

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

YEAR B

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God always true,
after you raised Jesus
from death,
he has been with us,
even though
we cannot see him.
Let us hear his voice
as he speaks to us
secretly in our prayers;
let us feel him near us
when we gather together
in the church.
Stay with us;
keep close to us
through Jesus,
who lives with you,
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The mission of the church is to call us to constant conversion and invite us to give witness to our faith in the Risen Lord.

Jesus, the Risen Lord, appears and proclaims peace and forgiveness, the good news of the Resurrection. He tells his disciples that all the writings of the Old Testament have pointed to this day, and they are now witnesses to it. And he commands them to go out and call others to “change their lives and believe.”

Our first reading finds Peter doing just that—proclaiming the Resurrection to those who killed Jesus. Yet, even to these, he proclaims, “now, change your lives. . . be forgiven.”

FIRST READING: *Acts 3:13-15, 17, 19*

This is a reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter said to the people:

“The God of our ancestors—
Abraham, Jacob and Isaac—
has now glorified Jesus.
You took him to Pilate
and accused him of things he didn’t do.
And even when Pilate wanted to free him,
you said, “No!”
You asked Pilate to free a murderer
instead of Jesus, who is good and holy.
You killed the One who gives us eternal life!
But God raised him up from the dead,
and we have seen him!

“But I know, my brothers and sisters,
you didn’t really understand
what you were doing
when you put Jesus to death.
Your leaders didn’t understand either.
But now, be sorry for what you did
and change your lives!
Turn to God so your sins may be forgiven!”

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: *Psalm 118*

RESPONSE:

This day was made by the Lord, let us re-joice,
let us be glad! let us re-joice in sal - va - tion.

VERSES: Leader

1. The stone which the build-ers re-ject-ed is the Cor-ner-stone,
2. You o-pen-ed the gates of heav-en, you have giv-en me

All: (clap) to Response
1. is the Cor-ner-stone. } I will pro-claim the won-ders you do!
2. life. You have giv-en me life.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

"Peace be with you," Je - sus said. Al - le - lu - ia!

"I am ris - en from the dead." Al - le - lu - ia!

GOSPEL: *Luke 24:35-48*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Luke.

Two disciples
who had met Jesus on the road to Emmaus
came to tell others all that happened. They told them
how they knew it was Jesus when he broke the bread.
While they were talking about all of this,
suddenly Jesus was there and said to them,

"Peace be with you!"

They were so frightened
that they thought they were seeing a ghost.
But Jesus said to them,

"Why are you so frightened and confused?
Look at my hands and feet. Touch me.
A ghost doesn't have a body like I do.
I am really here!"

Even though the disciples
were filled with joy and wonder,
they still could not believe it. So Jesus said to them,

"Do you have anything here to eat?"

They gave him some cooked fish and he ate it.
Then he said to them,

"Remember all the things that I told you before.
Everything that was written in the law of Moses
and in the prophets and psalms
was really talking about me
and all that would happen to me."

And Jesus helped the disciples
to understand the Scriptures. He said to them,

"It is written that the Christ would suffer and die
but would rise from the dead on the third day.
In his name, everyone must be told
that their sins are forgiven
when they change their lives and believe.
You are now witnesses to all of this."

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

After the Gospel, ask the children
to recall what they heard. You might
help them with questions such as:

- Who was there?
- What did the two from Emmaus tell the others?
- What did Jesus say when he came?
- Why were the disciples frightened?
- What did Jesus say?
- What did Jesus do?

Ask the children to recall the first
reading (you may wish to reread it).

- What did Peter tell those who killed Jesus?

Summary: Jesus rose from the
dead to bring us peace and
forgiveness, and he asks us to bring
peace and forgiveness to others.
When we do that, we show that Jesus
is here with us.

How do we feel when we are
forgiven?

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

Third Sunday of Easter

Focus

A Bible open at today's Gospel, with a crucifix and candle arranged next to it.

Introduction

The disciples had witnessed many of the marvellous miracles that Jesus had performed, and they believed that he was indeed the Messiah or Saviour promised by God. Yet it seemed incredible even to them that Jesus could have come back to life from the dead. What would it take to convince them that Jesus had indeed risen from the tomb and was very much alive? In today's Gospel we'll find out!

Gloria

Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and sing Acclamation 3.

Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St Luke (24:35-48)
(See page 380.)

Reflection

Why were the disciples afraid when Jesus first appeared among them?

They thought that they had seen a ghost because Jesus had appeared so suddenly and without any warning. They were still in a state of shock and disbelief as they listened to the accounts of the disciples who had met Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

Why should they think that Jesus was a ghost?

The followers of Jesus had seen him being crucified and put to death. Surely the only explanation for the person standing in front of them was that he was a ghost. After all, how could someone come back to life?

