

# My Lord and my God

## EASTER 2

**You will need:** a copy of the Bible passage.

- For the *Explore* section – the track 'I believe in miracles' by the Ramones, and the means to play it.

In **John 20.19-31** Thomas feels left out when the other disciples have seen the risen Jesus. Jesus comes again and Thomas recognises who Jesus truly is. He needs firm evidence that the person he sees is the same person who was crucified. Thomas proclaims his belief without actually touching Jesus and eventually is able to accept a personal relationship with Jesus, based on trust and faith.

*This is the third of nine Bible studies in which we explore how the Easter readings reveal different faces of Jesus.*

## Bible notes

The disciples were afraid of the Jews. Although they knew that Jesus had risen, they still did not understand the implications of the resurrection. For some reason Thomas was absent, and so when he is informed of Jesus' visit, he is sceptical. Not only does he need to see Jesus, he needs to touch him. He requires firm evidence that the person he sees is the same person who was crucified. Later, Jesus again appears through a closed door. Thomas proclaims his belief apparently without actually touching Jesus. Thomas goes further than the other disciples, who described Jesus as the Lord. Thomas calls Jesus 'My Lord and my God'. John describes this encounter as a sign (v.30), which is the word he uses for miracle, and his commentary is that Jesus cannot be seen in the same way, but it is important that he is believed in.

## Make connections

In this passage Thomas travels from doubt to belief to faith. It was not unreasonable to doubt. It did not make sense that Jesus should rise from the dead. What made the difference? Jesus offers Thomas peace, and Thomas realises not only that Jesus is whom they have said, but that he is someone to honour and trust. In what ways can we honour and trust Jesus today? It was in response to a question from Thomas that Jesus said he was the way, the truth and the life (John 14.6). Thomas expressed faith by describing a personal relationship with Jesus, whom he calls 'My Lord and my God'. Thomas now has peace. He has accepted a personal relationship with Jesus based on trust and obedience. Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus? What would it mean to you to say 'My Lord and my God'?

## Explore

### Think

Think about the important people in your life.

- Why are they important to you?
- Think about those you trust.
- On whom do you rely; whom do you believe?

### Ask

- Why do you trust, rely on and believe them?
- What does believing in Jesus mean to you? Is there any difference between belief and faith?
- What do you think John meant by describing the actions of Jesus as signs?

### Hope

There is a song by the Ramones with the lyric 'I believe in miracles. I believe in a better world for me and you.'

- If Jesus could offer you one thing in the way that he gave Thomas peace, what would you hope for?
- If Jesus could make one difference to the world, what difference would that be?

### Pray

Picture what you would like Jesus to bring about for you and for the world, and quietly pray Thomas' words. This is not a magic formula but it is a way of aligning you and your thoughts with those of Jesus.

My Lord and my God.