



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



easter



lectionary
reading

Cycle C

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

Lectionary #42

Reading I: Acts of the Apostles 10: 34a, 37-43

In this passage from the Acts of the Apostles, we see that Saint Peter developed such a strong conviction and faith that, despite opposition and persecution, he was willing to proclaim Jesus as Messiah. Through the resurrected Christ, the divine Spirit has come upon the disciples and given them such faith and **conviction** that they boldly move away from their fear to proclaim the risen Christ to the *ends of the earth*. The resurrection of Christ not only brings new life to Christ, but also invigorates and creates such **conviction** that the fearful doubters now enter into and become fearless witnesses to the Risen Christ.

Reading 2: Colossians 3: 1-4

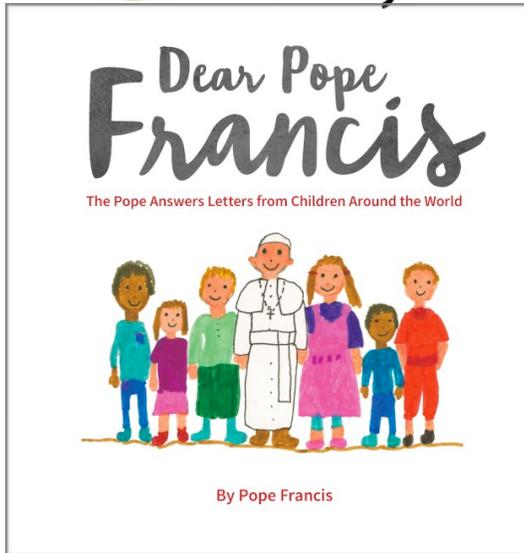
While Saint Paul did not establish the Church of Colossi, he was informed that individuals there were deviating from the foundational beliefs and practices established by the founder, Epaphras. Saint Paul seeks to correct these deviations and clarify the truths about Jesus. He reminds the people about the true identity and work of the one who they are following. In doing so, he reminds them of their **conviction** and faith in the true Christ.

Gospel: John 20: 1-9

In this passage, we encounter Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb *while it was still dark*. The movement out of darkness into light is the starting point from which Mary and the other disciples come to a **conviction** that something spectacular has occurred. Upon seeing the empty tomb, she runs to Peter and the beloved disciple and they investigate the scene. The Gospel account reports that when they see the empty tomb, the beloved disciple *saw and believed*. The beloved disciple is not named, and so can be anyone who places their trust and **conviction** in Jesus as the Messiah.



children's
story



Dear Pope Francis

Written by Pope Francis

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character
education
activity

**Con.vic.tion (noun): a firmly
held belief or opinion**

Dear Pope Francis

Faith is about seeking understanding, and that is why asking questions is so important. Gathered from more than 250 submissions, *Dear Pope Francis* is a collection of 30 letters from children all over the world. The handwritten letters and illustrations are reproduced on the lefthand pages, along with English translations and photos of each child. The pope's answers appear on the opposite page. The letters and responses will make you laugh and cry, and will help you continue to trust in the fact that God loves you.

Strengthening Your Conviction Means Asking Questions

Step One: Provide the students with paper that they can use to write a draft of their letter and ideas for pictures that they want to send to Pope Francis. Encourage them to come up with questions about their faith and the church that they might have for Pope Francis.

Step Two: Provide the students with heavy duty card stock so that they can create a final draft of their letter and draw a picture to send to Pope Francis.

Step Three: Help the students find an envelope and address their letters to Pope Francis.

Step Four: Have each student share their question and their letter and drawing with their classmates.

**Our convictions
determine our conduct.
They motivate us to
take a stand and act
according to our
values.
-Rev. Rick Warren**



case study

**Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.**

What could you do today?

Tell your family and friends about the exercise that you did in class, and share your question, letter, and drawing with them. Ask them if they have ever had questions about their faith. If they were able to ask Pope Francis a question, what would that question be?

Look Feel Know Act

Faith is a lot like having a **conviction**, or a very strong belief, about something. During this Easter season and throughout our experience as Christians, we believe that Jesus was born and lived among us as one who came to express God's love. His love allowed him to serve us, to suffer and die for us, and to be raised from the dead. As we grow in our faith, we are more and more **convinced** of these mysteries and allow them to motivate us to live in a loving and peaceful manner. As we grow deeper in our belief, we come to feel and experience the Risen Christ all around us and live our lives in a way that expresses God's love for the world. Faith and **conviction** are love in action.



closing tool

In the Scriptures passages chosen for this Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord, we follow individuals such as Mary Magdalene, Peter, and the beloved disciple as they are mystified and come to a **conviction** that Jesus has risen from the dead. In *Dear Pope Francis*, we see that there are children (and adults) all over the world who have questions and seek answers about their faith. Many times, people think that being a person of faith and **conviction** is just something that happens, but in reality, being a faithful person requires us to live with questions and allow answers to find us.

Lord God, I give you praise for you have given me this gift of faith. Help me, O Lord, in nurturing it so that I may live with a firm conviction so that I might be motivated to speak the truth and live out the values that I hold onto. Amen.



**Santa Clara
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