

Year A - 2nd Sunday of Easter

John 20: 19-29

After eight days Jesus came in and stood among them.



The disciples were afraid of the Jewish leaders, and on the evening of that same Sunday they locked themselves in a room. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group. He greeted them and showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they became very happy.

After Jesus had greeted them again, he said, "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me." Then he breathed on them and said "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they will be forgiven. But if you don't forgive their sins, they will not be forgiven." Although Thomas the Twin was one of the twelve disciples, he was not with the others when Jesus appeared to them.



So they told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But Thomas said, "First, I must see the nail scars in his hands and touch them with my finger. I must put my hand where the spear went into his side. I won't believe unless I do this!"

A week later the disciples were together again. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came in while the doors were still locked and stood in the middle of the group. He greeted his disciples and said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands. Put your hand into my side. Stop doubting and have faith!"

Thomas replied, "You are my Lord and my God!"

Jesus said, "Thomas, do you have faith because you have seen me? The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!"

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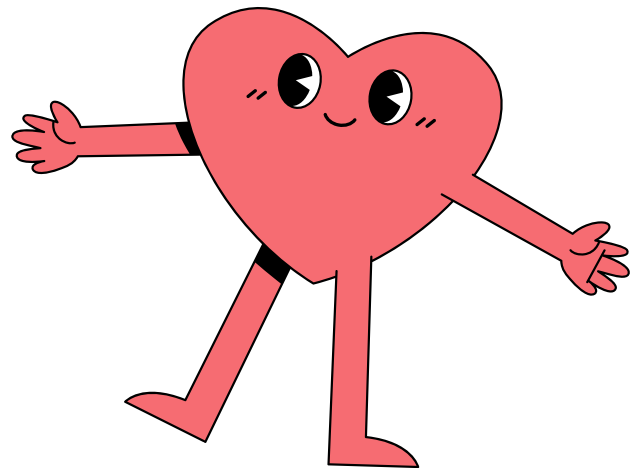
John 20: 19-29

Seeing with the eyes of faith.



Message

- Begin by inviting the children to retell the gospel together.
 - Where were the disciples?
 - Why were they there?
 - How were they feeling?
 - What happened?
 - Someone was missing, who was it?
 - What happened when Jesus appeared again?
 - How do you think Thomas felt when he saw Jesus?
- Jesus says something very important to Thomas: "Thomas, do you have faith because you have seen me? The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!"
- Thomas saw Jesus with the eyes of his flesh and he believed.
- Jesus is with us in a different way now. But we can still have faith! In fact, we are the people that Jesus was talking about when he said 'the people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed'.
- We have faith when:
 - The Holy Spirit gives us his grace and 'wakes up' our heart so we can see Jesus with the 'eyes' of our heart.
 - We want to know more about God but we still believe in God even when there are things we can't understand.
 - We trust in God even when things are hard because we know that God is loving and good. God knows everything and he loves us!
- It's the Holy Spirit who helps us to have faith.



Discussion

- How do you think we can help our faith to get stronger?
 - Learning more about God.
 - Having friends and family around us who have faith.
- Asking the Holy Spirit to help us.