he sent his Son to free us, his sheep, through his one, perfect sacrifice.



2. The supper at Bethany

Crypt of the lower church of the sanctuary of St. Pio of Pietrelcina, San Giovanni Rotondo - Italy



"But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said, 'Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?' This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it."
(Jn 12:4-6)

After Lazarus was raised, there is a feast to celebrate the life he received again. Mary and Martha, Lazarus' sisters, offer gestures of love, because only love knows how to celebrate. But Judas, who only cares about himself and calculates, is bothered by this love.



3. The anointing at Bethany

Chapel of Casa Incontri Cristiani, Capiago - Italy



"And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head."

(Mk 14:3)

The woman offers to the Lord all that she has: a precious jar of perfume. Love always expresses more than we see at first sight. For love, the woman anoints Christ's body, for he is king, priest and prophet. And as the Lord says, she anoints his body in preparation for his burial.



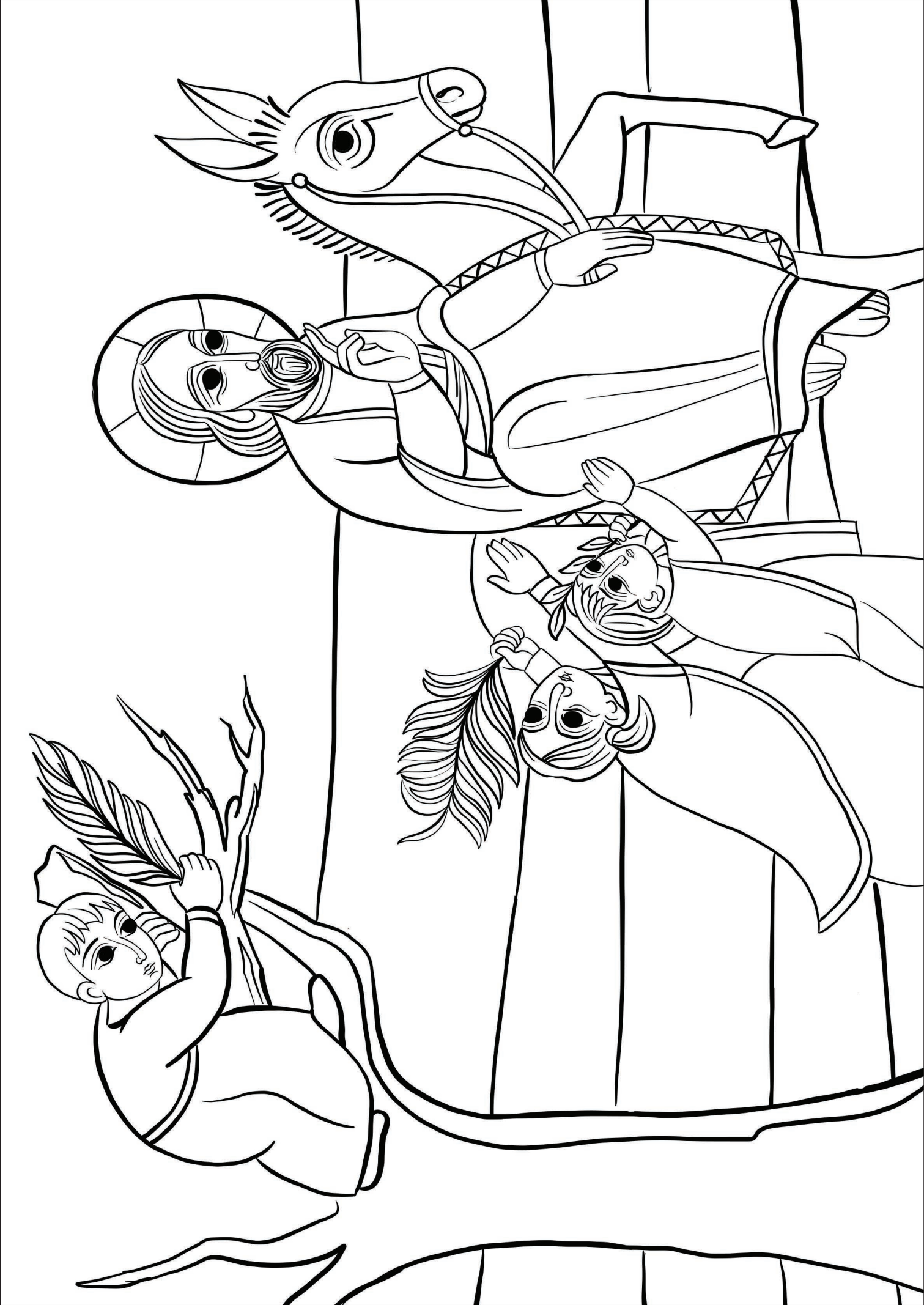
4. The entry into Jerusalem

Stella Maris La Gavia College, Madrid - Spain



*"The crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted,
'Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!'"*
(Mt 21:8-9)

In the image of the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem, there are children who cry out, praising the Lord. They are the simple, the small, the only ones who understand that Christ is a new, different kind of King. He's not a King who takes advantage of his people. Rather, he comes in meekness and gentleness to save those whom he himself has made.



