



## Messy Church at home

### 26 April 2020 - Is seeing believing?

Though we won't be able to meet together as a Messy Church on 26 April, how about trying Messy Church at home?

#### **The story of Thomas - John 20:24-29**

The following version of the reading is taken from The Voice Bible. Perhaps each person would like to read a part and you could act the story out together.

<sup>24</sup>All of the eleven were present with the exception of Thomas. <sup>25</sup>He heard the accounts of each brother's interaction with the Lord.

**The Other Disciples:** We have seen the Lord!

**Thomas:** Until I see His hands, feel the wounds of the nails, and put my hand to His side, I won't believe what you are saying.

<sup>26</sup>Eight days later, they gathered again behind locked doors; and Jesus reappeared. This time Thomas was with them.

**Jesus:** May each one of you be at peace.

<sup>27</sup>He drew close to Thomas.

**Jesus:** Reach out and touch Me. See the punctures in My hands; reach out your hand, and put it to My side; leave behind your faithlessness, and believe.

**Thomas (filled with emotion):** <sup>28</sup>You are the one True God and Lord of my life.

**Jesus:** <sup>29</sup>Thomas, you have faith because you have seen Me. Blessed are all those who never see Me and yet they still believe.

#### **Activities**

Here are some activities to try, using bits and pieces you might have at home. If you can't find the exact same items, what things could you use instead?

## **Feely bag game**

You will need:

- a pillow case
- random different-shaped objects to go in it, for example, a teddy, a plastic bottle, a roll of sticky tape, an apple, a wooden spoon, a lego brick etc.

The idea is to work out what is in the pillow case, just by feeling the items through it. You might all like to contribute a couple of things each to the pillow case in secret, so that everyone has a chance to guess some of the items. How many did you get right?

As you play the feely bag game, think about whether someone else would believe you if you told them what was in the pillow case before they actually felt it for themselves. Thomas didn't believe the other disciples when they said they had seen Jesus alive after he came back from the dead. He said that unless he saw and touched Jesus for himself, he wouldn't believe Jesus had risen.

## **Touchy feely resurrection**

You will need:

- paper or card and a pencil
- tin foil
- thick string or wooden sticks (spent matchsticks/ wooden skewers/sticks from the garden)
- glue

Draw the shape of a cross on your paper/card. Cut lengths of string or wooden sticks to fit to the outline shape of your cross and stick them on. Then glue your tin foil over the top of your cross shape and press it down, so you can see and feel the raised shape of the cross underneath the foil.

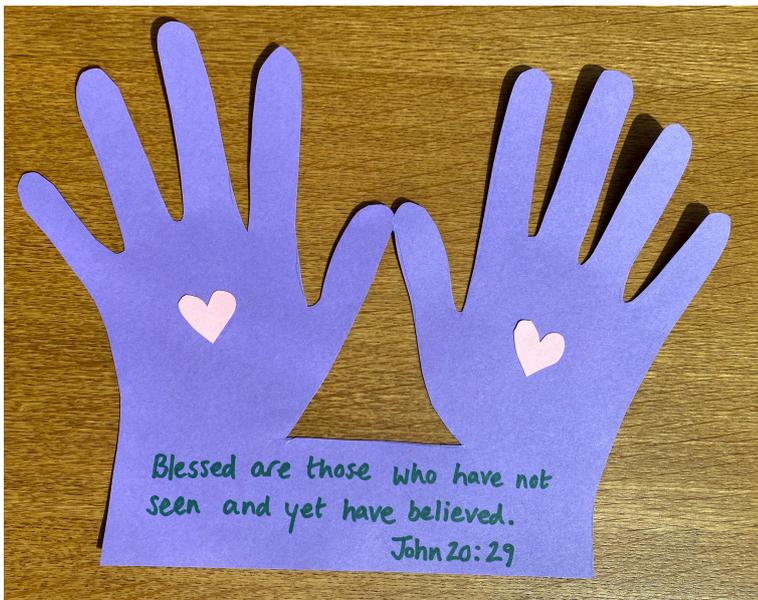


While you make your cross, think about times when you have wanted to touch something or someone to make sure they were really there. When you have finished run your finger over the shape of the cross. Why do you think Thomas needed to see and touch Jesus to believe he was alive again?

## **Touching hands**

You will need:

- paper or card (two different colours if you have them)
- pencils and pens
- glue and scissors



Choose a piece of paper or card that's big enough for you to fit both your hands on side by side with the thumbs touching. First draw round one hand, then the other. (Ask someone to help you if it's tricky to draw round the hand you usually write with.) Carefully cut round the hands, but don't cut through where the thumbs join, so the hands remain joined together. Also keep a strip along the bottom joining both hands to write in the bible verse John

20:29, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Finally, either draw in a heart shape on each palm, or cut out two hearts using different coloured card/paper and stick one on each palm.

While you create your touching hands, think how Thomas felt when he heard the other disciples talking about the fact they had seen Jesus alive. Thomas said he simply wouldn't believe until he had seen Jesus for himself. Imagine then, how overwhelmed Thomas must have felt when Jesus appeared to him. Jesus greeted him and held out his hands, inviting Thomas to touch his hands where the wounds from the nails had been; inviting him to stop doubting and believe.

### **Learn a new song**

Don't forget to keep singing Jesus' love is very wonderful.

And what about practicing the new song you learnt for Easter? Sing along with [1,2,3 Jesus is alive](#) on YouTube.

### **Reflect**

Think about the story of Thomas.

If you'd been Thomas, would you have touched Jesus?

Who do you usually hold hands with, hug, slap on the back, sit close to?

What does it feel like for you, not to be close enough to touch anyone outside your household?

How can you stay close without touching people?

How can you stay close to Jesus without being able to touch or see him?

### **Pray**

Jesus knew it was hard for Thomas to believe without the evidence of seeing and touching. He knew it would sometimes be difficult for us to believe in him too. He

told those first disciples that we would be 'blessed' because we would not have seen him with our eyes like they did, but we would still believe.

Try saying this prayer, you might like to get one person to read it and everyone to say the responses in bold.

Jesus, I haven't seen you with my eyes, but I believe you are

**My Lord and my God.**

Jesus, I haven't touched you with my hands, but I believe you are

**My Lord and my God.**

Jesus, I haven't heard you with my ears, but I believe you are

**My Lord and my God.**

You might also like to say The Lord's Prayer. And perhaps you'd like to finish with Messy Grace - can you remember the actions we do when we say it? Here's a reminder...

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (Hold out your hands in front of you)

And the love of God (Put your hands on your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Hold hands)

Be with us all now and for ever. Amen (Raise hands together on the word 'Amen' and shout loudly!)

**Look after yourselves and stay well and safe.**