

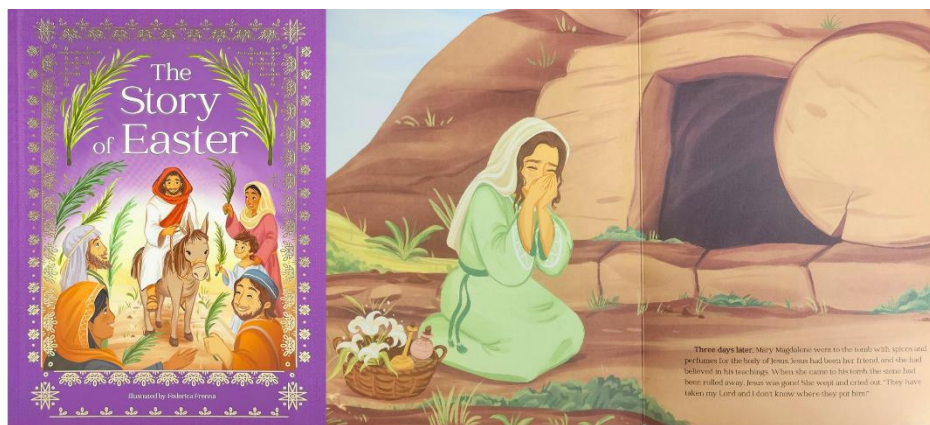


Looking for Mary: 9 Children's Books That Highlight the Remarkable Role of Mary Magdalene in the Easter Story

By Cris Conerty

I love reading about courageous women in the holy scriptures! **Mary Magdalene stands out as a shining example.** She wholeheartedly supported the ministry of Jesus, rose to prominence as a leader and teacher amongst the Lord's disciples, and was ultimately given the sacred honor of being the *first* to see the Risen Christ. **Yet, I've noticed a significant lack of children's Easter books that adequately shine a spotlight on Mary's pivotal role.** She is frequently mentioned only in passing, often left unnamed, and on some occasions, not mentioned at all.

For parents or grandparents interested in **highlighting the contributions of women in their Easter traditions**, here are nine captivating children's books that give emphasis to *the* preeminent witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ - Mary of Magdala.

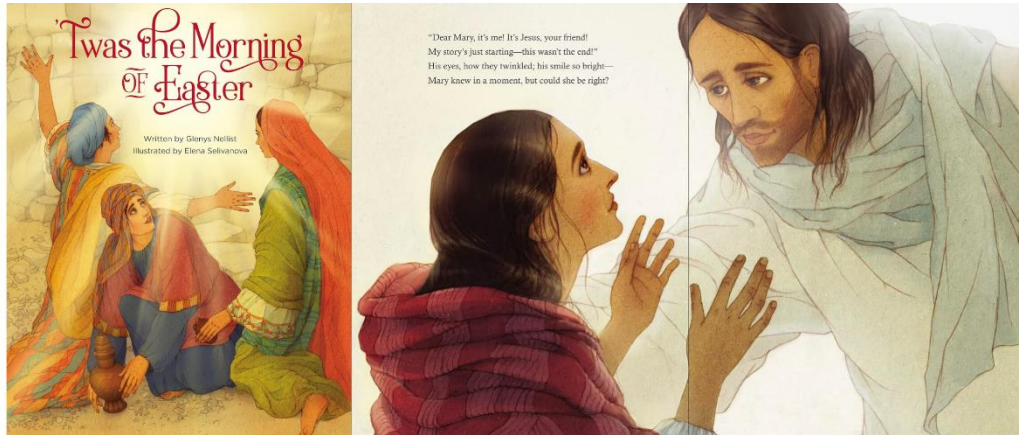


[The Story of Easter](#)

Written by Pippa Mellon | Illustrated by Frederica Frenna | Cottage Door Press | Hardcover 32 pages

This over-sized keepsake board book, built to endure the generations, features rich illustrations and text crafted for older children and adult storytellers to share with young listeners. **Mary**