5. The washing of the feet

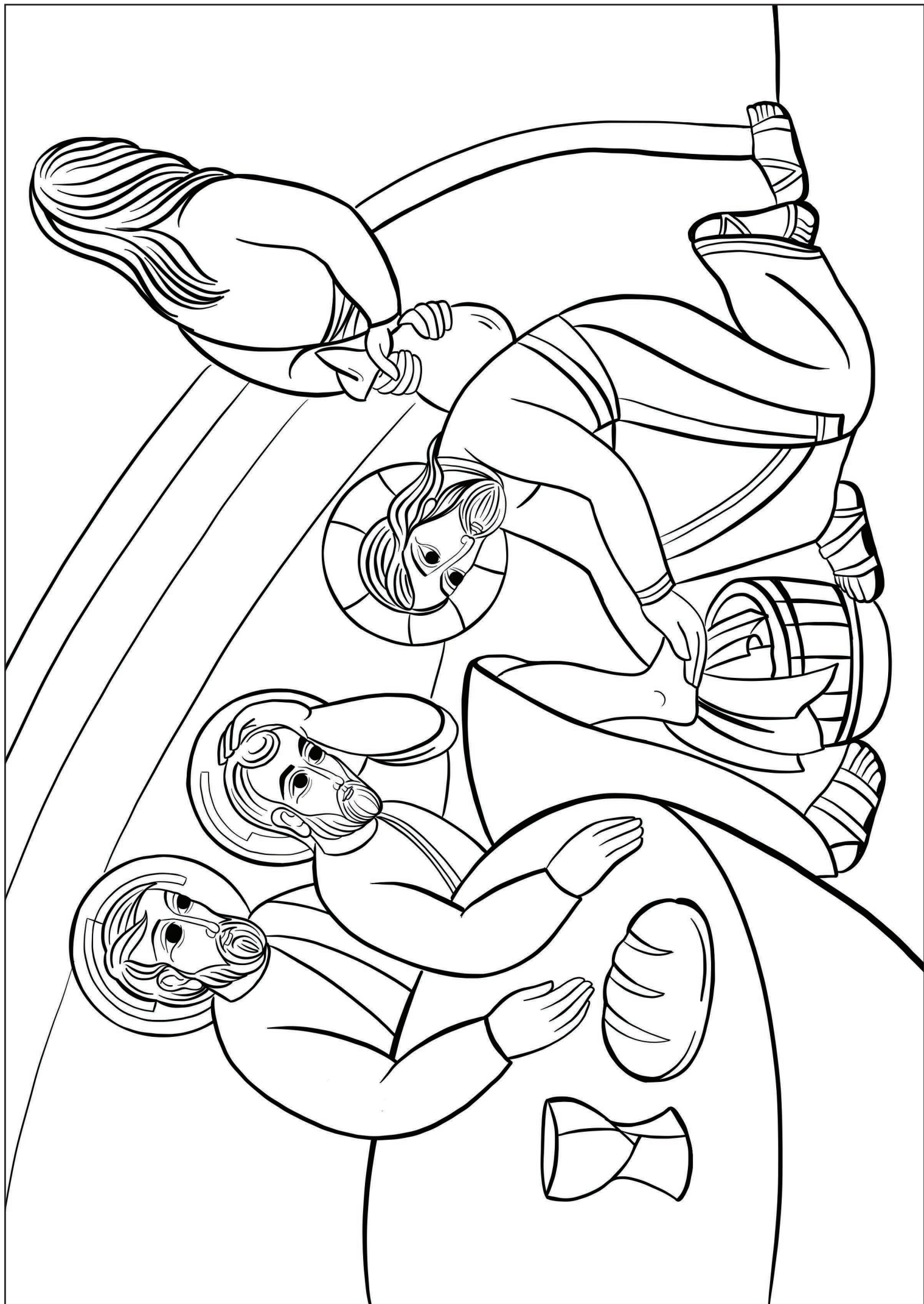
Ta' Pinu National Shrine, Gozo - Malta



“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and tied a towel around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded.”

(Jn 13:3-5)

Christ washes his disciples’ feet with a humble gesture of love – a gesture considered so humiliating at that time that even Jewish servants weren’t supposed to do it. By doing this, Christ shows that he came to save people whole: from their heads to their feet. Judas is irritated and decides to go out, leaving love. He can’t accept a God who is love.



