



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Second Sunday of Easter, Year A

White

“I believe that you are Christ, the Son of God.”

Acts 2:42-47, Ps 118, 1 Peter 1:3-4, John 20:19-29

Do you sometimes stop to think about what you believe? When you pray, do you believe that God will answer your prayer? Sometimes, God answers our prayers in a different way to what we were expecting. That can be difficult for us. However, God is always there, loving us and listening to us.



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Second Sunday of Easter, starting with the Gospel. (You may choose to use or focus on one reading only, but remember that the Gospel may not be omitted.) Then look through the preparatory material that follows and familiarise yourself with the Liturgy Outline.

GOSPEL

John 20:19-29

The disciples were afraid of the Jewish leaders,
And on the evening of that same Sunday
They locked themselves in a room.
Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group.
He greeted them and showed them his hands and his side.
When the disciples saw the Lord,
They became very happy.

After Jesus had greeted them again, he said,
“I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me.”
Then he breathed on them and said,
“Receive the Holy Spirit.
If you forgive anyone's sins,
They will be forgiven.”
But if you don't forgive their sins,
They will not be forgiven.”

Although Thomas the Twin was one of the twelve disciples, he was not with the others when Jesus appeared to them. So they told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But Thomas said, "First, I must see the nail scars in his hands and touch them with my finger. I must put my hand where the spear went into his side. I won't believe unless I do this!"

A week later the disciples were together again. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came in while the doors were still locked and stood in the middle of the group. He greeted his disciples and said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands! Put your hand into my side. Stop doubting and have faith!"

Thomas replied, "You are my Lord and my God!"

Jesus said, "Thomas, do you have faith because you have seen me?
The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!"

FIRST READING

Acts 2:42-47

The followers of Jesus spent their time learning from the apostles, and they were like family to each other. They also broke bread and prayed together.

Everyone was amazed at the many miracles and wonders that the apostles worked.

All the Lord's followers often met together,
And they shared everything they had.

They would sell their property and possessions and give the money to whoever needed it. Day after day they met together in the temple. They broke bread together in different homes and shared their food happily and freely, while praising God.

Everyone liked them, and each day the Lord added to their group others who were being saved.

PSALM

Psalms 118

Response: *Alleluia!*

Let Israel shout,
"God is always merciful!"
Let the family of Aaron the priest shout,
"God is always merciful!"
Let every true worshiper of the LORD shout.
"God is always merciful!" **R**

The stone that the builders tossed aside
Has now become the most important stone.
The LORD has done this,
And is it amazing to us.
This day belongs to the LORD!
Let's celebrate and be glad today. **R**

Brothers and sisters:

Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death,
He has given us new life and a hope that lives on.

God has something stored up for you in heaven,
Where it will never decay or be ruined or disappear.

Scriptures from the Lectionary for Masses with Children (CEV)
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Background to the Readings for Leaders

Doubt is a common response by many to matters of faith. It must have been so for the disciples dealing with the shock of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Thomas expressed this doubt and placed conditions on his belief. Jesus' response was compassionate and accepting, and led to one of the most profound professions of faith. The move from doubt to faith is one of transformation: the fear of the disciples, locked huddled in their upper room transformed into peace and even joy by the greeting of Jesus and the giving of the Holy Spirit; the transformation of the doubt of Thomas into faith. This transformation of Thomas occurs when he is given the opportunity to touch Jesus. Along with the transformation comes responsibility of being sent, just as Jesus was sent. There is an ancient tradition that Thomas went on to preach the gospel as far East as India. The first reading exhorts the early Christians in living their faith with renewed faith and joy, and strengthening them in the face of persecution.

Images from the Readings

- *Locked in a room, afraid*
- *Receive the Holy Spirit*
- *My Lord and my God!*
- *Broke bread and prayed*
- *New life and hope*

Reflection for Leaders

Touch is a powerful sense. In times of sadness or bereavement a simple touch can often convey more comfort than words. It goes beyond verifying physical presence. It can provide healing and comfort and speaks of support or compassion. Laying on of hands, often within a rite of anointing, is a potent symbol indicating the bestowing of the Holy Spirit and is used in many sacraments – for example the Rite of Reconciliation, anointing of the Sick, Confirmation. The disciples in today's reading were transformed by the unexpected presence of Jesus among them. The process of transformation in our own lives often requires the support of others. Are there times when God has acted in a way that is different to what you have expected? Have there been times of doubt in your life experience or your faith journey? How did you overcome these doubts, and how will you nourish your faith in the future? During this week look for ways in which a simple gesture might convey unspoken messages of support to others.

Reflecting on the Readings with the children

Before Sunday read over the suggested discussion points given in the Leader's Liturgy Outline.

With the 8-12 year olds: First, listen to the children's own responses to the Reading/s and then, if needed, use some of the discussion starters suggested.

With the 5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'.

Suggested Focus

Prepare a focus for the area where the children's Liturgy of the Word is to be held:

White cloth, Lectionary, a candle, a small jug or bowl of olive oil. (a small towel or cloth will be handy to have as well for the children to wipe their hands)



Second Sunday of Easter, Year A

At a suitable moment after the Opening Rites, but before the First Reading is proclaimed, the children are presented with the Children's Lectionary and a candle and sent, with their ministers, to the place where they will celebrate their own Liturgy of the Word, with words of dismissal such as the following:

INVITATION – Pōwhiri

procession for their

I invite the children to join in the
celebration of the Liturgy of the Word.

To the Minister of the Word:

Receive this Book of Readings and proclaim God's Word
faithfully to the children entrusted to your care.

Receive this candle as the light of Christ who is present in
his Word.

PROCESSION WITH THE BOOK OF READINGS – Te Kapa o te Pukapuka Tapu

WELCOME – Ko te whakatau

Leader: O God, we know your love is everlasting. Help us to see you through the people
we meet so that day by day our belief in you grows stronger.

R Amen.

First Reading: Acts 2:42-47

The Word of the Lord /
Ko te Kupu a te Ariki

Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalm 118 (if used)


Response: Alleluia.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-4 (if used)

The Word of the Lord /
Ko te Kupu a te Ariki


Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

D G Bm A D G Asus⁴ A



Easter: Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Je - sus is ri - sen from death. _____

Bm G D A G A D



Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. He is the light of the world.

Gospel: John 20:19-29

Minister of the Word: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

Children: **Glory to you, O Lord / Korōria ki ā koe, e te Ariki**

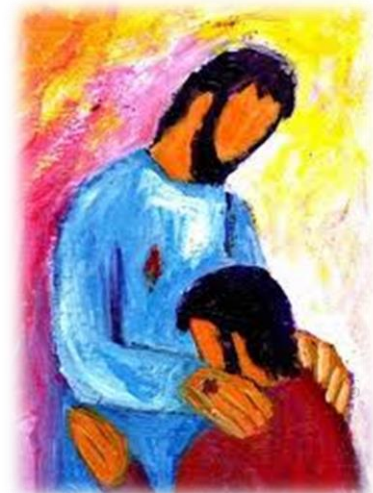
At the end of the Gospel: The Gospel of the Lord

Children: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ / Kia whakanuia rā koe, e te Ariki, e Hēhu Karaiti.**

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH THE CHILDREN – Whai Whakaaro

8-12 year olds: *Suggested Beginning: A good place to begin is with the question: What did you hear? Allow each child the opportunity to respond in their own words to hearing the Word of God. Then begin a general discussion, building on these responses, perhaps using some prepared questions, like the following, to stimulate ideas.*

- Have you ever been tricked by your friends? Sometimes it can be hard to believe some of the things that people tell you without seeing them for yourself. Thomas thought his friends were tricking him when they said that Jesus, who had died, had visited them when Thomas wasn't there. How do you think Thomas felt when they told him this?
- Where were the disciples when Jesus appeared to them? (Locked in the upper room)
- Why do you think they had been so afraid? (they might face the same fate as Jesus; the authorities thought they had stolen the body from the tomb)
- How did they feel afterwards (very happy) If the doors were locked how did Jesus get in? (no ordinary person could, but Jesus now had a resurrected body)
- What happened when Thomas saw Jesus? Did Thomas believe that it was Jesus then? Why was it important for him to touch Jesus?



- We have not seen Jesus as Thomas did, but we believe that Jesus is present to us in other people, in prayer, in the Mass and in the Scriptures. What did Jesus say about people who believed in him without seeing him? (they are really blessed) What does this tell us today?

5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'

LITURGICAL ACTION – Ko te Rītenga Karakia

Thomas' powerful act of faith was:

"You are my Lord and my God".

Invite the children to repeat this statement and then extend their hands. Sign a small cross on their palms with the oil and say "May Jesus bring you peace." The children may say "Amen".



Have the children remove excess oil with the towel before they return to Mass.

PROFESSION OF FAITH – Panui o te Whakapono

We believe in God the Father,
 who made the whole world.
 We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
 who was born in Bethlehem
 and lived among us,
 who died on the cross for us,
 and rose from the dead.
 We believe in the Holy Spirit
 who brings life and love to us all.
 We believe that the Church is one family,
 and that one day
 we will share everlasting life
 with God in heaven. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL –

Te Īnoīnga o te Hunga Whakapono

(Here are some suggested intercessions; you are encouraged to compose your own according to the age and experience of the children)

Leader: In the joy of this Easter season, we turn to God in confidence with all our needs:

- That the Church will reach out to all people with the good news of the Risen Christ
Let us pray to the Lord **R Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That, even when we have doubts or are uncertain, we will keep faith in Jesus
Let us pray to the Lord **R Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That all who are afraid will receive the peace of the Risen Christ
Let us pray to the Lord **R Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For those who are sick and lonely, that the joy of Easter which we share with them will make them strong
Let us pray to the Lord **R Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God of new life, you give hope to the hearts of all who are afraid. Hear and answer the prayers that we make for others and ourselves through Jesus Christ our Lord

All: *Amen*

The children rejoin the assembly before the prayers over the gifts.