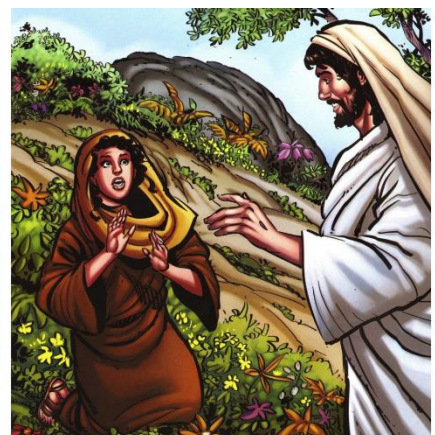
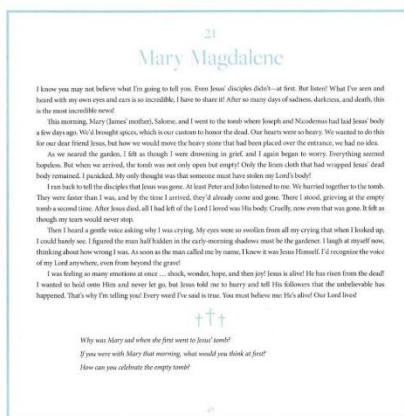
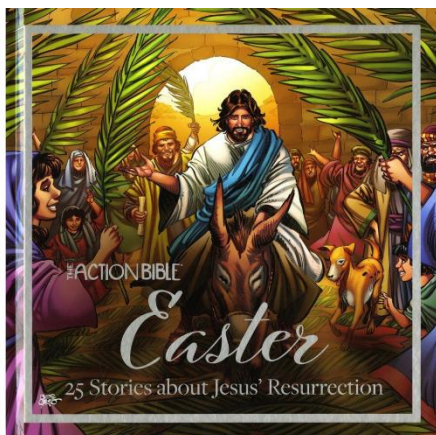
Magdalene is featured prominently near the end of the book in two simple but appealing illustrations – one as she tearfully kneels beside the empty tomb and one with the Risen Lord showing himself to Mary, highlighted by an intricate gold border to set it apart from all other illustrations. Easter traditions are included at the end of the story.



'Twas the Morning of Easter

Written by Glenys Nellist | Illustrated by Elena Selivanova | Zondervan Kidz | Hardcover 32 pages

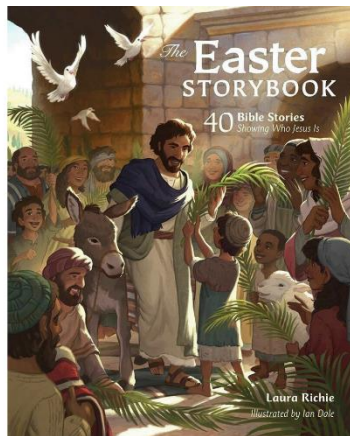
'Twas the Morning of Easter places Mary Magdalene as the central character with her image on nine of the thirteen gorgeous two-page illustrations as well as on the front and back covers! The rhyming narrative flows with the familiar rhythm and pattern of Clement Moore’s poem “’Twas the Night Before Christmas.” A notable omission in the illustration of Mary inside the tomb are the presence of angelic visitors proclaiming that Christ has risen from the dead. However, with 539 reviews and a 4.9 rating on Amazon, this book is a sure winner. As an added bonus, a delightful free activity packet can be downloaded from the author’s website!



The Action Bible Easter: 25 Stories about Jesus' Resurrection

Written and illustrated by Sergio Cariell | David C. Cook | Hardcover 96 pages

Vivid, comic book style illustrations by a former Marvel and DC Comics illustrator and exciting first-person narrative set this book apart from other Easter books targeting young readers. Each engaging essay is a testimony of a direct witness to the Easter story, from a Dog on the side of the road that encounters the kindness of Jesus, to the Olive Tree that witnesses the Lord’s suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, to Mary Magdalene who experiences “shock, wonder, hope and then joy” all at once when she recognizes the resurrected Master’s voice calling her by name! Jesus’ ministry and miraculous triumph over death is summarized in an illustrated epilogue titled “Why Did Jesus Die on the Cross?”