Jesus tried to reassure them by offering his peace. How can we exchange a sign of peace with one another?

There are many different symbolic gestures that serve to share Christ's peace. These include a simple handshake, a warm smile, a few kind words of welcome, or a gentle kiss. These signs can vary from country to country and region to region, depending on what is acceptable according to local or cultural tradition.

When Jesus saw their hearts were filled with doubt (just like Thomas last week), how did he convince them to believe that he was alive?

He offered to let them touch him and his wounds, and then he ate a piece of grilled fish in front of them as a gesture of his reality.

Why did Jesus spend time explaining the Scriptures and all that had happened to his disciples?

He wanted them to understand his heavenly Father's plan of salvation for his people. Everything had come to pass according to God's will, so that his beloved Son could destroy sin by dying on the cross, and raise us to

new and everlasting life by his glorious resurrection. Jesus commanded his disciples to go out to the world and share this Good News with all people. In order to do this, they needed to understand and believe in everything they had witnessed, so that others might believe and choose to follow Christ.

Activity

The fish was an early Christian symbol. This wasn't because many of the first disciples were fishermen, but because the Greek word for fish is made up of the first letter of each word of the Greek phrase, 'Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour'.

Photocopy the fish symbols and help the children to create witness badges by decorating them before taping them to a safety pin. Alternatively, glue them on to a clothes peg to use for everyday purposes at home.

Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family, together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

We pray for the Church and all her people;
may we share Christ's Gospel by our living example.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for peacemakers in our world;
may they work to heal injustice and reconcile differences.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are filled with doubt
and uncertainty;
may they find faith in the risen Christ.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who have died;
may they rise to everlasting peace and joy with Christ.

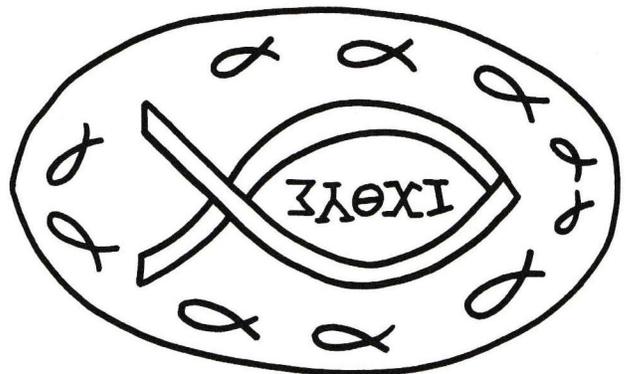
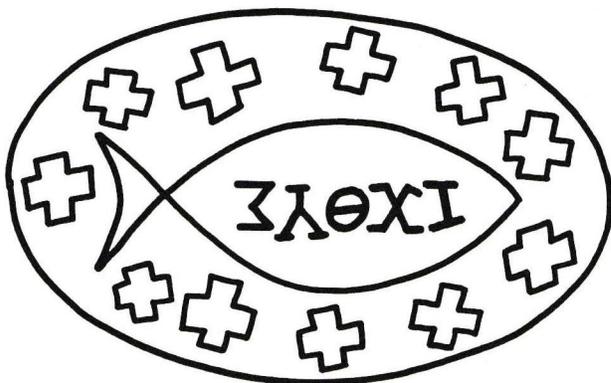
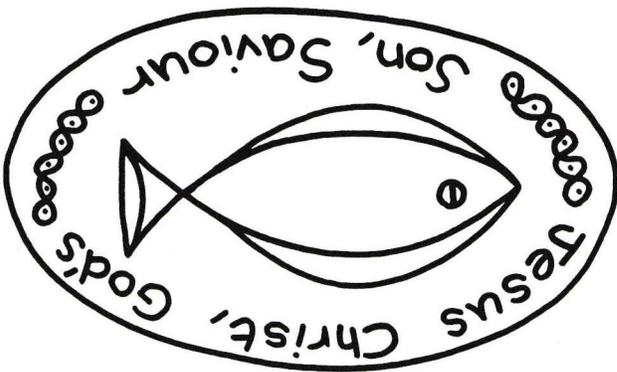
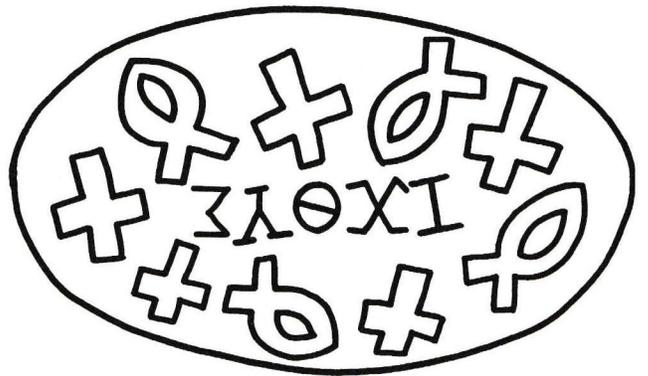
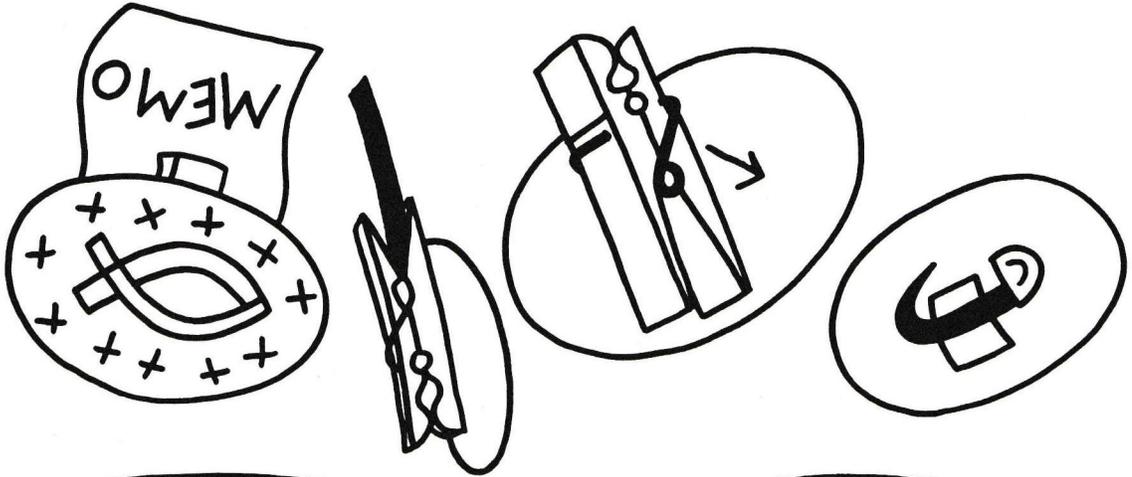
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening,
in the silence of our hearts
let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

