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# EASTER'S

## promise

Three men convicted of crimes were executed by the Roman authorities in Palestine almost 2,000 years ago. Two of them are remembered solely because of how they treated the third, a prophet.

One of the men executed alongside the prophet mocked him. The man crucified on the prophet's other side asked to join the prophet in his kingdom.

And the only reason anyone recalls this story is the testimony of the prophet's disciples that he rose from the dead and appeared again to them in bodily form. So strong was their belief that they were willing to risk imprisonment and execution to tell the story.

The Resurrection of Jesus is the most important story of Christianity. Consider the words of Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Nancy Hawkins, assistant professor of theology at St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry in Pittsford: "Without the Resurrection, Good Friday is just another really nice prophet being killed."

Sister of St. Joseph Karen Dietz, coordinator of sacramental catechesis for the Diocese of Rochester, likewise noted that Jesus was not just another preacher who met an untimely end.

"Our faith doesn't make sense without the Resurrection," she said. "The fact that (Jesus) rose from the dead is pivotal."

Indeed, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts the Resurrection at the center of Jesus' identity.

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Story by Rob Cullivan