

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



F A M I L I E S R E C L A I M I N G S U N D A Y

Read aloud: Acts 2:1-11
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13
Gospel: John 20:19-23

“DO ... RE ... ME ... FA... SOOOOOOOOOO ...”

“Mom, I’m going to go nuts!” Mary Clare lamented, as she came into the kitchen with her hands over her ears. “Who thought it would be a good idea to get Vincent a *trombone*?!”

Mom was laughing and cringing at the same time. “Well, we have to be patient with your brother, Dear,” she counseled. “It wasn’t much different when Peter took up the trumpet, or you took up the flute!”

“Do ... Re ... FAAAAAA ...”

“Ohhh ... that one hurt!” Mom shuddered.

Vincent was proudly practicing his new instrument before Mass this morning. It was three days now that the Paulines had listened to every breath Vincent took into his mouthpiece.

“Isn’t it nice that we get these opportunities to test our patience?” Mr. Pauline chuckled as he came into the kitchen.

“And isn’t it time for our Gospel reading for this morning?” piped in Mary Clare, sounding especially eager.

Dad looked at his watch. “Sure is,” he said to Mary Clare. “Gather up the family!”

The first person Mary Clare ran to get was Vincent, and then the others. Soon everyone was in the living room.

Dad read the Gospel of John, Chapter 20, for this Pentecost morning. Instead of straight reading, Dad stood in front of his family and read the passage with as much expression as he could:



*"On the evening of that first day of the week,
when the doors were locked, where the disciples were,
for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst
and said to them, "Peace be with you."*

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.

The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

[Jesus] said to them again, "Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit.

Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." "

(John 20:19-23)

"Cool, Dad! I liked the part where Jesus comes in even though the doors were locked." Lucy shouted. "A person like you or me couldn't walk through a door like that. Jesus had a new kind of body—a *glorified* body!"

Mary Clare added, "And the part about forgiving sins or holding them bound gave the disciples all the power to hear confessions and to baptize. Jesus tells them right out that '*as the Father has sent me, so I send you!*'" (*John 20:21b*)

Then Vincent exclaimed. "It was really neat how you breathed on us and said, '*Receive the Holy Spirit!*'" (*John 20:22b*) I could feel it all the way over here!"

"The action of breathing has always been important in Scripture," Dad said. "Remember that God breathed the breath of life into Adam in the book of Genesis; and in Acts, we hear how God gave breath and life to each one of us. Now, here in John, we receive the spiritual 'breath of life,' the Holy Spirit."

"Whoosh ..." Baby Ben blew, imitating the way his dad acted it out. "Whoosh ... again!"

"Hey, I could use that kind of wind when I blow into my trombone!"

"I never thought of it that way before, Vincent!" Dad perked up. "Every time I hear you practicing your trombone, I am just going to imagine the blowing, and the breath, and the wind of Pentecost! That's beautiful music indeed!"

"So, it's okay to practice a lot?" Vincent chirped, as he began blowing notes again. "Any time I want?"

Mom jumped right in. "Well, as rich as the wind imagery is, Vincent, Jesus also tells us in the reading, '*Peace be with you!*'" (*John 20:21a*)

And at the sound of that, the family rejoiced!

"As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

(John 20:21b)