



Parents / Carers some background information about today's Gospel

The Gospels tell us that Jesus appeared to the disciples on several occasions after they discovered that his tomb was empty. Part of the mystery of Jesus' Resurrection is that he appeared to his disciples not as a spirit but in bodily form. The bodily form was not one that the disciples recognized though. In John's Gospel, Mary of Magdala does not recognize that the figure standing before her is Jesus until he speaks to her. In Luke's Gospel the disciples who meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus do not recognize him until he breaks bread with them. The resurrected Jesus had a physical presence, but the disciples couldn't recognize Jesus unless he allowed them to. His resurrected body, nonetheless, showed the marks of his crucifixion.

From readings such as today's Gospel, we also see that in his resurrected body, Jesus seems to be free of physical constraints. He appears to the disciples despite the fact that the doors were locked.

Jesus greets his disciples with the gift of peace and the gift of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, Jesus commissions his disciples to continue the work that he has begun: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." During the meeting, Jesus also shows the integral connection between forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The story of Thomas illustrates our Christian experience today: We are called to believe without seeing. In fact, all Christians after the first witnesses have been called to believe without seeing. Thomas's doubt is hardly surprising; the news of Jesus' appearance was incredible to the disciples who had seen him crucified and buried. Thomas's human nature compelled him to want hard evidence that the Jesus who appeared to the disciples after his death was indeed the same Jesus who had been crucified. Thomas is given the opportunity to act on that desire. He is our witness that Jesus is really risen.

Our faith is based on the witness of the Church that has preceded us, beginning with Thomas and the first disciples. Through Baptism we receive the same Holy Spirit that Jesus brought to the first disciples. We are among those who are "blessed" because we believe without having seen.

Setting the Scene, gather the family and help them to focus before you begin your prayers together

Materials Needed

- A clear glass filled with water
- A pencil

Place a pencil in a clear glass of water so that part of the pencil stands above the water. The pencil should appear to be crooked, and the underwater part of the pencil should appear to be larger than the rest of the pencil. Show the submerged pencil to the children and ask: ***Do you think that part of this pencil is bigger than the rest of it? Are you sure? Allow children to respond and then ask: Do any of you think that the pencil will be straight when I take it out of the water? Take the pencil out of the glass and ask: How does the pencil look now? Is it straight? Is one part of it larger than the other? Say: We rely on our eyes to see the truth, but sometimes things are not what they seem.***

Finally let's get ready to begin our liturgy, prepare a focal point perhaps containing a bible, some spring flowers and a cross if you have one or twigs made into a cross and a lit candle.

Make the sign of the Cross together saying

In the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Opening Prayer

God of truth, fill us with your Spirit and strengthen our faith, so that we may not doubt your love for us. Give us courage to spread your peace throughout the world. **Amen.**

We Say Sorry

You search for us when we lose our way, Lord have mercy. **All: Lord, have mercy.**

You have hopes for us even when we are hope-less, Christ have mercy. **All: Christ, have mercy.**

You love us even when we lose our faith, Lord have mercy. **All: Lord, have mercy.**

Gospel Acclamation

Say together A reading from the Gospel according to John, **while making the sign of the cross on your foreheads, lips and over your hearts – meaning let God's word be in my thoughts, on my lips and in my heart.**

God, help us to listen to your word so that we may see your glory. **Alleluia Alleluia**

Either read the Gospel of John 20:19-31 from your bible, the text below or watch the you tube video which is from a collection titled stories from the bible.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GymJSMe3AU8>

The Gospel of John.....Jesus appears to Thomas.

It was late that Sunday evening, and the disciples were gathered together behind locked doors, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. Then Jesus came and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said. After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive people's sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

Thomas said to them, "Unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands and put my finger on those scars and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later the disciples were together again indoors, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then reach out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe!"

Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me!"

In his disciples' presence Jesus performed many other miracles which are not written down in this book. But these have been written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him you may have life.



The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Reflecting on the Gospel with Children

After his death and resurrection, Jesus appears to his disciples, and wishes them peace. How did they feel when they saw Jesus alive again?

But one of the disciples wasn't there when Jesus appeared. Can you remember who that was?

And what did Thomas say? Did he believe the others when they told him they had seen Jesus?

Thomas said he would not believe that Jesus was risen from the dead unless he saw it for himself. Thomas wanted to see the holes in Jesus' hand, made by the nails on the cross.

We are all a bit like Thomas sometimes. Can you tell me about a time when you didn't believe something someone told you, until you'd seen it for yourself?

In just the same way, it isn't always easy for us to believe in God and Jesus. Even though we listen to the gospel, and hear about God's love for us from people at church, home and school, it can be difficult to keep believing when things go wrong or when we are sad or afraid.

