

# Easter:

## Second Sunday of Easter

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### Preparation

#### Background for Scripture Readings

##### First Reading

- The readings for the Sundays after Easter reflect on the experiences of the early Church.
- Today's first reading presents an ideal of the early Christian community.
- The result of true Christian love put into practice is justice.

##### Second Reading

- In the second reading, John makes the point that through Christ's blood and sacrifice; at the moment of Christ's death, the world is saved.
- By our Baptism into the death of Jesus, we are born to new life as children of God.
- Our duty is simply to believe in Jesus Christ.

##### Gospel

- The Gospel is John's description of the first appearance of Jesus since the Resurrection.
- In the first appearance, Jesus gives the disciples peace and joy and breathes new life into them, bestowing on them the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- In the second appearance, Jesus appears to Thomas and by showing his wounds, he gives Thomas the evidence he needs to believe.

# Breaking Open the Word

## Leader Instruction

### Catechist Reflection Guide for the Second Sunday of Easter

**First Reading:** Acts 4:32-35—The early community sold everything and gave it to the Apostles for the needs of others.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24—Give thanks to the Lord.

**Second Reading:** 1 John 5:1-6—The love of God is shown in keeping his commands.

**Gospel:** John 20:19-31—Jesus bestows the Holy Spirit on the Apostles—Thomas doubts.

#### **Invitation to prayer** (30 seconds)

Ask the children to quiet themselves and sit comfortably. Have them take three deep breaths while you prompt them to relax as they breathe in God, our Father who loves us, Jesus Christ, his Son, our brother, and God's Holy Spirit who lovingly guides us. As an invitation to prayer, make the Sign of the Cross.

#### **Listening for a word or phrase** to speak to your heart (3-4 minutes)

Read the Gospel passage or the special phrase slowly and deliberately while the children are silently listening. Ask them to listen for a word or phrase that seems to be God's word for them today. Spend about 30 seconds as they select their "word" from God. Ask them to silently repeat that word or phrase and to write it on their heart.

**Ages 5-8:** Read the story of the early Christian community from a children's Bible or tell it in your own words. Read the phrase on the handout and ask them to think about sharing.

**Ages 9-14:** Read the passage from Acts.

#### **Loving God through his Word** (3-5 minutes)

**Ages 5-6:** To lead a discussion about sharing, ask children: **Name some things you share with friends? Name some things you share with your family?** Invite children to draw a picture of something they share with a friend or with a family member.

**Ages 7-8:** Read aloud the first sentence. Use these questions to lead a discussion about sharing, especially with the poor: **What do you think about this special kind of sharing? Name some things you share with friends. How does it feel when others share things with you? Name some things you share with your family. How do you share with the poor?** Close with the Lord's Prayer.

**Ages 9-11:** Guide young people to reflect on the early community and what it might have been like for these Christians. Use the questions on the handout to help them think about their own community. Invite volunteers to share ideas for a plan to help the poor, hungry, and homeless. Close with the Lord's Prayer.

**Ages 12-14:** Guide young people to imagine they are time travelers between the early community and their parish. Use the question to guide a comparison of qualities of the early Church to their parish community about sharing everything for the good of the poor. Pause between each question and allow time for young people to use their imaginations. Lead them in a

meditation on the Lord's Prayer. Pray the Lord's Prayer aloud slowly for them and pause after each phrase.

**Living the Gospel** words through the week (3-5 minutes)

The handouts describe one or two ways children and young people can live this reflection on the Gospel through the week at home, school, or play. If appropriate, have them add one or two more personal choices to act on this week.