



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 C

White

'My Lord and my God'

Acts 5:12-16 Psalm 118 John 20:19-29



When Jesus was arrested and put to death, the disciples were very afraid and had run away and left him. But Jesus forgave them and wanted them to know that he would always be with them. What did Jesus say that let them know this? Why did Thomas not believe the others when they said that they had seen Jesus? What did Jesus say to convince him? Jesus gave his friends power and authority and shared the Holy Spirit with them. How can we share Jesus' peace with others?

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 5:12-16

The apostles worked many miracles and wonders among the people. All of the Lord's followers often met in the part of the temple known as Solomon's Porch. No one outside their group dared join them, even though everyone liked them very much.

Many men and women started having faith in the Lord. Then sick people were brought out to the road and placed on cots and mats. It was hoped that Peter would walk by, and his shadow would fall on them and heal them. A lot of people living in the towns near Jerusalem brought those who were sick or troubled by evil spirits, and they were all healed..

PSALM

Psalm 118

Response: Give thanks, for the Lord is good, God's love is everlasting

Let Israel shout, "God is always merciful!"

Let every true worshipper of the Lord shout, "God is always merciful!" **R**

The nations attacks were so fierce that I nearly fell, but the Lord helped me.

My power and my strength come from the Lord, and he has saved me. **R**

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

Touch and belief seem to be connected through the person of Thomas. Absent on the occasion of the first appearance of Jesus on the day of the resurrection while the rest of the disciples quake in fear inside a locked room, Thomas is the central figure in the second. The first occasion is when the Holy Spirit is bestowed on the disciples and the commission given for them to be sent out with the authority to forgive sins. It is an experience of both total transformation and of responsibility. Thomas' absence requires him to believe on the testimony of others – a situation that he struggles with. His doubt is understandable, and Jesus does not judge him harshly. It is through the invitation to touch the wounds of Christ that Thomas' great acclamation of faith is born. This transformed early Christian community caused a furore in society. On the one hand, although they began to gather openly at the Temple, many people were frightened to join them. Yet miraculous signs and wonders accompanied the apostles wherever they went. The power of God was so strong that Peter did not even need to touch the sick for them to be healed. Despite the fear, many people did come to believe.

Images from the Readings

- *All were healed*
- *Locked themselves in a room*
- *Receive the Holy Spirit*
- *I won't believe*
- *My Lord and my God*

Reflection for Leaders

Being called to believe on the testimony of others requires a degree of faith that Jesus recognises in a special way. The doubt of Thomas is transformed by his encounter with Jesus and he is empowered to be sent out to share the good news, just as we all are at the end of each Mass. Tradition claims that Thomas went on to preach the Gospel as far east as India – he took up the responsibility to share the good news. Have we taken up this challenge? Have there been times of doubt in your life, where you have questioned yourself or your loved ones? What dispelled that doubt? The sense of touch is a powerful force, though many people are reluctant to reach out to others because of cultural restrictions or a fear of being too personal. Yet many people are starved of a touch that can bring healing, comfort, support and acknowledgment. Look for ways this week to convey a message of compassion or friendship.



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 cross



LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

Second Sunday of Easter - Year C

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 I invite the children to join in the procession for their 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, you desire our world to be filled with love and friendship. Help us to share your peace with each other just as you shared it with us.

R Amen.

First Reading: Acts 5:12-16

(if used) The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki

Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalm 118 **Response: Give thanks, for the Lord is good, God's love is everlasting**

(or another suitable response known by the children)

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

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.*

- Why had the disciples locked themselves in a room?
- Why did Jesus appear in the middle of them? (He had forgiven them and didn't want them to be afraid any longer)
- What did Jesus do and say when he had greeted them?
- What does it mean to believe?
- What about believing things that you can't see? What would make us believe something that we haven't seen?
- Have you ever been told something that you found hard to believe, but found out later that it was true?
- Why do you think Thomas did not believe his friends when they said that they had seen Jesus?
- What did Jesus say to Thomas? What was his response?
- What does this mean for us today?
- How can we remember Jesus' words and bring peace into the places that we are in?

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 Ritenga Karakia

Thomas' powerful act of faith was:

“You are my Lord and my God”



Invite the children to repeat this statement and then greet each other with a sign of peace.

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 Īnoinga 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: We turn to God with our needs full of confidence and joy this Easter time.

- For the Church, that she is a faithful disciple of the teachings of Jesus...
Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That our leaders be filled with a spirit of forgiveness in the way that they govern our country. Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That our homes, families and schools be filled with peace and tolerance...
Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For courage and strength to carry out the work that Jesus calls us to...
Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God, giver of life, fill us with your Spirit and grant what we need.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord

All: Amen

The children re-join the assembly before the prayers over the gifts.



*My LORD and
My GOD*

Second Sunday of Easter, Year C

Chorus play

John 20:19-29

Thomas encounters the Risen Lord

This reflection is intended to be read by one person (Reader) who is assisted by another person holding SIGNS (as indicated by CHORUS). The rest of the children read the signs as they are help up.

Reader: Jesus had died and ...

Chorus: RISEN!

Reader: But the disciples were still...

Chorus: AFRAID!

Reader: So they locked themselves in a room. Suddenly,

Chorus: JESUS APPEARED!

Reader: He stood right in the middle of the room and said,

Chorus: PEACE BE WITH YOU!

Reader: God sent me and now I am sending you out ...

Chorus: RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT!

Reader: Now there was one disciple,

Chorus: THOMAS!

Reader: Who was not there when Jesus appeared. When the other disciples told him...

Chorus: WE HAVE SEEN JESUS!

Reader: Thomas could not quite believe them.

Chorus: UNLESS I SEE – I WON'T BELIEVE YOU!

Reader: Some time later, Jesus appeared again and this time Thomas was there!

Again Jesus said to them,

Chorus: PEACE BE WITH YOU!

Reader: Give me your hand Thomas.

Touch me and believe! Thomas replied,

Chorus: MY LORD AND MY GOD!

Reader: Happy are you Thomas – you can believe because you see. Happier still are those who cannot see but still ...

Chorus: BELIEVE!

RISEN!

AFRAID!

JESUS APPEARED!

PEACE BE WITH YOU!

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT!

THOMAS!

WE HAVE SEEN JESUS!

**UNLESS I SEE –
I WON'T BELIEVE YOU!**

PEACE BE WITH YOU!

MY LORD AND MY GOD!

BELIEVE!

From 'Just Imagine 3, Even more Creative ways of presenting Scripture...' written by Rina Wintour, Mountjoy Enterprises, www.mountjoyenterprises.com.au. Available from the Liturgy Centre.