

Easter:

Third Sunday in Easter

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Background for Scripture Readings

First Reading

- The trial of the disciples described in Acts was their second trial before the Sanhedrin (the highest court of justice in Jerusalem.)
- The disciples were arrested for disobeying the order to never speak in Jesus' name again.
- In today's passage, the order not to speak of Jesus is repeated by the Sanhedrin.

Second Reading

- The vision from Revelation presents the heavenly witness to the Risen Christ.
- The hymn of praise begins with the voice of angels, all living creatures, and the elders.
- The response comes from every creature in heaven and on earth, everything in the universe.

Gospel

- After the Resurrection, the disciples returned to their homes in Galilee and to their former occupation of fishing.
- Suddenly, the appearance of the Risen Christ transforms all aspects of the disciples' lives.
- In the final chapter of today's Gospel, Jesus' threefold commission to take care of his flock matches Peter's three denials of Jesus.

Breaking Open the Word

Leader Instruction

Catechist Reflection Guide for the Third Sunday in Easter

First Reading: Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41—Peter explains that he is led by the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 30:2+4, 5-6, 11-12a+13b—Give praise to God.

Second Reading: Revelation 5:11-14—Worthy is the Lamb.

Gospel: John 21:1-14—Jesus appears to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias.

Invitation to prayer (30 sec.)

Ask the children to quiet themselves and sit comfortably. Begin the session with the Sign of the Cross. 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.

Listening for a word or phrase to speak to your heart (3-4 min.)

Read the Gospel passage or 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 pick out their "word" from God. Ask them to silently repeat that word or phrase and to write it on their heart.

For Ages 5-6: Read aloud the words "**Come and Eat.**" Tell children the story of Jesus and the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias in your own words or read John 21:1-14 from a children's Bible.

For Ages 7-8: Read aloud the words "**It is the Lord!**" Explain that **After Jesus died and rose, his body was glorified. He did not look like he used to, so it was not easy to recognize him right away.** Read John 21:1-14 from a children's Bible or tell it in your own words.

For Ages 9-11 and Ages 12-14: Read aloud John 21:1-14. Ask young people to listen for a word or phrase that seems to be God's word for them today. Spend about 30 seconds as they pick out their word or phrase. Ask them to silently repeat that word or phrase and to write it on their heart.

Loving God through his word (3-5 min.)

For Ages 5-6: Direct children's attention to the illustration and ask them to identify the foods Jesus and his disciples ate. Explain that **The story takes place after Jesus rose from the dead, and he did not look like he did before. Sometimes the disciples did not recognize him right away, but they were very happy to see him.** Invite children to complete the activity. Encourage them to draw expressions on the disciples' faces. Close with the prayer. You may wish to use gestures with the Alleluia or sing it.

For Ages 7-8: Direct children's attention to the illustration and ask them why the disciples understood who Jesus was when he told them to cast their nets and they caught so many fish. (He did it before.) Have a conversation with the children using the questions on the handout. Emphasize that **We know people by the things they do. Eating and sharing bread was one of the things Jesus and his disciples did often. We participate in a special meal when we go to Communion during Mass.** Close with the prayer.

For ages 9-11: Ask young people to share their word or phrase. Use the questions on the handout to engage young people in discussion about the Gospel passage. Explain **That the story takes place after Jesus rose from the dead and he did not look like he did before, so sometimes the disciples did not recognize him right away.** Spend some time helping young people understand that we experience the presence of the Risen Christ in prayer, in people, and in the events of our lives. Close with the prayer.

For ages 12-14: Ask young people to share their word or phrase. Have young people take a few minutes to reflect on the questions and have them share their responses in the large group. Emphasize the kinds of

actions we do that help others experience the Risen Christ in their lives (*random acts of generosity and kindness; reaching out to the poor; acting for justice*). Close with the prayer.

Living the Gospel words through the week (3-5 min.)

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.