

Surprised by Hope

Mary Magdalene stood crying outside the tomb. She was still weeping, when she stooped down and saw two angels inside. They were dressed in white and were sitting where Jesus' body had been. One was at the head and the other was at the foot. The angels asked Mary, "Why are you crying?"

She answered, "They have taken away my Lord's body! I don't know where they have put him."

As soon as Mary said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there. But she did not know who he was. Jesus asked her, "Why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener and said, "Sir, if you have taken his body away, please tell me, so I can go and get him."

Then Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned and said to him, "Rabboni." The Aramaic word "Rabboni" means "Teacher."

Jesus told her, "Don't hold on to me! I have not yet gone to the Father. But tell my disciples that I am going to the one who is my Father and my God, as well as your Father and your God." Mary Magdalene then went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord. She also told them what he had said to her.

John 20:11-18

I wonder how Mary felt when she first came to the tomb...

I wonder how Mary felt when she found the tomb empty and Jesus' body gone...

I wonder how Mary felt when two angels appeared and spoke to her...

I wonder how Mary felt when Jesus called her name...

I wonder how Mary felt when she went to tell the other disciples...

Here are some crayons and paper.

Make your own picture showing Mary and Jesus outside the empty tomb.

OR use the words to make a poem or prayer expressing how you feel in response to this story.

Surprised by Peace

I wonder how the disciples felt, hiding behind locked doors, thinking that Jesus was dead and buried...

I wonder whether they had heard the news from Mary, but were still afraid...

I wonder how they felt when Jesus appeared among them...

I wonder how they felt when he said, "Peace be with you" ...

I wonder how they felt when he showed them his wounded hands and side...

I wonder how they felt when he breathed on them and said "Receive the Holy Spirit" ...

Choose a picture card. Talk about what might have happened or what might be happening.

I wonder what would help bring peace to this situation...

I wonder what people might say or do to help...

I wonder if you know of any situations like this...

You are invited to light a candle and to say a prayer, aloud or silently, for people needing to be surprised by peace.

Surprised by Faith

I wonder why Thomas found it difficult to believe that Jesus was risen...

I wonder how I would have felt...

I wonder how the other disciples reacted to his doubt...

I wonder how Thomas felt when Jesus appeared to him...

What do you find it hard to believe?

Write down a question if you wish.

What helps give you faith?

Who helps give you faith?

What are some signs of new life that you see?

Choose a seed and hold it in your hand. Do you believe that this tiny thing can grow?

Take it home to plant in some soil. Water it and care for it. Be patient. See what happens.

Let it become for you a sign of new life this Easter.

Surprised by Life

Jesus later appeared to his disciples along the shore of Lake Tiberias. Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, and the brothers James and John, were there, together with two other disciples. Simon Peter said, "I'm going fishing!"

The others said, "We will go with you." They went out in their boat. But they didn't catch a thing that night. Early the next morning Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize who he was. Jesus shouted, "Friends, have you caught anything?" "No!" they answered.

So he told them, "Let your net down on the right side of your boat, and you will catch some fish." They did, and the net was so full of fish that they could not drag it up into the boat.

Jesus' favourite disciple told Peter, "It's the Lord!" When Simon heard that it was the Lord, he put on the clothes that he had taken off while he was working. Then he jumped into the water. The boat was only about a hundred yards from shore. So the other disciples stayed in the boat and dragged in the net full of fish.

When the disciples got out of the boat, they saw some bread and a charcoal fire with fish on it. Jesus told his disciples, "Bring some of the fish you just caught." Simon Peter got back into the boat and dragged the net to shore. In it were one hundred fifty-three large fish, but still the net did not rip.

Jesus said, "Come and eat!" But none of the disciples dared ask who he was. They knew he was the Lord. Jesus took the bread in his hands and gave some of it to his disciples. He did the same with the fish. This was the third time that Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from death.

When Jesus and his disciples had finished eating, he asked, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than the others do?"

Simon Peter answered, "Yes, Lord, you know I do!"

"Then feed my lambs," Jesus said.

Jesus asked a second time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter answered, "Yes, Lord, you know I love you!"

"Then take care of my sheep," Jesus told him.

Jesus asked a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt because Jesus had asked him three times if he loved him. So he told Jesus, "Lord, you know everything. You know I love you."

Jesus replied, "Feed my sheep."

Then he said to Peter, "Follow me!"