



YEAR

2

UNIT 1

# EASTER

## ABOUT THE UNIT

This unit is designed to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the stories of Easter from the New Testament and of the symbols the Church uses to celebrate the Season.

## WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit builds on previous learning about the story of finding the empty tomb and the symbol of the Easter Candle.

## PRIOR LEARNING

It would be helpful if children have:

- some knowledge of some stories about the Resurrection
- some knowledge of the symbols used during the Easter Season.

## SKILLS

Group discussion, letter writing, art, thinking skills, brainstorm, interpreting symbols, imaginative contemplation, empathetic writing.

## VOCABULARY

Easter, Resurrection, Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Peter, Paschal Candle, Alpha, Omega, Easter Vigil, Holy Water, Emmaus, Thomas, Doubt.

## ASSESSMENT

At the end of this unit:

**Most children will** know a range of stories about the Resurrection and the Risen Jesus, the other characters involved and their reactions. Be able to identify the symbols used during the Easter Season and explain their significance.

A.T.1    A.T.2

2a    2b  
2b    2c  
2c    2d  
3c

**Less able children will** know some stories that tell us about the Resurrection and that Jesus appeared to the disciples. Be able to identify some of the symbols used during the Easter Season.

1a    1a  
1b    1b  
1c

**More able children will** understand why the disciples reacted as they did to the empty tomb and the Risen Jesus and be able to describe what the stories tell us about the Risen Jesus.

3a    3b  
3c    3c  
3c    3d

## PROGRAMME OF STUDY

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

**C3** Become familiar with some ways the Church celebrates major seasons of the liturgical year.

**C5** Become familiar with signs and symbols used by the Church.

- Explain to the children that one of the most important stories in the Gospel is the Resurrection of Jesus.
  - Read *Luke 24: 1-12 and John 20: 1-18*.
  - Discuss the two accounts and make a list of their similarities.
  - Teacher to model being Mary Magdalene or Peter and explain what they saw and what happened at the tomb.
  - Children to prepare and ask questions which could be recorded in writing.
  - Children to write reactions to the story of the Resurrection as if they were Mary Magdalene or Peter.
  - Create posters proclaiming the Resurrection of Jesus.
  - Write a letter to a friend from one of the disciples explaining what took place at the tomb and the disciples thoughts and feelings.
  - What was it about the Risen Jesus that stopped Mary recognising Jesus at first? In what way do you think Jesus was different?
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- Discuss with the children how the Church celebrates the Season of Easter.
  - Explain that it is a celebration of 50 days with white or gold as the liturgical colour.
  - Identify with the children some of the symbols the Church uses to celebrate the Easter Season.
  - Cross with white cloth draped over it. What is the meaning of the white cloth? Look at the story of the Resurrection again. What does it say about the cloth?
  - Make a life size Easter cross for the classroom and use it in class liturgy.
  - Introduce children to the Paschal Candle and explain its meaning. Look at the 5 nails, why do you think 5 nails have been put in the candle? What do the nails contain? What do the nails tell us about Jesus? Can you think of another story when frankincense was brought to Jesus?
  - Look at the letters alpha and omega. What language do they come from? What do they mean? What do they tell us about Jesus?
  - In groups children work on making their own Easter candle. Use a variety of materials.
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- Show the children a video presentation of the lighting of the Paschal Candle at the Easter Vigil.
  - Water is an important symbol for Easter. Brainstorm different uses of water. What would happen without the gift of water? Where do we find Holy Water in the church building?
  - Talk to the children about water being essential to life and that the use of water in church is a reminder that Christians share in Christ's life.
  - Explain that Easter is a special time in the Church when water is blessed.
  - Create with the children an Easter liturgy using the symbols of the Easter cross, the Paschal Candle and Easter Water.
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- Children to recall a time when they missed out on doing something with a friend. What was it like when you found out what your friend was doing? Did you believe what they said they had done? How did you feel?
  - Read the story of Emmaus and Thomas refusing to believe.
  - In groups children to present an argument as the disciples who had seen the Risen Jesus, or as Thomas who would not believe.
  - What are your reasons for believing or not believing? Write statements in support of your point of view. Refer to any evidence that you might have.
  - Discuss the meaning of the word "doubt". Explore real life examples of people doubting sometimes.
  - Use an imaginative contemplation of Thomas meeting the Risen Jesus. Ask the children to imagine the reaction on his face and what Jesus looked like.
  - Create a storyboard of the meeting between Thomas and Jesus.
  - Create a role-play of this meeting. Emphasise the feelings of expectancy amongst the disciples and the doubts of Thomas.
  - Read the story of Emmaus. Find Emmaus on the map. How far is it from Jerusalem?
  - Why were the disciples leaving Jerusalem? How did they feel when the stranger first spoke to them? How did they feel by the end of the story? What had made the difference?
  - Imagine you were one of the two disciples who saw the Risen Jesus at Emmaus. What would you say to the other disciples when you got back to Jerusalem? Explore this through pictures and captions.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

**C3** Know the stories and events that surround the major Feasts of the Church year.

**C5** Of the significance and variety of signs and symbols in their own lives and in the life of the Church.

- Know that the disciples were totally surprised by the Resurrection of Jesus.
- Understand reasons why the disciples were so surprised to find Jesus alive again.

- That water, light and the colour white are special signs of Easter.

- Know two stories of the appearance of Jesus to his disciples, Emmaus and doubting Thomas.

- Think of reasons why Thomas found it hard to believe that Jesus was alive.

## FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Make a life size Easter tomb for the classroom, decorate with Easter symbols, flowers and prayers.

Find other images of the Risen Jesus on the cross.

## RELATED SCRIPTURE

*Lk. 24: 1-12*

*Jn. 20: 1-18* – The Stories of the Resurrection

*Lk. 24: 13-35* – The Story of the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

*Jn. 20: 24-29* – The Story of Thomas and Jesus

## OTHER LINKS

DT Links: Create an Easter Candle.

Science Links: Lots of references to water.

Geography links: Map work.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Use the Easter Candle and Easter Water during Collective Worship as symbols of the Resurrection.
- Learn some new Easter Songs rejoicing in the Resurrection of Christ.
- Have an image of the Risen Jesus as part of the prayer focus.

## EVALUATION

**What went well?**

**Which areas of planning need to be developed/adapted next time?**

**What needs to be revisited/developed in a later unit?**