Day 37

Jesus Is Alive!
Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20

"For two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. Let us know, let us press on, to know the glory his going out is sure as the dawn; for we will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth." (Hosea 6: 1-3)

Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene, a friend of Jesus, went with some other women to Jesus' tomb. They wanted to honor Jesus by putting more spices and ointments on His body. As they walked, they wondered how they would move the heavy stone in front of the tomb.

But when they arrived, the stone had already been rolled away! They went into the tomb, but Jesus' body was gone. Suddenly two men in white robes appeared, and the women were terrified. The angels said, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen!" (Luke 24: 5-6)

The women rushed back to tell the other disciples, but the men didn't believe them. Peter and John ran to see for themselves. It was true! Jesus' body really was gone!

They left, but Mary Magdalene stood crying outside the empty tomb. A man came and asked her why she was crying. Mary thought he was the gardener at first, but then he said her name.

Mary turned quickly. She knew that voice!

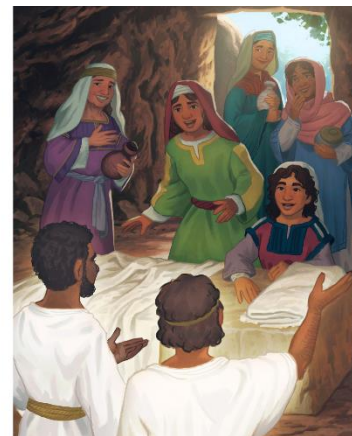
"Rabboni!" she exclaimed. Her Teacher said He was alive!

Mary went and told everyone that Jesus really was alive and was making all things new. That evening, Jesus' friends were together in a locked room when Jesus came and stood among them.

"Jesus be with you," Jesus said (John 20:21). Then He invited everyone to touch Him so they could believe. Long ago, God had breathed life into Adam, and he had walked with God. Now, Jesus breathed life into His disciples, and they would walk with God and help others do the same. Jesus had brought His friends close to God again! Because of His death, people could come close to God and each other, knowing God as their good Father.

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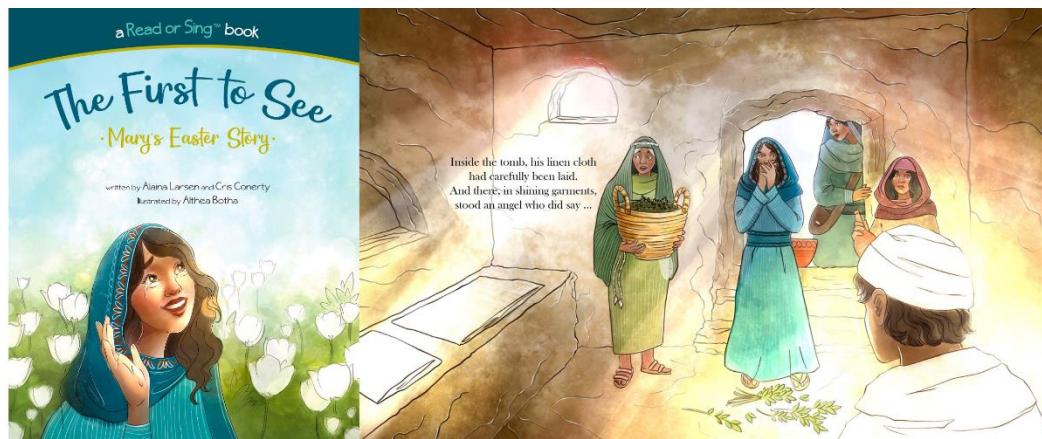
How did Jesus bring people close to God and to each other again?



