

**5th grade and up Sunday School – Easter
April 12, 2020**

Object of the lesson: Help children to understand that with Easter, Christ is alive, giving us new life and hope for the future. Help kids to know that even in the midst of pain, suffering, and death, Jesus is there, bringing new life.

Questions before the story: Do you remember what we call this week in the church? (Holy Week) What happened last Sunday (Palm Sunday – triumphal entry into Jerusalem) What happened on Thursday night? (Jesus ate his last supper with his disciples, washed their feet) What happened on Friday? (Good Friday – Jesus dies, disciples are sad and afraid) What happens today??

Read the Bible Story: Read one of the Easter stories in the Bible: Matthew 28: 1-10; Mark 16:1-8 or Luke 24:1-12

Ask some questions and talk about the story: Who went to visit the tomb early in the morning (the women, Mary), what were they expecting to find most likely (Jesus' body, were likely planning to cover in spices), Who did they meet at tomb? (an angel – bonus question: what do angel always say?? Do no be afraid!!) Who did Mary bump into as she was leaving the tomb? (the risen Jesus). What would you have done if you were one of the women and saw the angel in the cave?? Do you think the disciples were still scared even after knowing Jesus was alive? What do you think other people thought when they heard the disciples talking about Jesus coming back from the dead?

Discussion ideas:

Jesus is alive! On Friday, the disciples were scared and sad. Many of them went and hid. Some of them pretended that they didn't even know Jesus because they were afraid maybe they would be killed too! When the women go to the tomb on Easter morning, maybe they weren't quite sure what they would find, but they probably expected to find Jesus' body and to wrap it in spices, which was how people took care of dead bodies in that time. But instead they saw an angel and Mary mistakes Jesus for the gardener! In most stories, Mary only recognizes Jesus for who he is when he says her name, "Mary!" After she recognizes Jesus, her sadness turns to joy! The women ran to spread the message to the other disciples that Jesus was alive!

Adults sometimes talk about being Easter people in a Good Friday world. What do you think that means? What are some of the Good Friday things around us right now (Covid-19, death, sickness, people losing their jobs, businesses closing, people not being able to be with sick relatives, people going hungry, war, etc.)? What does it mean to be Easter people? (once you are an Easter person, Easter isn't a holiday we celebrate once a year. It's a new identity, a new way of being in the world. It means to live in the knowledge that God is stronger than death, that God in Jesus has suffered just like we suffer, God knows what it's like to feel pain and loss and sadness and yet, from that sadness God can bring new life! When we live like Easter people, everywhere we go – even in the sad and scary places – we expect to see Jesus, Jesus is out there wherever we see pain or injustice. As Easter people we are called to speak up against darkness and death, meanness and selfishness, injustice and cruelty (sometimes at personal cost) and to share God's love, to share our faith that God can turn death into life, planting and watering and bringing a new creation into being. Hallelujah!

Activity: Make butterfly prayers. Jesus rose from the dead and brought us new life and changed the world. Make a butterfly (template attached) and write on it your hopes for the world. Take a photo and send to Mary at formation@washingtonparish.org.

Activity: Make hot cross buns! The eating of hot cross buns marks the end of Lent. Different parts of the hot cross bun have a certain meaning. The cross represents the crucifixion of Jesus, and the spices inside signify the spices used to embalm him at his burial. And they are sweet and delicious for Easter. You can do this without fruit if you don't have any. Here's an easy recipe:

<https://www.kingarthurfLOUR.com/recipes/easy-hot-cross-buns-recipe>

Prayer: Dear God, today we celebrate Jesus being alive and bringing us new life! Help us to share the joy of Easter everyday with those around us. Amen.

