

Closing prayer

Leader: Through the resurrection of Jesus,
God has redeemed us and made us his children.
All: **May he bless us with joy.**
Leader: The Redeemer has given us lasting freedom.
All: **May we inherit his everlasting life.**
Leader: By faith we rose with him in baptism.
All: **May our lives be holy,
so that we will be united with him for ever.
Amen.**

(Adapted from Solemn Blessing for Second Sunday of Easter)

Stewardship link

A good steward is called upon to *express* their faith, *share* their faith, *live* their faith. Faith relies on belief and trust and we strive to look for evidence of God around us. Christ is in others, those we know and those who are strangers. Christ is also in us. Christ is very near to us, if we open our eyes.

To do

During this week, try to share the two gifts of peace and faith with those you encounter.

What opportunities is God offering you to share these?

Reflect on your own reactions to sharing these gifts.

Is God inviting you to use these gifts more actively – perhaps in the home, workplace, parish or local community?

Take some time to note your responses in your notebook.

Diocese of Portsmouth

Stewardship Reflection

2nd Sunday of Easter Year C

‘Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.’

(John 20:29)

Opening prayer

Leader:
Let us pray
for a deeper awareness of our
Christian baptism.

Response:
**God of mercy,
you wash away our sins in water,
you give us new birth in the Spirit,
and redeem us in the blood of
Christ.
As we celebrate Christ’s
resurrection
increase our awareness of these
blessings,
and renew your gift of life within us.**

(Opening Prayer for Second Sunday of Easter)



To share

What insights have you had in the last week? Is there something in your notebook that you would like to share with others in the group?

To listen

John 20:19-31

To think about

Jesus appears to his disciples in this post-resurrection story. Three times he says to them, 'Peace be with you'. This peace is also offered to us, disciples in the 21st Century. It is the peace encourages us to face all trials and triumphs of our lives, knowing that Jesus is with us and that we are not alone. It is the peace we offered to enable us to live with all those we know - friends, family, colleagues and our chance encounters, on journeys, on the street etc. This peace is the same regardless of whether we like or dislike these people. This peace is a gift to us.



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This passage also invites us to reflect on the gift of faith and our response to this.

To reflect on

Think of occasions in your own life when you joyfully use the gift of peace, both within yourself and with those around you.

When do you find it difficult to share this gift?

Where are you being challenged to share this gift at the moment?

Jesus tells his disciples 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe' (John 20:29). What is your response to being blessed with the gift of faith?

To discuss

What do you think of Thomas's initial reaction to the news his fellow apostles give him? What effect might the recent trauma of Jesus' death have had on him? Can you identify with him in any way?

Have you ever felt afraid to acknowledge your faith because of the reactions or hostility of others?

Where / when in your life do you feel you have lacked faith or belief?

How might you share the gifts of peace and faith in the coming days? What challenges might you face?