Silence

Loving Father,
you sent your beloved Son
to transform our world with love.
May we bear witness to that love in our everyday lives.
We make our prayers through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Third Sunday of Easter

Christ's witnesses

INTRODUCTION

Jesus told his apostles to go out and tell the world that he had died and risen to new life.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Read these words:

The time is coming
when there will be no night,
and no one will need lamps
or the light from the sun,
because the Lord God will be
our light for evermore. (Revelation 22:5)

SORRY

In a moment of silence, let us ask for God's forgiveness for all the times when we have offended others by our words or actions. Sing together Sorry Song 2.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 1.

GOSPEL (LUKE 24:35-48)

The disciples who had met Jesus on the road to Emmaus were telling the others what had happened, when suddenly Jesus appeared among them. At first they were terrified, because they thought that they had seen a ghost!

Then Jesus said to them, "Peace be with you," and seeing that they were still scared, he added, "Do not be afraid. Why do you doubt what you can see? Please, look at my wounds and see that I am not a ghost. Touch me, a ghost has no flesh or bones as I have!" They were overjoyed but still filled with disbelief. Then Jesus asked them for something to eat, and they watched as he ate some grilled fish.

Then he began to explain the scriptures to them, so that finally, they understood what scripture had said about the Messiah suffering and rising after three days. Jesus said to them, "You are

my witnesses because you have seen all these things happen."

DISCUSSION

How would you feel if you saw a ghost? How did Jesus calm and reassure his terrified disciples? He appeared saying the words, "Peace be with you," and told them not to be afraid. Then he showed them his wounds to convince them that he really had risen from the dead.

Even after showing the disciples his wounds, did they really believe what they were seeing? Although they were overjoyed to see Jesus again, they were totally dumfounded to find that he was really alive. So Jesus ate a piece of fish to convince them that he was real and not a ghost.

What did Jesus mean when he told the disciples that they were his witnesses? The disciples had seen and heard for themselves all the marvelous things that Jesus had done. He would send them out to give evidence, or proof, of this by the way they lived, the miracles they would perform in his name, and the things they would teach.

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." We may not have seen all these things with our own eyes but we believe. Each of us can be a witness for Christ by living God's way, as Jesus showed us. When we become members of the Christian family, we are called to follow Christ and be a witness for him every day of our lives.

ACTIVITY

On a large sheet of paper, draw a representative map of the world (it does not need to be accurate), or if available, use a large map of the world. Copy the various modes of transportation that the apostles might have used. After coloring, help the children to add them to the map, with large red arrows pointing in various directions. Add the caption, "Witnesses to the world."

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, send us your spirit
to give us the strength
to live as you taught us.

Help us to bear witness to you
by our actions and our words.

