

# All Things Visible and Invisible – A Lesson Plan on Believing

This reflection will help youth think about what it means to believe in something which can't be seen. How do we know it is real?

## Opening for Lesson Plan on Believing

Imagine that you meet someone from another country (or another planet!) who has never used the internet. He asks you a question about how many people live in your city. You look it up on your phone and tell him.

*(If possible, have a couple of leaders act this out.)*

“How do you know that?” he asks.

“I looked it up on the internet.”

“Where is that? Can I see it?”

You show him your phone. “See it is here?”

“But that is just your phone. Where is the internet?”

“It is everywhere, you can't really see it?”

“Then why do you believe in it? And how do you know the answer you gave me is right?”

- What would you say to this person?
- Why do you think it is easy to believe that the Internet is real?
- Why do you trust the information you get from the Internet?
- What are some other things you believe in even though you can't see them? (electricity, the wind, angels, air, emotions, wi-fi)

Read the gospel reading.

## Scripture Reading for Lesson Plan on Believing

[John 20:19-31](#) (Jesus Helps Thomas Believe) – the Gospel Reading for the [Second Sunday of Easter](#) (Sunday of Divine Mercy) – Years A, B, and C

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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."

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord."

But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them.

Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe."

Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

[John 20:19-31](#)

## **Discussion for the All Things Visible and Invisible Lesson Plan**

Thomas found it difficult to believe the story that the other apostles were telling him. It didn't seem possible that he could be alive. They had seen him die. But now he was being asked to believe something he hadn't seen. And it didn't make sense. Really, we would probably have a similar reaction to news like that.

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Thomas just can't believe it.

But, the good news is that Jesus doesn't write him off. Instead, he makes another visit. And he helps Thomas believe. Jesus still bears the scars of his crucifixion. These are the wounds of abandonment and betrayal. And he lets Thomas touch these scars. What an act of intimacy and love Jesus shows to Thomas!

St. Thomas will forever be known as "Doubting Thomas". But he went on to be a missionary in the East. Church tradition tells us he left the comfort of all he knew and went as far as India, eventually dying there. This should give us great hope that even though we may doubt, with the help of the Lord we can still be saints.

There might be things we have a hard time believing in. Perhaps we don't really believe that God loves us, warts and all. Maybe we think there is something we have done which we don't trust to bring to God to be forgiven. Like Jesus we could have wounds from those we love. But maybe we don't believe he can heal those wounds. Or maybe it is something else.

## Reflection Questions for the Lesson Plan on Believing

- Why do you think it is difficult to believe?
- Is there anything that the Catholic Church teaches which you struggle to believe in?
- Is there a specific way you would like to grow in your faith life?

## Challenge for the All Things Visible and Invisible Lesson Plan

This week, pick one area of your life where you are having difficulty believing or would like to increase your faith. Every morning and evening, think of that aspect of your faith and pray the prayer from Mark 9:24 : "Lord I believe. Help my unbelief."

And then trust and believe that God hears your prayer.

## Prayer for the Lesson Plan on Believing

Conclude by praying the [Litany of Belief](#).

## More Resources

- [More Lesson Plans](#)
- [Learn how to turn your parish into a welcoming community](#)
- [Read a story about amazing faith during imprisonment in Russia](#)