But what does Jesus say to Thomas?

Jesus appears again to Thomas, shows Thomas the holes in his hands and wishes him peace. He tells Thomas to believe, and he proves that he is real. But he also says, "How happy are those who believe without seeing me!"

What do you think this means?

We are blessed by God, because we believe in Jesus even though we haven't seen him like the disciples did. Even though it is difficult for us to believe sometimes we try to remember that God always loves us.

Let us try not to be like Thomas this week. Let's do our best to believe that Jesus is the risen Son of God, to remember God's love for us, even in the saddest and hardest times and to share the peace of Christ with each other all around the world.

Response

(purpose is to help the children to remember what they have learnt and apply it to their lives)

Ask the children to draw a big smiley face and write 'We believe Jesus has risen and we are HAPPY!' On the reverse of the card ask them to write or draw something they will do this week to make someone else happy. You could put the smiley face in your window to help other people smile and know about Jesus' love for them too.

We believe in our creed, we say what we believe.

Invite the children to think about what they are saying when they say the creed.

Ask this series of questions and invite the children to reply, "I do":

- ❖ Do you believe that God in God, our loving Father? **I DO**
- ❖ Do you believe that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life? **I DO**
- ❖ Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who helps us to understand what God is like? **I DO**
- ❖ Do you believe in our holy, Catholic Church, where we come to learn about God? **I DO**

Let us Pray

We all have times when we doubt and so we ask God to fill us with faith as we pray together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may continue to spread God's peace throughout the world as it follows Christ's example of care for those who are poor, sick or finding life difficult. Lord, in your mercy... **hear our prayer**

We pray for all people who are sad, lonely, frightened, sick or troubled: that God may give them hope in the darkest times. May we love and care for one another, so no one feels alone. Lord, in your mercy... **hear our prayer**

We pray for our parish, school, family and friends: that we may find it in our hearts to believe and to share the peace of Christ with each other. Lord, in your mercy... **hear our prayer**

Invite the children to offer a prayer for any one they know who is in need of our prayers at the moment.

Let's say together the prayer that Jesus taught us.....**Our Father**

Closing prayer: Christ Jesus, you came to show us how to live. Fill us with faith in you and lead us to share your peace throughout the world. Amen.

All: **Amen.**

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Please remember to blow out your candle.

*This liturgy and the accompanying activities have been produced with the help of resources produced by the Diocese of Westminster <https://rcdow.org.uk/faith/catechesis/childrens-liturgy/> Sdc.me.uk, CAFOD <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy> , craftingthewordofgod.com *Pinterest.**

Activities to help you children understand the Gospel. Let them complete the activity or activities of your choice and then use them to help you discuss what happened in the Gospel. You can do this during your liturgy or after.

Share Life!



Thomas believed Jesus truly rose from the dead when he saw the wounds in Jesus' hands and side. Jesus died and rose for us.

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Thomas's Unbelief

Jesus Appears to Mary and Disciples
—John 20

John 20:10-31 gives details of Jesus' appearance to His disciples after His death. Thomas wasn't present the first time Jesus appeared, and Thomas declared that he wouldn't believe unless he had touched Jesus' wounds. Finally Thomas saw and touched Jesus. What did Jesus tell him?

On the lines below rewrite the message using the letters in the box. Begin with the last letter and work backwards. The first and last letters have already been entered. False punctuation has been included in order to make the solution harder to find.



DEVEILEIBEVAH
,TEYDNA^NEES
T^ONEVAH,OH
|WESOHTERA,D
ESSEL,BDEVEIL
,EBEVAH,UOYE
M,NEESEVAH;U
OY,ESU,ACEB.

_____ D

(John 20:29)



Bringing people close to Jesus Christ through his Church

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." John 20:25

Based on John 20:19-31 (NIV)



Y J M N P S M B J D J Y D J S
C X I T A T F M L H O Y W A X
W X R K N Y G X P O F O M E D
X M A D V Y G E A X C O R E H
R X C C J V D R L X H K V S A
T L L U V E D A E T N E E D M
T K E S H E H I R C I N S D S
O X S C W B A S S L O C Y N T
G R U O L K N Z E C L R G D N
E O H D Q Z D B H J I I D E P
T S I U J J S A S R S P F E Z
H N T F E K D P I A M I L B D
E T W U S N K D D U L G E E E
R S R N U K P S E S L V H N S
R P T V S V D O U B T I N G B

JESUS	TOGETHER	DOUBTING	RECORDED
MIRACLES	SIGNS	SHOWED	BELIEVED
DOORS	LIFE	HANDS	DISCIPLES
TOUCHED	THOMAS	SIDE	LOCKED

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