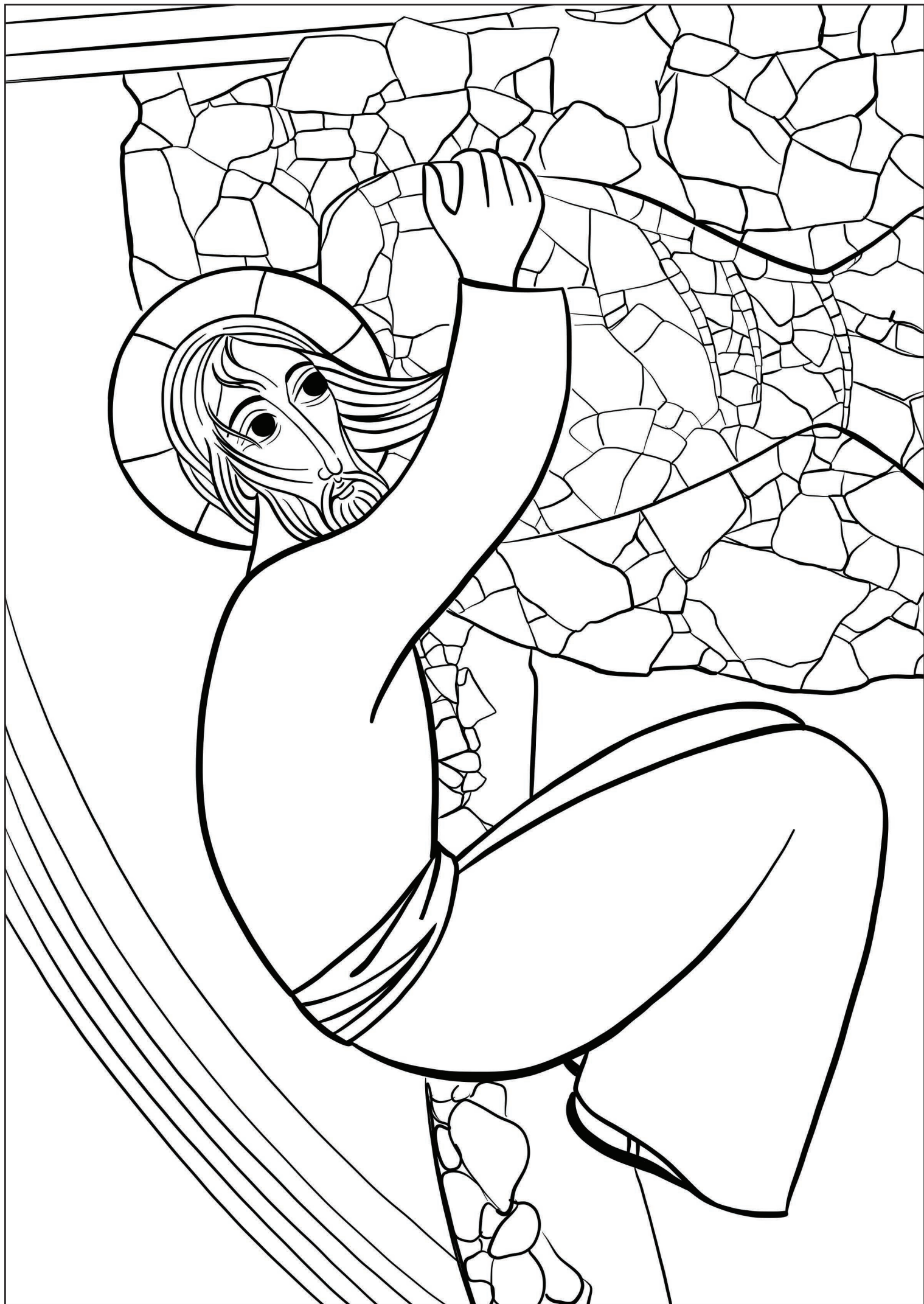
6. The garden of Gethsemani

Our Lady of the Way Church, Caltagirone - Italy



"Jesus came out, and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. And when he came to the place he said to them, 'Pray that you may not enter into temptation.' And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours be done.'"
(Lk 22:39-42)

In the garden of Gethsemani, we understand that humanity's salvation takes place when we are liberated from ourselves. When we no longer do only what we want, but when, through love, we welcome another's will. At Gethsemani, Christ entrusts himself to the Father's will. Because there is sin in the world, this will is a suffering for him. But in drinking from this cup, he accomplishes our salvation.



