

## Children's liturgy

### Second Sunday of Easter (Year B): Divine Mercy Sunday

Colour: white

**Song suggestions:** Do not be afraid (147, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

**Welcome:** Today we are going to hear about how the disciples were hiding and afraid, but Jesus appeared to them and made them feel strong. He brings them peace. Let's think about who makes us feel better when we are scared, and how we can help ourselves and other people feel peaceful inside.

**Opening prayer:** Loving God, you sent your Son Jesus to the disciples when they were scared. Help us to bring hope to other people who are hiding, or afraid, so they may know peace. Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Acts 4:32-35

**Psalm:** Ps 117:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

**Gospel acclamation:** everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. 'Halle, halle, halle' (Caribbean) from 'Sing With the World', Alison Adam & John Bell; or 'Alleluia' (Zimbabwe), Abraham Maraire Publications, WCC & GIA.

**Gospel:** John 20:19-31

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. *(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below\*)*

**Gospel reflection:** What do you remember about the reading today?

After Jesus' death the disciples were scared and hiding from people who they thought would hurt them. Why do you think the disciples were so afraid?

They thought that the people who put Jesus to death, could also come to hurt them because they were Jesus' friends and believed in him.

But then Jesus came and stood in the room they were in – not a ghost, but the real Jesus. Can you remember what he said to the disciples? How did the disciples feel when they saw that he had risen from the dead?

Is there someone who makes you feel brave and happy again when you are afraid? What do they do to make you feel better?

Jesus came to give his disciples peace, hope and bravery to face the future. He tells them to be strong and go out into the world to tell others about the good news of the gospel.

Today in many parts of the world there are people who are scared because of wars. How do you think this makes them feel?

What can we do to make the world a more peaceful place ourselves? How will we spread the message of peace that Jesus brings this week?

We can start with our own family, friends and neighbours. We can be kind to others and help anyone who is feeling afraid of something. We can be that person who makes them feel brave and happy again. And then we may find that we feel braver and happier too!

**Intercessions** *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

We are filled with joy that Jesus rose from the dead, bringing peace and hope for the future. Let's think about this as we pray together:

We pray for the Church all over the world: that it may continue God's work, reaching out to those who are afraid. Lord, hear us...

We pray for people who are in wars all over the world: that they may feel strong inside and one day find peace and happiness. Lord, hear us...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may have courage and show our faith in Jesus in all that we do. Lord, hear us...

**Closing prayer:** Loving Jesus, you came to your friends when they had lost hope. Help us always to believe in you and to spread your hope and peace wherever we go. Amen.

### **Activity suggestions**

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to write on the back their message of peace and hope for the world and how they can help anyone who is afraid.

If there is time they could write or think of their own prayer for peace.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. If they have written a prayer, ask them to say it at home together during the week. Ask them to try and spread Jesus' message of peace in the way they treat others in the coming week.

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