



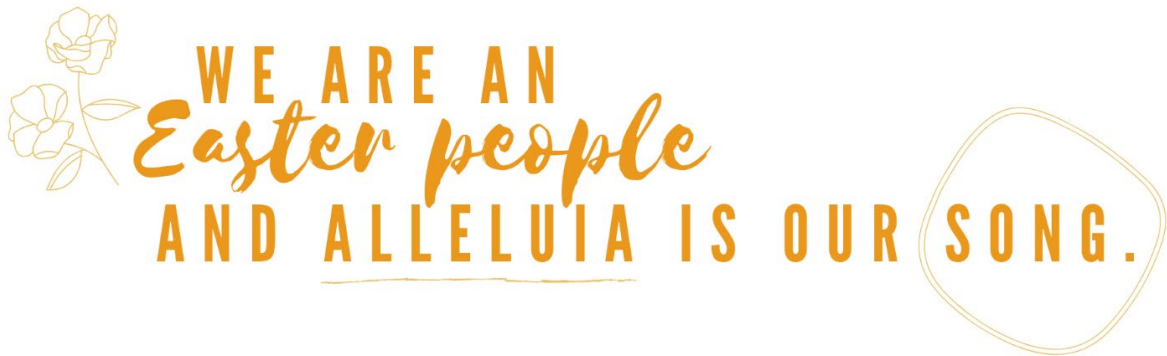
UNITED IN PRAYER

A RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES, HOUSEHOLDS, & INDIVIDUALS

SECOND SUNDAY IN EASTER

(YEAR A)

19 April 2020



GATHER

BE IN THE PRESENT MOMENT, REGONISING GOD IN OUR MIDST

SET UP A PRAYER SPACE

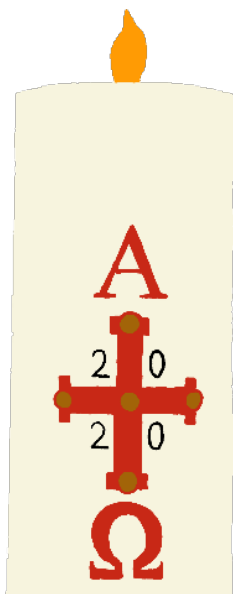
Gather what you can from around your house to create a prayer space or focus for the time of prayer, ideally including a candle (representing the Paschal Candle at Easter).

As you light your candle; pray the following words...

**Nau mai haere mai e Hehu Karaiti
ko koe te rawhiti o te ao.**

**Welcome Jesus you are the light
of the world.**

*See our website for a full 'Blessing
of Light' Morning Prayer.*



SING OR LISTEN TO A HYMN

Alleluia, Alleluia Give Thanks to the Risen Lord - Donald Fishel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqMqfBXaD5g>

Our God Is Here - Chris Muglia

<https://youtu.be/WtSnlxnIB3k?t=23>

OPENING PRAYER

God almighty, merciful Saviour,

You are our faith and our great consolation.

Bless us in the days to come

that we may radiate your peace and healing to the world.

In Christ's name.

Amen.



PROCLAIM

TIME TO READ THE SCRIPTURES

Here you will find references for this weekend's readings.

While we cannot physically gather for Mass, the Word of God is what can nourish us.

THIS WEEKS READINGS

Open a Bible or visit universalis.com to find the readings.

FIRST READING: ACTS 2:42-47

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 117 (118):2-4, 13-15, 22-24

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end

You can pray the Psalm by listening along to it sung [here](#).

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1:3-9

You did not see Christ, yet you love him



The Incredulity of Saint Thomas - Caravaggio

GOSPEL: JOHN 20:19-31

Eight days later, Jesus came again and stood among them

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you', and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.

'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit.

For those whose sins you forgive,

they are forgiven;

for those whose sins you retain,

they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered,

'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.



BREAK

REFLECT ON THE SCRIPTURES

This section of the prayer resource is designed to be adapted for people depending on how they are gathering to pray. There are options for children, young people and everyone.

1. FOR CHILDREN
2. FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
3. FOR EVERYONE

1. FOR CHILDREN

What do you remember from today's reading?

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.

