

Years A, B and C

Easter Sunday

Jesus is alive, Alleluia! Alleluia!

INTRODUCTION

On Easter Sunday we celebrate the fact that Jesus has risen from the dead and is alive! As you walk into the church, you realize that something wonderful has happened. A large bright candle shines out for all to see and the church is decorated with beautiful flowers, a sign of new life. Today we will sing joyfully "Alleluia, alleluia" as we thank God for Easter morning.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and then read the following prayer:

Lord, as we light our candles,
we pray that the light
of that first Easter morning
will shine on us here today.
Alleluia.

SORRY

If we have done anything to spoil our friendship with God, help us to be truly sorry and to make a fresh start. Sing Sorry Song 1.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 3.

GOSPEL (JOHN 20:1-9)

Before sunrise on the Sunday morning, Mary of Magdala went to the tomb. As she got to the entrance, she saw that the stone had been rolled away and that the tomb was empty. She ran to the disciples saying, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb and we don't know where they have put him!"

Peter and the disciple John ran to the tomb and found it just as Mary had described, with the linen burial cloths lying on the ground. Peter went into the tomb, followed by John. Until this moment, they had not understood the scriptures which had said, "He must rise from the dead." But now they saw, and they believed.

DISCUSSION

Why did Mary return to the tomb on Sunday morning? Jesus had died late on Friday afternoon, and the women had begun to embalm his body with spices and ointments in preparation for burial, as was their custom. However, the Jewish Sabbath began at sunset on the Friday evening, and work was not allowed on the Sabbath, so they had to wait until Sunday to complete their task.

What did Mary find when she arrived at the tomb? Whom did she tell? As the disciples ran to the tomb, can you imagine what they must have been thinking? Peter and John had raced to the tomb and found it empty. They could hardly believe that Jesus might be alive, but at that moment, they began to hope that something as wonderful as this really could happen.

On Easter day and throughout the season of Easter, a special candle, called the "Paschal candle," is lit. What does it remind us of? It reminds us that Jesus, the Light of the World, has destroyed death and is alive. It is a symbol of new life.

What do we give to each other on Easter Sunday as symbols of new life? Easter eggs! Just as the chick in an egg must break free from its shell to begin a new life, so too, Jesus had to break free from death in the tomb. He had the new life which God has promised to us all!

ACTIVITY

Help the children to make several Easter banners to decorate the church, or help them to make this Easter greeting card.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, we thank you
for the joy of the resurrection,
when you rose from the dead
and were filled with new life.
Help us to remember that you suffered
and died on the cross for us,
so that one day we, too, will share with you
the joy of everlasting life.