[The Easter Storybook: 40 Bible Stories Showing Who Jesus Is](#)

Written by Laura Richie | Illustrated by Ian Dale | David C. Cook | Hardcover 96 pages

In this popular illustrated anthology, forty days of stories guide readers through the Easter season, with **Day 37 devoted to Mary Magdalene’s story titled “Jesus is Alive!”** The impressive aspect of this retelling is the **companion illustration which depicts five (count them...five!) women in the tomb listening to the angels as they reveal the good news!** While each of the New Testament Gospels differ as to how many women and who (besides Mary Magdalene) went to the tomb, this author decided to include them all: Mary Magdalene, Joanna (the wife of Chuza, a household servant of King Herod Antipas), Susanna (a follower of Jesus who was healed by him and then assisted him financially), Salome (the wife of the well-to-do fisherman Zebedee and mother of the apostles James and John), and the “Other Mary” (identified as the wife of Clopas and/or the mother of James the Younger and Joseph). Although some have claimed that women would not have entered the tomb of Jesus, Mark 16:5 clearly states “And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.”



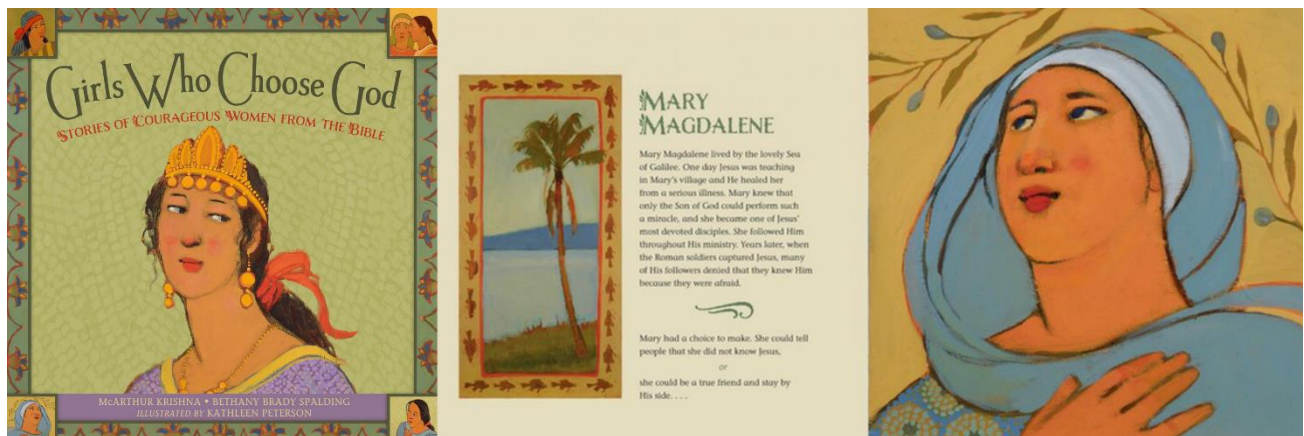
[The First to See: Mary's Easter Story](#)

Written by Alaina Larsen and Cris Conerty | Illustrated by Althea Botha | Cedar Fort Publishing & Media | Hardcover 32 pages

Fun fact about this unique version of the Easter story - it was a song before it became a book! The companion song can be downloaded from your favorite digital music store, making the book an entertaining and educational Read-or-Sing™ multi-media experience! The sheet music for the original song is included in the back of the book, and the book text and song lyrics are identical. Each carefully crafted rhyming verse reveals exciting new details leading up to the very moment Mary recognizes the Risen Christ! With illustrations of Mary on nearly every page as well as the cover, this book is truly a tribute to this faithful female follower of Christ. Free coloring pages, games, and ideas for integrating *The First to See: Mary Magdalene's Easter Story* into your Easter traditions can be downloaded from the author's website!

