

The Gospel at Home

This Week's Gospel: John 20:1-9 and John 20:19-31

Easter celebrates Jesus' Resurrection. This is the very heart of the Christian faith: that God raised Jesus, who was crucified, from the dead. The promise of Jesus is that all who believe in him will be raised up to new life with God. Jesus' appearances after his Resurrection show that life with him is love, forgiveness, service to others, and giving one's life for one's friends.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): Your child learned how Easter celebrates God's life-giving power over death. Talk about all the ways your family celebrates the feast—colored eggs, special treats, meals, and going to Mass. Make a large banner with the word Alleluia, and display the banner in your home throughout the season.

Promise (Grades K-1): This week the class learned the story of Jesus' rising from the dead. The class learned, too, that Jesus is present in their Christian community. Ask your child to tell the family about the Apostle Thomas and how he came to believe that Jesus is risen. During the week, use the greeting "Peace be with you" with your family. It will remind you of how Jesus greeted his friends after he rose from the dead.

Good News (Grades 2-3): In class this week, your child took part in a play that tells the story of the events on the first Easter Sunday. As a family, act out the events in the booklet. You can pass the text around to read the parts. Talk as a family about how important it is to have faith in the Resurrection of Jesus. Plan some special decoration for your home, maybe an empty tomb, that shows your family's faith in the Risen Jesus.

Venture (Grades 4-6): This week, your child's class learned to identify the signs of new life around them. The class also learned about some of the symbols of Easter. Ask your child to share what some of these symbols mean and why they help us remember Jesus' Resurrection: light, colored eggs, water, seeds, the lamb, the lily, and the butterfly. Share as a family how important Jesus' promise of new life is for each of you.

Visions (Grades 7-8): In class, the young people connected the new life of spring with the new life that accompanies the Resurrection of Christ. They also talked about the experience of the death of a loved one and how the promise of new life helps everyone understand that life is changed, not taken away. Talk about the loved ones you have lost and how you miss them and look forward to being with them again in heaven thanks to the promise Jesus made. Ask your youngster to share with the family what he or she learned about Mary Magdalene.

Pray Together

Make a family Easter candle. It is true that you can purchase Easter candles, but it might be a good experience to decorate a plain white candle with the signs and symbols of Easter. Each evening during the first week of the Easter feast, light the candle and spend a few moments in family prayer. Then renew your baptismal promises by making the Sign of the Cross together.