

Sunday Gospel Background

Alleluia! He is risen! Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried. But on the third day, he was raised again. He appears to his disciples. Thomas doubts Jesus' Resurrection until he sees and touches Jesus' wounds. The Resurrection of Jesus is the most important truth of the Catholic faith. Jesus' Death and Resurrection opened the gates of Heaven for us. He promises his followers the joy of Heaven. For this great gift, we say, "Alleluia!" Teach the Easter word *Alleluia* to your child—it means "Praise God" in Hebrew.

Editor's Note: This week's *Promise* is for two Sundays. You can do both lessons at once, or spread them out over two weeks.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Dear God, thank you for raising Jesus up and for filling us with new life too. Amen. Alleluia."
- Story • An Easter Surprise** A coloring page to accompany this story is available at gospelweeklies.com/lesson-updates. Tell this story:

Mason was sitting on the porch swing at Grandma's house when a big black car pulled up. His mom and sisters were in the kitchen with Grandma making Easter dinner. They were taking the big ham out of the oven, mashing the potatoes, and whipping cream to put on the red Jell-O® salad. No one else is coming to Grandma's house today, Mason thought. I wonder who is in the car.

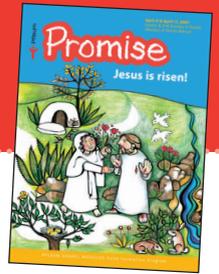
The passenger door opened and a soldier got out. He opened the back door of the car and pulled out a big duffel bag. The soldier leaned back into the car to talk to the driver, then stepped back, closed the car door, and waved as the car drove down the street. The soldier stood on the sidewalk and grinned at Mason. "Aren't you going to say hello?" he asked. Mason couldn't believe his eyes. "Uncle Davey!" Mason cried. "How come you're here? Grandma said you were still in Afghanistan." Uncle Davey's smile got even bigger. "Why don't you go tell Grandma that I'm here? OK?"

Mason ran into the house, banging the door behind him. "Grandma!" he yelled. "Uncle Davey is here. He came in a big black car. He's really here." Mason grabbed Grandma's arm to pull her toward the door. "Mason, you will make me drop this pan," Grandma said. "But Uncle Davey is here," Mason insisted. Grandma set the pan on the stove. "Mason, Uncle Davey is in Afghanistan. You know that." "No, Grandma," Mason said. "He's outside. Come and see."

Grandma looked at Mason's mom, a kind of scared look. She went to the sink and washed her hands. Mason's mom stood by her. Then Grandma said to Mason, "You'll just have to show me where Uncle Davey is." Mason ran to the door and looked out. The soldier was still there, still smiling. When Grandma saw Uncle Davey, she had to hang on to Mason for just a minute. Then Uncle Davey ran up the steps and gave his mother a big hug. "I'm home," he said. "Just in time for Easter dinner." It was their happiest Easter dinner ever!

Ask: What was the Easter surprise? Why didn't Grandma believe Mason at first? Why was this Easter dinner the happiest one ever? Why did Uncle Davey's surprise visit mean so much?

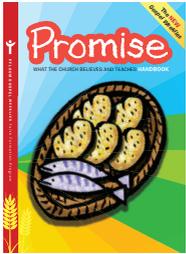
- Activity • Signs of Easter, Signs of Life** Talk about signs of Easter in your home: *Easter cards, baskets and eggs; stuffed toys, especially rabbits, lambs, and chicks; special flag to hang outside; flowers; new clothes, a special meal, etc.* **Ask:** What do these things tell us about Easter? *Cards and church items remind us that Easter is about Jesus rising to new life. Eggs, butterflies, and flowers are signs of life too. A clean house, special foods, and new clothes show that Easter is an important celebration.*



- Cover Activity • Jesus is risen! (page 1)** Invite your child to study the cover picture.
Ask: Who is the man? Why does he have sores on his hands, feet, and side? Who is the woman? *Mary Magdalene*. **Ask:** What is the cave for? *Jesus' empty tomb*. Have your child circle all the signs of life on the page. *Rabbits, birds, bird nest, flowers, plants, water, butterfly, Jesus, and Mary Magdalene*.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • The First Easter (page 2)** Read through the Gospel together, pausing at each picture to make sure your child associates the picture with the name.
- Word of the Week • Mass (page 2)** Help your child find **Mass** on page 2. Share this definition: *We gather at Mass to remember and thank Jesus*.



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 9. Read the title aloud. Remind your child about who Adam and Eve are. Then read the text aloud. Explain that God wanted Adam and Eve—and all people—to be happy in Heaven with him forever. Read aloud the directions for the activity. Your child likely already knows the answer: *Jesus*. Explain that God sent his Son, Jesus, to save us and open the gates of Heaven for us.

Turn to page 12. Read aloud the title and the third promise. Emphasize that God's promise wasn't only for Adam and Eve. Jesus came to save us too! He did this by dying on the Cross and rising from the dead. We remember and thank Jesus at every Mass.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, pages 3-4.

Live the Gospel

- Activity • Alleluia Butterflies (pages 3-4)** Explain that butterflies are symbols of Easter. The butterfly's life cycle symbolizes the life of Jesus. The caterpillar represents Jesus' life on earth. When the caterpillar enters its chrysalis, this represents Jesus' Death and time in the tomb. The butterfly that emerges from the chrysalis represents Jesus rising from the dead.
Help your child cut out the two butterflies. The pictures show how to fold each butterfly so it has wings. You may hang them from a coat hanger, dowel rod, ruler, or paint stirrer with fishing line or thread. Hang the Alleluia butterflies in your home and keep them up until Pentecost.
- Closing Prayer** Invite your child to repeat each line after you: Thank you, God, for signs of spring. Thank you, God, for butterflies. Thank you, God, for raising Jesus to new life. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture