

Easter Sunday, Year A, intermediate

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Thu, 07/25/2013 - 20:00

Intermediate Session

Acts 10:34, 37-43

John 20:1-9

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, you raised Jesus from death to new life.

We joyfully give you thanks and praise.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is the resurrection of Jesus. Provide each child with glue, a paper circle and five flower petals cut from construction paper. To begin, invite the children to write on each flower petal a sign of new life that they see around them during this season. Then have them glue the flower together. Discuss:

- What signs of spring and new life do you find around you at this time of year?
- Why is Easter a celebration of new life?
- Why is Easter a time of joy?

Allow time for discussion. On Easter we celebrate the gift of new life that God has given us through the resurrection of Jesus. We are filled with joy and hope because we share in the new life of Jesus.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading from Acts of the Apostles, listen to the good news about Jesus.

Read Acts 10:34, 37-43.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What is the good news about Jesus?
- What happens to Jesus after he is put to death?
- What does Jesus tell his followers to do?

In the Gospel today listen to the story of the resurrection.

Read John 20:1-9.

Allow for silence.

- Who goes to Jesus' tomb?
- What do Peter and the other disciple discover when they go to the tomb?
- Who is the first to believe in Jesus' resurrection?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

Today's reading from Acts of the Apostles proclaims Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and its meaning for the world. Peter preaches the Good News about Jesus with urgency and excitement. Peter tells the story of Jesus' baptism and his preaching and healing of those afflicted by the devil. He tells of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection, and the forgiveness of sins, which results from these events. Peter speaks as one of the chosen witnesses who ate and drank with Jesus after his resurrection. Today's first reading announces the whole message of the Good News of Jesus, centering on his resurrection.

In today's joyous Gospel passage, the story of the resurrection of Jesus unfolds. Mary Magdalene makes an early morning visit to Jesus' tomb only to find that the stone has been removed. Quickly, she tells the story to Peter and the beloved disciple and they go to the tomb. The beloved disciple reaches the tomb first, yet allows Peter to enter before him. Both enter the tomb, but the beloved disciple alone is described as believing. The writer of today's Gospel makes the point that because of the beloved disciple's love for Jesus, he comes more quickly to believe that Jesus is risen. The early morning discovery of Jesus' empty tomb represents the dawning awareness that Jesus has been raised from the dead.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What helps the disciples believe that Jesus has been raised from the dead?
- Why is the resurrection of Jesus so important?
- What helps you believe in Jesus?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

“On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the scriptures...”

The love that God has for us does not end with the death of Jesus on the cross. God raised Jesus to new life. The chains of death are broken. The Risen Lord is not a ghost who appears to the disciples. Jesus did not simply come back to life; the resurrection of Jesus is a passing over from death into a new and glorious life.

In Baptism we are joined to Christ. In the waters of Baptism we die to sin and rise to new life. During this Easter season, we celebrate the gift of new life and we remember that we share in the new life of Jesus through Baptism.

- What happens at our Baptism?
- Why do we celebrate Jesus' resurrection?
- How does your family celebrate Easter?

The Gospel in Life

What can you do this week to show others how important Easter is to you?

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At Home Family Guide, theme 27

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