



Living the Seasons at Home April 19 – Trust and Rejoice

This week's Easter story talks about the disciples hiding behind locked doors - who would have imagined that we would be asked to stay at home this Easter to keep ourselves and others safe, not from people but from a virus that would harm us!

Readings for this Season of Easter

Acts 2:12a, 22–32

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1:3–9

John 20:19–31 (the focus for age-level materials)

Read John 20:19–31 in an age-appropriate Bible such as the Living Bible or from a story Bible



John 20:19-31 Living Bible (TLB)

That evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors, in fear of the Jewish leaders, when suddenly Jesus was standing there among them! After greeting them, he showed them his hands and side. And how wonderful was their joy as they saw their Lord!

He spoke to them again and said, "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." Then he breathed on them and told them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you refuse to forgive them, they are unforgiven."

One of the disciples, Thomas, "The Twin," was not there at the time with the others. When they kept telling him, "We have seen the Lord," he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands—and put my fingers into them—and place my hand into his side."

Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them and greeting them.



Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger into my hands. Put your hand into my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!”

“My Lord and my God!” Thomas said.

Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. But blessed are those who haven’t seen me and believe anyway.”

Jesus’ disciples saw him do many other miracles besides the ones told about in this book, but these are recorded so that you will believe that he is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that believing in him you will have life.

Something to think about, talk about, or do

After Jesus’ death, the followers of Jesus gathered together in a room and locked the doors. They heard that Jesus was alive in a new way. This news filled them with joy. But they were worried they might get in trouble, like Jesus, because they were his friends. Then something surprising happened. Jesus appeared within the community and shared a spirit of peace with them. When Jesus left, the spirit of peace remained and the community was able to continue sharing Jesus’ love with others.

Together this week

Jesus shared a spirit of peace with the community of followers.

- ■ Bring to mind the different ways people share peace today, such as holding up two fingers, shaking hands, or saying “Peace be with you” in worship.
- ■ Talk about ways how can you share peace and remind one another that Jesus’ spirit of peace is with you, especially when we can’t meet with each other.

The practice of prayer

Breath prayers

Our minds whisper messages to us constantly throughout the day, yes even in lockdown. The phone rings, we hear our neighbours, an emergency vehicle uses its siren.

Breath prayers can help fill our minds with God's peace.

They are like silent rhymes to God, so we can pray anytime, anywhere.

We say the first half of our holy rhyme as we breathe in and the second half as we breathe out.

Sit quietly with your eyes closed;

breathe in and out, counting quietly to five with every breath in and out.

Then use the following simple breath prayer by reading each line slowly and quietly.

As you breathe in, say silently, "Peace be."

As you breathe out, say silently, "with me."

As you breathe in, say silently, "Peace be."

As you breathe out, say silently, "with you."

Writing our own prayers

Create a short personal prayer (one or two sentences long) with words that say something that you hope for or are thankful for.

Make each phrase at least five to eight syllables long, to encourage relaxed breathing.

For example, O God, open my mind to peace // open my heart to love.

O God, be with me today // in what I do, in what I say.

Prayer May we know Love with us always and may peace enter our hearts with every breath we take. Amen.

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