

Resources on the Sunday Readings – Easter 3

Picture Reflection (p1), Bible Reading & Study Questions (p2-3)

See separate families' sheet.

Picture Reflection



Open minds

Luke 24: 36b-48

This story of the two disciples meeting the risen Christ, their friend, on the road to Emmaus is a well-known Easter story. It seems unusual to us that they didn't recognise him until he eats with them, but it is understandable in the grief that they were experiencing.

- Spend a few moments with the picture of the rollercoaster...
- What are your feelings about paying to go on a rollercoaster at a theme park? If you have had that experience - spend a few minutes re-living the sensations of being carried along with the rollercoaster...
- Why might we describe the appearance of the risen Christ to his friends as a 'rollercoaster experience'?
- Reflect on times in your life when you have gone from being anxious to finding peace...where was God in those experiences?
- What does it mean for you to have an open mind and heart when you worship?

A Prayer:

Lord, we come to you today with our hearts and minds open to receive your teaching.... Lead us to understand who you are, what you have done and what you require of us as witnesses. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

Bible Study Questions.

Bible Readings – **Acts 3:12-19** and **Luke 24:34-48**

¹² When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, 'You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?' ¹³ The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, ¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

¹⁷ 'And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out,

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

³⁴ They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

³⁶ While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' ³⁷ They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

Bible Study points to ponder.

Both today's readings above talk of witnessing, being at, pivotal events in Christ's ministry. His disciples were involved in the most important elements of his legacy, and he reminded them to share what they knew, tell what they had seen, and be part of the new church that would follow.

But there was some retribution as well, because, as we read in Acts 3 verses 14 & 15, the disciples were accused of being complicit in the trial and crucifixion of their leader. So how could they (or we) face up to what had happened?

Being witnesses of Christ and his actions is not voluntary, but absolute. He says, without argument, 'you are witnesses', not 'you can witness my bequest if you like', and so we have to work out how our lives can reflect what we know of Christ, our Saviour. Think about that through these questions, based on the events recorded in today's readings:

- Would you be startled and terrified like the disciples to meet Jesus?
- What were the new Christians listening to Peter told to do to recover their position as faithful disciples?
- How does our witness to Christ declare our faith as his disciples?
- Do you have the option to witness, to share what you know about Christ or not, or is it a full-time commitment?
- Who do you share the Good News of the Gospel with?