7. Peter's denial

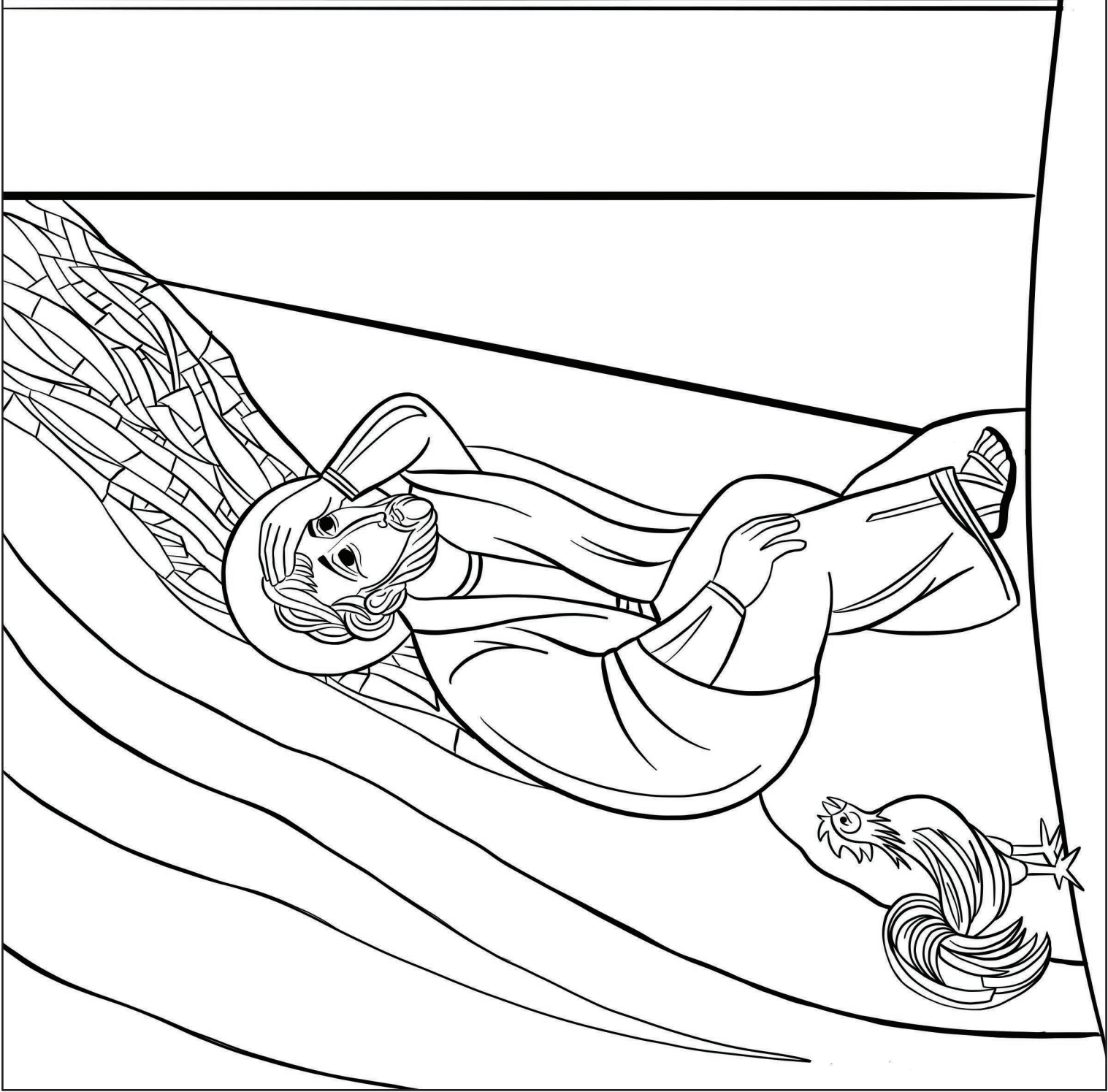
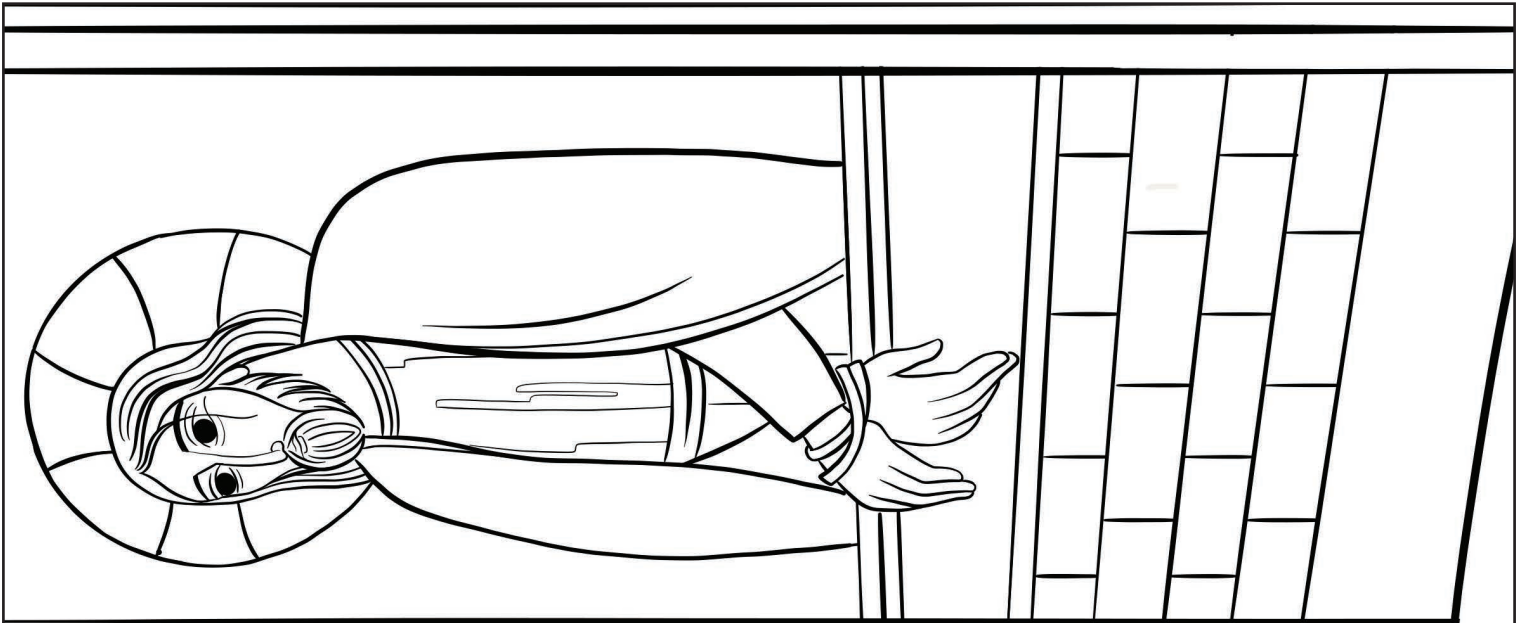
Saint John Paul II Shrine, Krakow - Poland



"And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.'"