Bonus Books

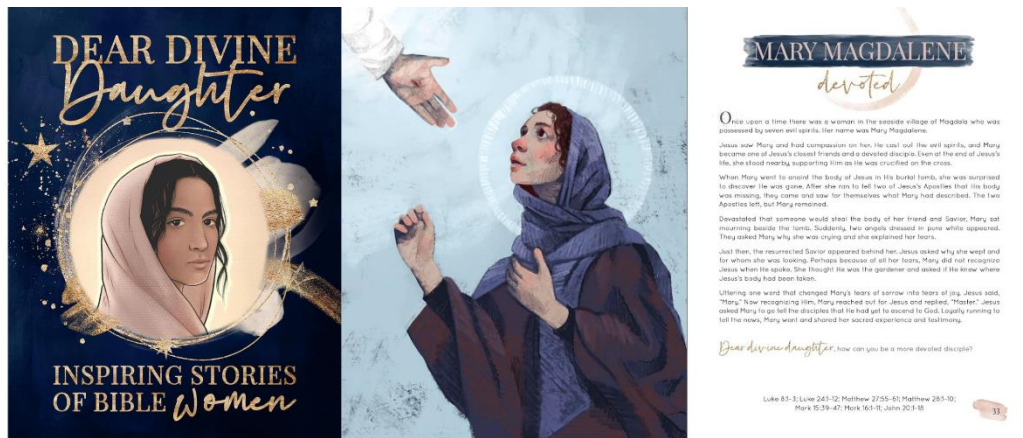
While not specifically Easter-themed, these 4 biographical anthologies each devote a chapter to Mary Magdalene, highlighting admirable characteristics of her discipleship and details of her astonishing encounter with the Risen Lord.



[Girls Who Choose God: Stories of Courageous Women from the Bible](#)

Written by McArthur Krishna and Bethany Bardy Spalding | Illustrated by Kathleen Peterson | Desert Book Company | Hardcover 48 pages

The highlight of this notable book are the thirty-four thoughtful oil paintings created by well-known artist Kathleen Peterson. Mary Magdalene's tribute includes an illustration of the Sea of Galilee by which her hometown fishing village of Magdala was located (be sure to notice the fish depicted in the border of this illustration), an image of the sorrowful Mary by the tomb with the resurrected Lord standing behind her, and her own full-page portrait. Two pages of gentle storytelling text are devoted to depicting Mary Magdalene as a true follower of Christ and invites the reader to walk the same path.



Dear Divine Daughter: Inspiring Stories of Bible Women

Written by Amber Corking and Aubri Robinson | Multiple Illustrators | Cedar Fort Publishing & Media | Hardcover 84 pages

This unique book written by identical twin sisters and illustrated by eight different artists. One divine characteristic is attributed to each of thirty-four women in the Bible, including Mary Magdalene to which the virtue of “devoted” is assigned. The full-page watercolor illustration by Sarah Hawkes is airy and refined while sensitively portraying the Lord’s wounded hand. A thoughtful prompt and a list of scriptures invites the reader to ponder how she can emulate Mary to become a more devoted daughter of God.



[Her Story, Her Strength: 50 God-Empowered Women of the Bible](#)

Written by Sarah Parker Rubio | Illustrated by Zondervan | Zondervan | Hardcover 240 pages

This comprehensive anthology includes a surprising chapter titled “Women Who Followed and Supported Jesus” which recounts the contributions of Joanna, Susanna, Salome, and the “Other Mary” to the ministry of Jesus. Their story concludes with preparing spices to anoint the Lord’s body; however, the narrative continues in the next exciting chapter titled “Mary Magdalene: The Strength in a Name.” Colorful illustrations enhance the reading experience, and I especially like Mary’s portrait in which she has a young and individualistic appeal.



[For Such a Time as This: Stories of Women from the Bible, Retold for Girls](#)

Written by Angie Smith | Illustrated by Breezy Brookshire | B & H Kids | Hardcover 256 pages

This beautiful book, featuring vibrant watercolors, contrasting muted pencil drawings, and relatable text, brings to life forty female characters from the Bible, including Mary Magdalene in her essay titled “Alive.” This version of Mary’s story alludes to one angel in the tomb as the Gospels of Matthew and Mark state, while other stories often describe two angelic visitors, as Luke and John declare. Following each story is a devotional section that highlights an attribute of God, suggests ways to become a better servant of the Lord, provides an inspirational prayer, and finally, suggests a verse of scripture which, for Mary’s story, is John 20:18 – “I have seen the Lord.”

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Cris Conerty is an award-winning songwriter and children’s book author who collaborates with her daughter Alaina Larsen to create songs and stories that bring joy, comfort, and courage to followers of Christ. Together they co-authored *The First to See: Mary’s Easter Story* – a children’s picture book inspired by their original song of the same name. Their work can be found at www.alainalarsen.com