



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Second Sunday of Easter, Year C, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



### Junior High Session

Acts 5:12-16

John 20:19-31

## Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Lord God,

you give us new life and gifts to share.

Help us to live as people filled with your Spirit.

In the name of the Risen Christ we pray.

Amen.



## Opening Life Reflection

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On this Second Sunday of Easter we joyfully celebrate our new life in Christ. Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and the Holy Spirit dwells among us. To begin today's session invite the youngsters to brainstorm how their belief in the resurrection can make a difference in their lives. Discuss:

- Does your belief in the resurrection of Jesus help you to trust that good will ultimately overcome evil? What effect does that belief have on your everyday life?
- How does your belief in the resurrection of Jesus offer hope when you experience painful events in life?
- How can you bring the hopeful message of the resurrection to others?

We joyfully celebrate Easter because through all the hardships we experience in life our faith promises that a new day will come. We have not seen the Risen Christ, yet we believe. This belief gives our lives meaning. And like the first disciples, we are called to be witnesses of faith for others.



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## **Listening to the Word of God**

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In the reading from Acts of the Apostles, hear how the Apostles were powerful witnesses of faith.

Read Acts 5:12-16.

Allow for silence.

## **Scripture Discussion Starters**

- Why did the people carry the sick into the streets?
- What did the apostles do among the people?
- Why did many people come to believe in Jesus Christ?

In today's gospel the risen Lord appears to the disciples. Listen to how they rejoice.

Read John 20:19-31.

Allow for silence.

- Why were the disciples behind locked doors?
- What did Jesus first say when he came and stood before the disciples?
- What did Jesus show them?
- What happened when Jesus breathed on the disciples?
- How did Thomas react to the news that Jesus appeared to the disciples in his absence?
- How did Thomas come to believe in Jesus?

## **Scripture Background**

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings.

There is a spirit of excitement and joy in today's readings. The reading from Acts reveals the awesome power of the Spirit in the lives of the apostles. Their belief in the Risen Christ has taken them out of hiding and put them among the people where they work many wonders. This passage shows how the early Christian community grew in response to the faith and witness of the apostles.

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In today's gospel the risen Lord appears to the apostles. We can only imagine the excitement and joy of the moment. The disciples are behind locked doors, afraid when Christ comes before them with a greeting of "peace."

The risen Christ then commissions the disciples to continue his own saving work. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." The confused and frightened followers of Christ are given a mission and they find meaning for their lives. Jesus then breathes on the disciples giving them the gift of the Spirit, and the disciples are changed. No longer afraid, the followers of Christ are empowered to go out into the world.

As this gospel reading continues we hear that Thomas was not present when the Risen Lord first appeared to the disciples. He is reluctant to believe what he does not see. Only after he sees the risen Christ for himself and touches his wounds does Thomas come to believe. Jesus responds with a blessing for all those who have not seen but have believed.

## Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Are you able to believe in things that you can not see?
- Explain whether or not you can relate to Thomas in the gospel reading.
- Why does Jesus bless those who believe without seeing?

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

## Doctrinal Discussion Starters

***"Blessed are those who have not seen, but have believed."***

Faith comes from hearing about the good news from the witness of a community of believers. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, the words of those who tell the good news are inspired, and the ears of those who listen are opened to hear what is told.

Many believers struggle with their faith at times. When we experience evil, suffering, and injustice in this world we may begin to question our belief. In times of doubt, individuals can turn to the community of faith for support.

- Do you think that it is okay to question your beliefs?

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- Where can you turn when you have doubts about your faith?
  - How can you grow in your faith?

# The Gospel in Life

Searching and questioning your faith can lead to growth and greater conviction. What questions would you like to ask about your faith? Bring your questions to a trusted member of your parish community.

## Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 27

Junior High, Mystery of God, chapter 9

## Blest Are We

Grade 7, chapter 19

Grade 8 chapter 9