(Lk 22:61)

Peter weeps bitter tears after he denies Jesus. He realizes that even though he was convinced that he loved the Lord, he was more concerned for himself. The cock, standing next to him, will always be a reminder, not so much of Peter's betrayal as of God's mercy and of the forgiveness that Peter receives from Christ.



8. Christ is scourged

Ta' Pinu National Shrine, Gozo - Malta



"Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe; they came up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and struck him with their hands."
(Jn 19:1-3)

Christ is scourged, even though he is totally innocent and unjustly condemned. The soldiers are surprised at how he puts up with everything in peace, with meekness. In fact it is peace and humility that disarm those who use weapons and force. Christ reveals that God doesn't defend himself but rather offers himself. In this way, God shows his true face.



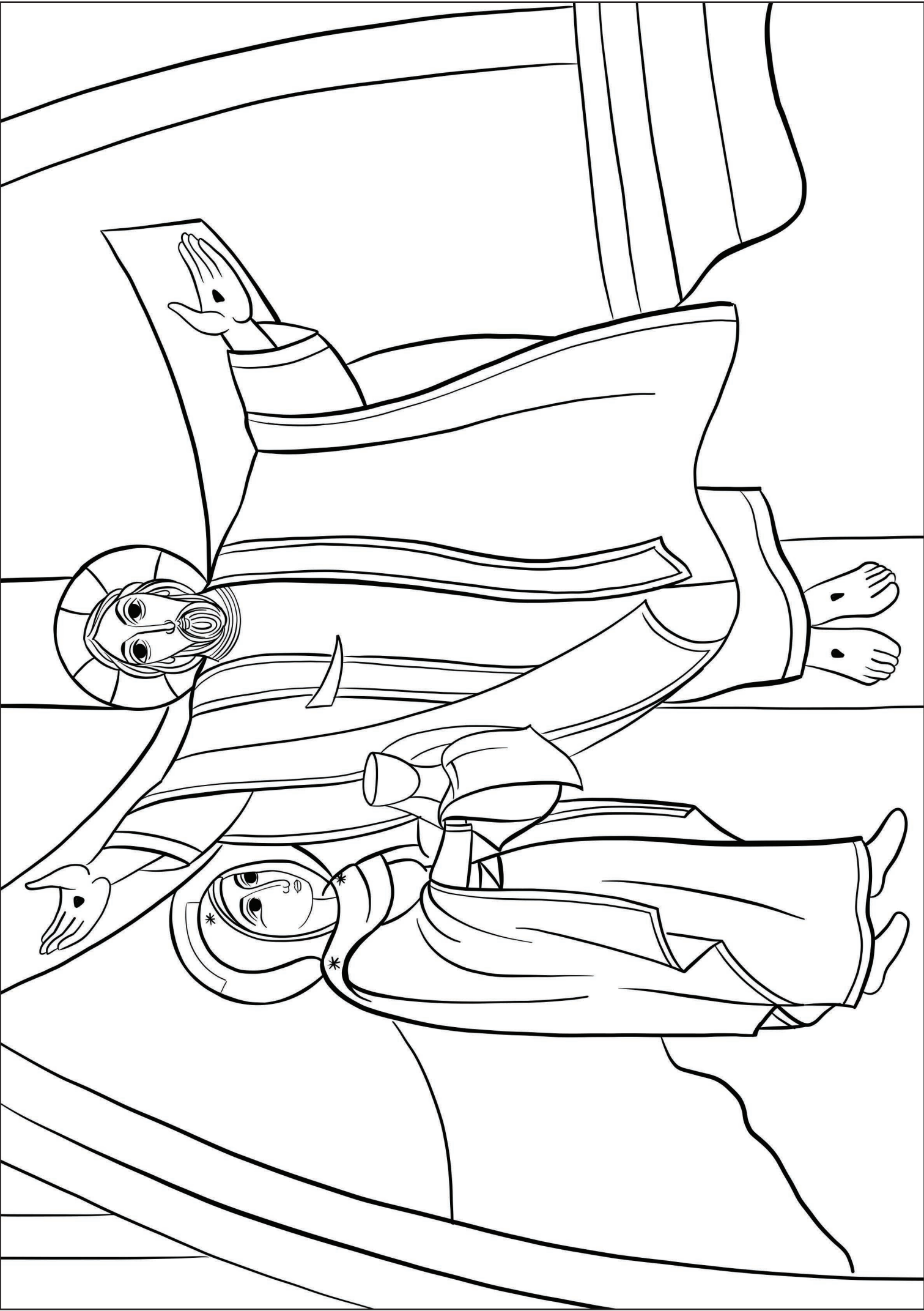
9. The crucifixion

Chapel of the Center for Spirituality "Geltrude Comensoli", Ranica - Italia



"And it was the third hour, when they crucified him. And the inscription of the charge against him read, 'The King of the Jews.'"
(Mk 15:25-26)

No one can kill Christ, for he offers his own life. With this sacrifice of his life, he unites humanity to the Father. For this reason, his sacrifice makes him the new high priest. We see him here wearing the vestments of a priest, while Mary, the mother who is an image of the Church, the new humanity, receives life from him.



10. The deposition

Saint John Paul II Shrine, Krakow - Poland



*"When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed."
(Mt 27:57-60)*

When Mary, our Lord's mother, first received her son from the Father, she was a virgin and became a mother. When she receives him now, as the body of her son who died on the cross, it's as if she gave birth to him again, in pain. But in this death it is she, the Church, who is generated, just as once Eve was drawn from Adam's side.



11. He descended to the dead

Church of Sant Julià i Sant Germà, Sant Julià de Lòria - Andorra, Spain



"He descended to the dead, and on the third day he rose again".
(Apostles' Creed)

Christ died and was buried in the tomb. He enters Sheol, the kingdom of death, where no living person can enter. He allowed death to swallow him up to free the dead! He goes to seek Adam and Eve, his two first parents. Taking them by the wrist, the point where we feel someone's pulse to see if he is alive, Christ brings them back to the Father – for the risen Lord returns to the Father.



