



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

Children's Liturgy of the Word THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

In today's readings, we see the power of Jesus Christ in action. The first reading, from Acts, tells of healing performed by Peter and John in the name of Jesus. A lame man was cured of his impairment, and Peter reminds the crowd that it was done "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth."

The gospel tells the community about another appearance of the risen Jesus. The new appearance occurs while the two disciples who have returned to Jerusalem from Emmaus are still telling the disciples in the upper room what happened to them on the road to Emmaus and at the breaking of the bread.

The gospel provides insight into the early Church's method of catechizing. The risen Christ opens the minds of his disciples to the understanding of the Scriptures. He shows how the prophets had foretold the sufferings of the Messiah, his resurrection from the dead on the third day. We, too, are his witnesses.

Reflect on the transformative power of Christ in our own lives and pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Scriptures.

Objective

- † Help children see the resurrection of Christ as a bodily resurrection.
- † Help children believe in the peace of Jesus.

Background

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

- † The first reading helps us see that God fulfilled God's promise to forgive our sins and bring peace to the world through God's own Son, Jesus.
- † Peter gave a powerful speech after Christ's resurrection and talked about how people made a mistake by choosing to release Barabbas instead of Jesus.
- † He tells them that God sent Jesus to us, yet he was murdered. Peter told them, and us, that everyone makes mistakes, but it's important to admit them and change for the better.
- † He encouraged people to turn towards God and asked them to be sorry for what they did wrong. Peter believed that no mistake is too big to be forgiven, and if people changed their ways, then God would forgive them.

Luke 24:35-48

- † When Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, he first said, "Peace be with you." He had taught them to use this greeting whenever they visited someone's home. Jesus had always emphasized the importance of peace, so this greeting reminded him of his message.
- † The disciples were initially scared when Jesus appeared but then realized it was really Jesus, which filled them with joy. Jesus then did three important things to him: he greeted them with peace, shared a meal, and taught them. Eating together was a big part of Jesus' life, and he used this time to teach them about how he was the Messiah.
- † He fulfilled the prophets' prophecies and psalms, and his followers were to continue spreading his message of peace.

Leader's Reflection Questions

- † How would you share Peter's message if someone asked you what God has done for the world?
- † What helps you to have peace?

The Liturgy

Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

Priest: Dear children, the disciples of Jesus were afraid when they saw him. They thought that he was a ghost. Today, your leaders will share stories of how Jesus lives and brings us peace. Go in peace!

When most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the place of the celebration. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the location of the celebration, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome.

The leaders assist the children to sit and prepare. Begin with the Sign of the Cross. Help the children think and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may say the following prayer in these or similar words.

Lord Jesus,

Bless us with open minds and hearts so that we will hear your message.

Amen.

Invite the children to listen to the readings.

First Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter addressed the people: "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him.

But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this, we are witnesses.

And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

"And now, friends, I know you acted in ignorance, as did your rulers.

In this way, God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer.

Repent and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out,

At the end of the reading, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The word of the Lord."

The word of the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God.

Gospel

The children stand for the Gospel. The leader proclaims it. All sign themselves on the forehead, lips and chest.

✠ **A reading from the holy Gospel, according to Luke.**

Children respond: Glory to you, O Lord.

The two disciples told the eleven and their companions what had happened on the road to Emmaus and how Jesus had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

While they were talking, Jesus stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." They were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

He asked them, "Why are you frightened, and why are you surprised? Look at my hands and feet; see that it is me. Touch me and see, for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

While they were questioning and wondering, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, which he ate in their presence. Then he told them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures and said, "It is written that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations. You are witnesses of these things."

At the end of the Gospel, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The Gospel of the Lord."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Children: Glory to you, O Lord.

The children sit to listen to the reflection.

Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions.

An excellent place to begin is the question:

What did you hear?

Allow each child to respond to hearing the Word of God in their own words. Then begin a general discussion, building on these responses, perhaps using some prepared questions, like the following, to stimulate ideas.

What did Jesus say to his followers when he appeared to them?

Peace be with you.

Last week, when Jesus' friends were upset, they wanted to be together. Two of them chose to leave their town, Jerusalem, and go to Emmaus. While they were walking and talking, Jesus joined them and explained what had happened to him. They didn't realize it was Jesus at first.

Then, after eating together, the disciples realized it was Jesus! So, the two disciples returned to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples. While the two disciples were telling the other about Jesus appearing to them, Jesus also showed up in that room, which was in Jerusalem. He greeted them and let them touch his hands and feet so they could know it was him. This made them happy because they understood that Jesus had risen from the dead. Jesus is not a ghost.

How do you think they would have felt after Jesus had said this to them?

Listen and build on the children's responses to celebrate with joy and enthusiasm that Jesus has risen and is alive.

After dinner, Jesus taught them again, and they understood better what he had been trying to teach them before he died: that he suffered and died, but God raised him to new life. The disciples listened and believed everything Jesus told them. The truth of what Jesus said gives us courage and peace, and we should share this good news with others, just as his disciples did.

Help children connect with the risen Jesus and his message of peace, joy and forgiveness of sin.

What do you remember about Jesus' life?

He helped people who were sick. He fed hungry people. He became friends with people who were lonely. He always told the truth. He told everyone about God and how to live like a child of God, as God wants us to live. He forgave our sins.

What did he say the disciples must do?

How do we feel when we are forgiven?

How can we bring Jesus' peace and forgiveness to others?

Can you share Jesus's message that he is Risen with others as the disciples did?

Other questions/options to consider as well:

How can you help to make your home a place of peace?

When can Jesus be really present in your life?

Have you ever felt God's presence?

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith.

Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who became our brother and gave his life for us?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: We do believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

Prayer of the Faithful

leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. It may be necessary for the leader to repeat and paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: we pray. All respond to each petition by saying: Lord, hear our prayer. Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: With courage and faith, let us call upon God for our needs, for God listens to the voice of his people. Our response is: **R./**

Lector: That the Church throughout the world will enjoy the wonder of the Jesus who is alive, we pray: **R./**

Lector: That those who have nothing will feel the love and care of the Church, we pray: **R./**

The leader may invite other intercessions from the children or add intercessions based on the Church's current needs, the world, or the local community.

Lector: That we will love and care for others, especially our neighbours in need, we pray: **R./**

Leader: God of Resurrection and Life, you care for the people who put their trust in you. We ask that you listen to our needs and for those whom we pray. Amen.

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and think about what they have heard and are now doing.

Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.

Readings: Lectionary Sundays and Solemnities, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ottawa, ON, adapted for children.
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