

# Easter: Easter Sunday

## Lesson Contents

### Preparation

Background for Scripture Readings

### Breaking Open the Word

Leader Instruction

## Preparation

### Background for Scripture Readings

#### First Reading

- In the first reading, Peter's speech is a typical recital of the essential preaching about Christ.
- Peter and all the disciples are commissioned to bear witness to the Good News.
- Those who received their commission from the Risen Lord were eyewitnesses of his glory.

#### Second Reading

- Paul uses the image of yeast to remind the Corinthian community that one person's evil influence can harm the whole community.
- The image of unleavened bread is used to expose our need to purify ourselves.
- In the context of the Easter celebration, we are reminded to renew our Baptism.

#### Gospel

- In the Gospel of John, Mary runs to tell Peter and John about the empty tomb.
- John is the first to arrive at the tomb, which shows his special position as the beloved disciple.
- Upon entering the empty tomb, John makes his profession of faith, "he saw and believed."

# Breaking Open the Word

## Leader Instruction

### Catechist Reflection Guide for Easter Sunday

**First Reading:** Acts 10:34a, 37-43—Peter's witness.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23—This is the day the Lord has made.

**Second Reading:** Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8—Aspire to the higher things.

**Gospel:** John 20:1-9—The women are witnesses to the empty tomb.

#### **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 5-6:** Use the picture of the envelope to set the discussion on the Gospel passage about the women at the tomb receiving a message from an angel to go to Peter and others. Tell them that **in the Gospel story about Easter, an angel gives the holy women a message for Peter and his friends to meet Jesus in Galilee.** Guide a conversation using these questions. **Have you ever passed on an important message? Has someone passed a message to you? What did your message say? Did the message ask you to do something?** Read aloud the closing prayer and have children repeat it after you.

**Ages 7-11:** As you read the Easter poem on the sheet, ask children to reflect on Easter.

**Ages 12-14:** Read the Gospel passage.

#### **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:** Instruct children to draw an Easter picture and to put the word "Alleluia" underneath it. Guide them to share with each other their understanding of Easter. Affirm their understandings.

**Ages 9-11:** Use the questions on the handout to have a conversation about Easter. Focus on the baptismal aspect of Easter, favorite Easter praises, ways to celebrate Easter, and a prayer for peace and freedom from violence.

**Ages 12-14:** Guide young people to imagine they are in the scene at the tomb on Easter morning. Then guide them through the questions about the event and have them share their responses. Share prayers for Easter peace and joy.

**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.