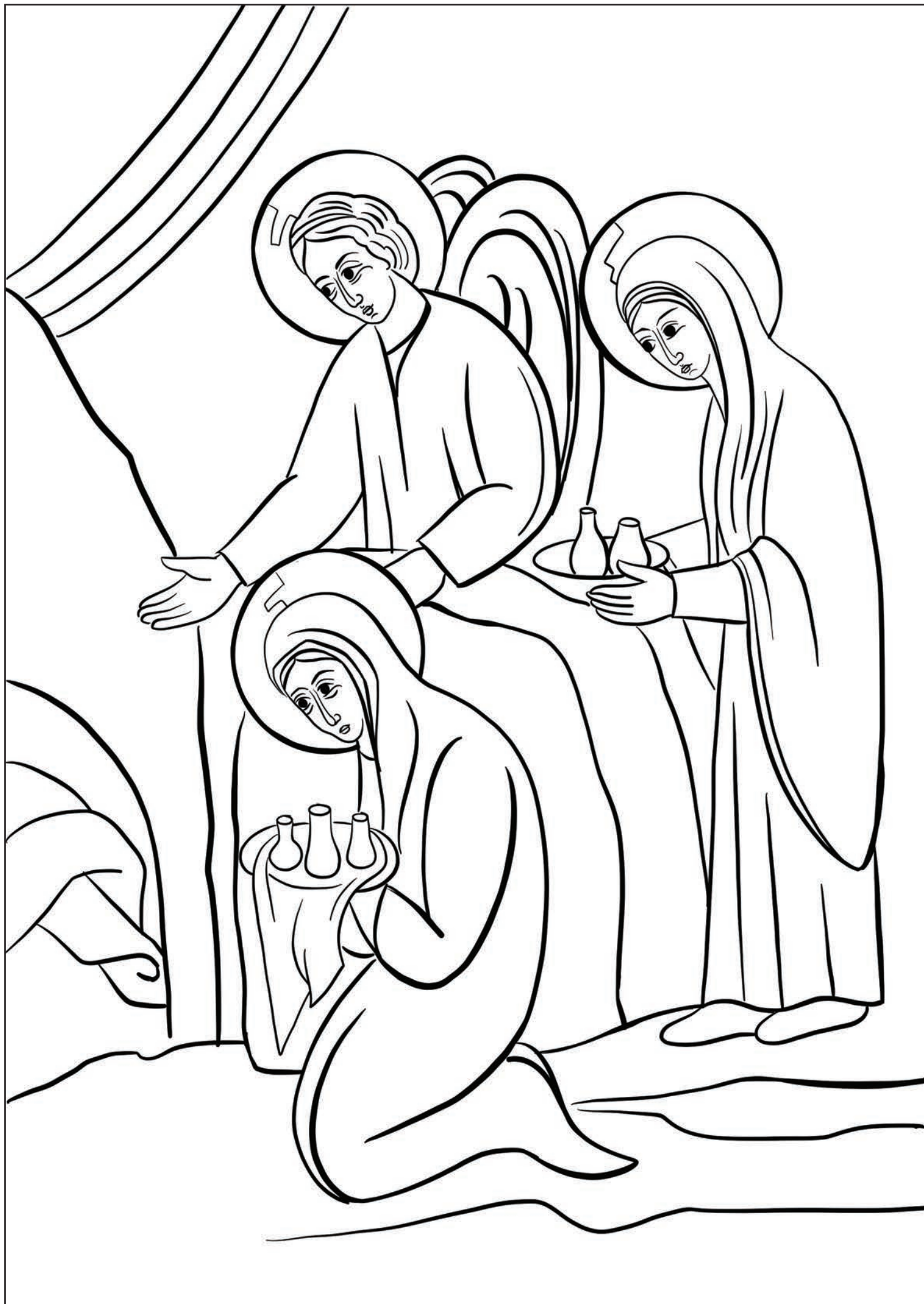
12. The myrrh-bearers

Redemptoris Mater Chapel, Apostolic Palace, Vatican City



"And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, when the sun had risen. (Mk 16:1-2)

These women who had followed Christ, helping and serving him with whatever they could do. They come to the tomb early, when it is still dark, to anoint Christ's body, as was the custom at the time. But the stone that sealed the tomb has been rolled away, not because the Lord came out from that entrance but rather to show them and us that Christ is risen and is no longer there.



13. Mary Magdalene sees Jesus at the tomb

Our Lady of the Way Church, Caltagirone - Italy



“Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”
(Jn 20:17)

Mary Magdalene recognizes Jesus not when she sees him, but when she hears him speak her name. Recognition happens in a personal encounter, in a call and a response that are full of love. Jesus has come back from another world, from the Kingdom of his Father. Now he no longer belongs to the world where people get old and die; he already belongs to the world of eternity. And he comes to this world in a way so unexpected and surprising that only those who love and believe in him can recognize him, in a personal relationship of love and faith.



Let us pray:



*It is right to exalt you, Creator of all things,
for by your sufferings we are freed from death
and possess immortality.*

*From your side pierced by a lance, a new creation flows:
a new Eve for the second Adam.
You fell into a wondrous sleep,
a sleep that became the source of life,
and you awoke alive, o Omnipotent One.*

*On this day, hell laments and cries out,
"My power is destroyed,
for I received a dead man who was just like all the others
but I could not keep him!
He robbed me of all those who were in my power.
For centuries I kept the dead as prisoners,
and now he is taking them all away!"
Glory, O Lord, to your cross and resurrection!*

*Christ is risen from the dead,
with death he conquered death,
and to those who are in the tombs
he gave Life!*



Lipa



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OF COLUMBUS®**

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