

A NOTE TO PARENTS

The Gospel for the first Sunday following Easter Day is always the story of Doubting Thomas—a story set “eight days” (i.e. one week) after the day when the women came to the tomb and found it empty. Then, for this Sunday’s story, we go backwards in time, back to the evening of the first Easter Day. Here is what has happened as the story opens:

Two disciples have left the little company for a nearby village. On their way, Luke tells us, they meet a stranger, and as they talk with him and share their confusion, anguish, grief and hope, they find that he offers them, from the Scriptures, a whole new understanding of the place of God and the Messiah in all that has happened. Deeply moved, they invite him to stay with them. He does—he breaks the bread and blesses it, and they recognize him, and he vanishes. They run all the way back to Jerusalem to share this incredible news with the fellowship—only to find them saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon.” Into this atmosphere of excitement, confusion, and lingering doubt, Jesus comes. This seems to be the same as the *first* appearance in last week’s Gospel—the one that Thomas missed.

Little, in fact, happens in today’s story. The disciples are terrified that Jesus might be a ghost, but he has them touch his hands and feet, he eats before them, and again he opens for them the Scriptures. Simple, homey stuff. But they had not recognized him, because he was different. He is not simply his old self; he is a “new creation:” the “first-begotten of the dead.” His life is of a new kind, beyond death; he belongs to a new world.

Ask your child how we recognize someone we love who has changed since we last saw them. Do your relatives see you only rarely? Do they scarcely know your children from visit to visit, as they grow? It’s hard to feel comfortable with some one who is different from what we remember and loved. What can help us to feel at ease again? What did Jesus do to help his friends?

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JUNIOR

Year B
3rd SUNDAY
of EASTER

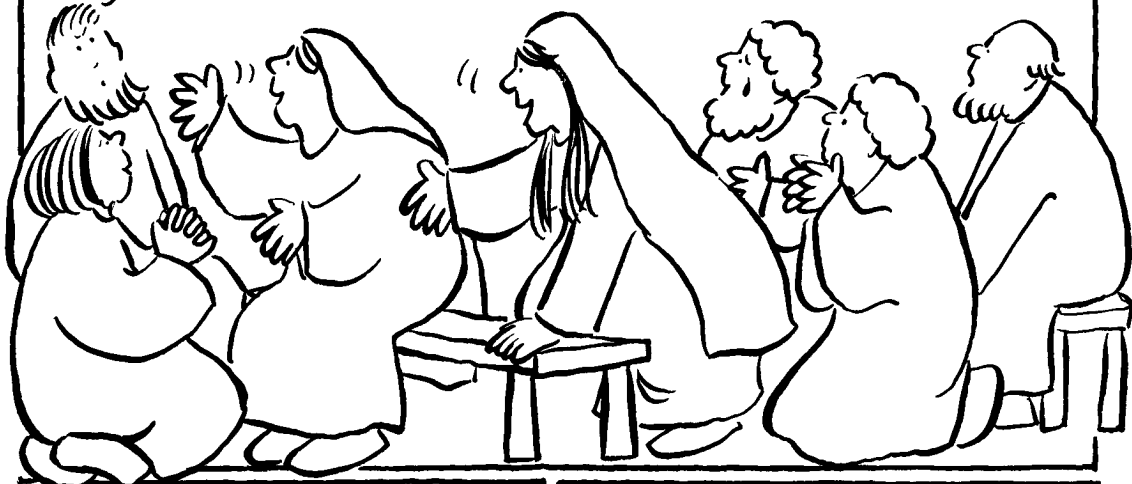
Jesus's friends gave him some bread
and fish, and he ate
with them.

LUKE 24:43



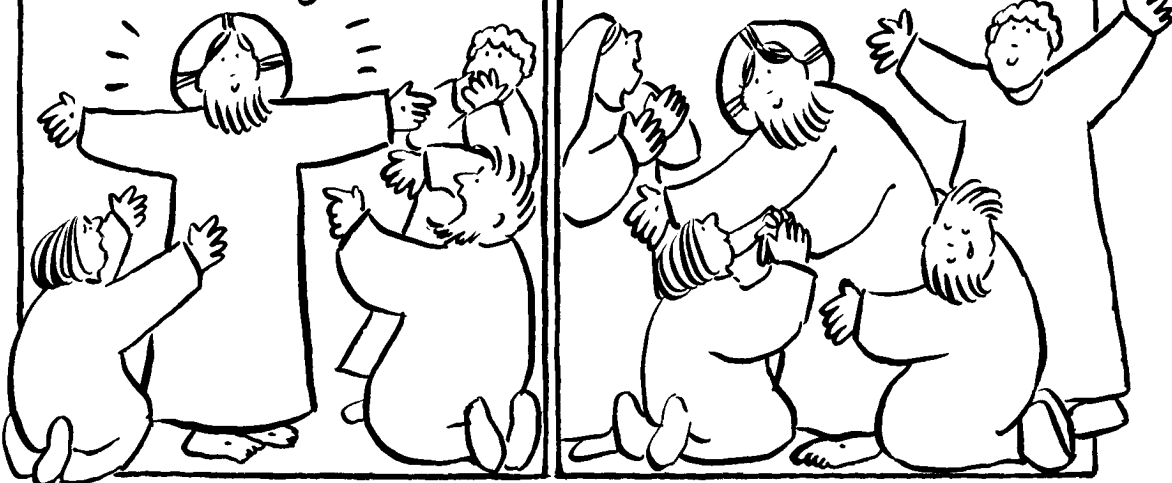
Jesus died. But then some of his friends said they had seen him, alive!

Others had not seen him. They did not know what to think.



Then Jesus came to them. Some of them said, "It's a ghost!"

Jesus said, "Touch me. I'm not a ghost." And he ate with them.



Jesus died, but he did not stay dead. God gave him new life to share with us. Now we know that God is stronger than death.

Jesus was not a ghost. He was alive. His friends could touch him. At first they were scared. Then they were filled with joy!

Draw faces on these people who love Jesus. Are they sad? or scared? or happy? Why?

