



Gospel Story: Seeing Is Believing

That night, when Jesus' friends were together, Jesus appeared—how he got in, nobody knew; the door was locked, because they were afraid. "Peace be with you," said Jesus. He hugged his friends.

Then he said something rather strange: "God sent me, and now I'm sending you. I'm giving you the power of the Holy Spirit, too. So if you forgive people's sins, they will be forgiven." Then he breathed on them. They looked the same, but something was different. They were filled with joy!

One friend who was not there was Thomas. He came later, when Jesus had already gone. "Thomas," said the friends. "We've seen Jesus. He's alive!"

"Jesus!" said Thomas. "That can't be! I don't believe you." *(Blow out the paschal candle.)* "I must see him myself," said Thomas. "I must touch his scars and see where they nailed him and pierced him." *(Uncover the cross.)* "Then I will believe that Jesus lives."

That very night Jesus came again to his friends. "Peace be with you," said Jesus. Then Jesus walked right over to Thomas. "Here I am, Thomas," said Jesus. "Touch me. Feel the marks of the cross on me." *(Take the cross into your hands. Hold it for a moment, then silently pass it around. Continue the story when all members have touched the cross.)*

"It is you, Jesus!" said Thomas. "I can feel you for myself. You're really alive!" *(Light the candle again.)* Then Thomas fell to his knees and said, "You are my Lord and my God."

Jesus said, "Now that you've seen me, you can believe, Thomas. Others—people who aren't even alive today—won't need to see me, and yet they'll believe. Happy are those people!"