

St. Thomas Sunday: Doubting Thomas

Make the sign of the cross and sing: "Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!"

If not after church on Sunday, reread the story of Thomas' doubts about the Resurrection of Christ, John 20:24–29.

Preschool

Did someone ever tell you something that was hard to believe? (Listen to the children's stories of things they would find hard to believe.)

If someone told you he saw a dead man walking around, would that be hard to believe? Did Thomas believe the other disciples? Would you?

Talk a bit about the normal, expected way things usually are:

Can the children describe some things that we know should happen in a certain way or look a certain way? (Maybe, things fall down, not up; we walk on our feet and not our heads; grass is green and not purple; etc.)

Life is full of normal, everyday things and it would be impossible to live life otherwise. Imagine a world where things fell up, down, or sideways, where the grass is purple...(go on with your children's list).

But, do things always have to be normal? Is God in charge? Can He change anything He wants when He needs to? So He can, and so He did change death, and that surprised poor Thomas.

Activity: Use your imagination and lots of colors to draw a picture of something you believe but can't see (for example: air, wind, love, etc.) or a picture of the cross with four nails.

Elementary school

Discussion questions for Gospel reading:

- After Jesus was crucified and then resurrected on the third day, he went and visited his apostles. Which apostle was not there? (St. Thomas)
- Eight days later, all of the apostles gathered again. What did Thomas do after he saw Christ? (He touched the wounds on Jesus' side where he was pierced and on his hands where the nails had been, and he believed!)
- Although we cannot physically touch Christ as Thomas did, how do we experience him every Sunday? (Through Holy Communion)

Activity: Trust Fall

Set up a mini "trust fall" by having a person cross their arms and fall backwards without looking, into the arms of the person behind them waiting. *This would work best with a **parent** being the one to catch the falling person.*

Ask: How did you know that your parent would catch you?

Explain: This is similar to having Faith. We can't see God, but we know that he is there! Remind them that Christ said: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

What are some words we hear at Pascha? (“Christ is Risen!”)

After someone says that to us, we reply with, “Indeed He is Risen!” Practice this greeting with your family!

We sing many joyful songs at Pascha. One hymn is this: [Let God Arise](#)

Play the music and sing along to the parts you know. The more you practice the more you’ll remember next year!

“Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered!

Today, a sacred Pascha is revealed to us,
a new and holy Pascha,
a mystical Pascha,
a Pascha worthy of veneration,
a Pascha which is Christ, the Redeemer:
a blameless Pascha,
a great Pascha;
a Pascha of the faithful,
a Pascha which has opened for us the gates of Paradise;
a Pascha which sanctifies all the faithful.

As smoke vanishes so let them vanish!

Come from that scene, O women bearers of glad tidings, and say to Sion, “Receive from us the glad tidings of joy, of Christ’s resurrection; exult and be glad, and rejoice, O Jerusalem, seeing Christ the King who comes forth from the tomb, like the bridegroom in procession.”

So the sinners will perish before the face of God, but let the righteous be glad!

The myrrh bearing women at the break of dawn drew near to the tomb of the life-giver; there they found an angel sitting upon the stone; he greeted them with these words: “Why do seek the living among the dead? Why do you mourn the incorrupt amid corruption? Go, proclaim the glad tidings to His Disciples!”

This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Pascha of beauty; the Pascha of the Lord; a pascha worthy of all honor has dawned for us; Pascha, let us embrace each other joyously; Pascha, ransom from affliction, for today, as from a bridal chamber, Christ has shown forth from the tomb, and filled the women with joy saying: “Proclaim the glad tidings to the Apostles.”

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

This is the day of Resurrection let us be illumined by the Feast; let us embrace each other; let us call brothers, even those that hate us, and forgive all by the Resurrection, and so let us cry:

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