Adapted from CAFOD UK's Children's Liturgy Reflection



Click [here](#) for a printable version of the above image to colour in from CAFOD.



BREAK

2. FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The story we read this weekend in the Gospel often means that the apostle Thomas gets a bit of a bad reputation. But his doubt is hardly surprising; the news of Jesus' appearance was incredible to the disciples who had seen him crucified and buried. You may have noticed in the Gospel's we have been reading over the past week that when Jesus appears to his disciples, he often isn't recognisable in his body ... so we could give Thomas a bit of a break for wanting proof. So, maybe we can relate to how Thomas deals with the situation.

Thomas' very human response was to want hard evidence that this Jesus who appeared to the disciples after his death was indeed the same Jesus who had been crucified.

Unlike the disciples, our faith has to be partially based on the witness of those who have gone before us. This witness begins though with these disciples and their response to Jesus.

We are among those who are "blessed" because we believe without having seen, but with different kinds of encounters with Christ. This means that our witness in the world is what others see of Christ and the Church. How we live is important.

Can you think of a time when you have doubted?
Maybe you are even experiencing doubt right now, especially with everything going on in the world around us.

What has helped you in the past when you have experienced doubt?

Can you think of someone in your life who has been a witness to faith for you?

What is it about how they lived that makes them stand out?

How can you live as a witness in your own life to those around you?

What actions can you take in the next week to respond to this?

3. FOR EVERYONE

Peace I leave you, my peace I give you. In unpredictable times, as you sit, notice what are the signs of hope for you ... how might you hold hope for others ... share these with God, the source of our hope ...

During this Easter week we've been exploring the disciples' experiences of the Risen Christ. This weekend John gives us two more powerful resurrection encounters with Jesus. In both, Jesus suddenly appears to his followers even though they are shut away and the doors are locked. Where the disciples are fearful and doubting Jesus brings peace and encourages them to believe that he is truly risen from the dead. As we continue in this time of lockdown, maybe you have been - or are currently - frightened, anxious or lonely.

If so, in what ways have you experienced the presence of Jesus with you during this time?

How do you know Jesus is with you?

What difference does his presence make?

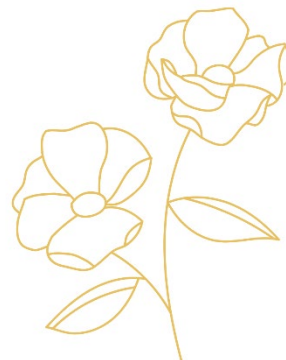
The disciple Thomas struggles to believe Jesus has risen from the dead. **How does Jesus use the marks of crucifixion to help Thomas?**

Place yourself into the scene as Thomas... **How do you react to the scars that remain on Jesus' body? Does anything surprise you about your reaction.** Just let your immediate feelings come to the surface.

Are you able to say with Thomas: 'My Lord and My God'? If so, say it to Jesus now.

In these final moments close your eyes and imagine Jesus breathing his Holy Spirit into your heart. Wherever you are, allow yourself to be filled with the peace that Jesus brings.

Adapted from: Pray as You Go. Full recording [here](#).





SEND

SENT TO LIVE WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving Father, the Resurrection of your Son
gives us a new birth to a living hope.
Let us live in that hope always and be witnesses of this.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen

SING OR LISTEN TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING HYMNS

Bring Forth the Kingdom - Marty Haugen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G88rhq1W4xw>

Hosanna (Praise Is Rising) - Paul Baloche

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMBDWG9tseU>

WAYS TO LIVE THIS PRAYER THROUGH THE WEEK

- ✓ Think about some ways that you might be able to witness to the Resurrection of Jesus through your actions this week. How can you be a witness of faith for those around you in a tangible way?



This resource has been developed during the Covid-19 pandemic to assist families, households and individuals to pray together. Our church buildings may be closed, but the Church is still open. In our current circumstance, the domestic Church becomes our primary way of being able to recognise Christ in our midst.

To stay up to date with resources, make sure you sign up to our weekly e-newsletter at <http://pndiocese.org.nz/newsletter> and visit <https://pndiocese.org.nz/covid19-united/>