

AUDIO RETREAT

Easter People audio retreat 2023 | Week Three | Jesus enters the closed room
[John 20.19-23]

Prayer and reflection resource



When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you'.

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then, the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you.'

After this he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

[John 20.19-23]

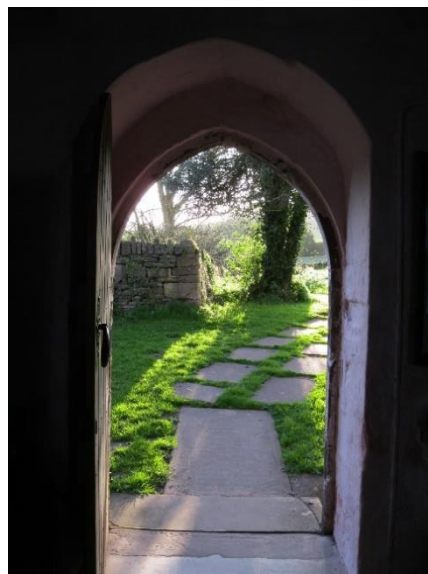
Imagine yourself in this room where the disciples are gathered. Use your senses to help enter the scene.

- Look around the room: What does it look like? Where does the light fall? Who is in the room? Where are they and what are they doing? Where are you in the room?
- What sounds can you hear: noises from the street outside, the conversation of those gathered with you?
- What are you feeling as you are in the room?

Now, Jesus enters the room. Perhaps you sense first a change in the light or the atmosphere. Perhaps it is his voice you first recognise: "Peace be with you". **What's happening for you as you hear those words?**

Now, he moves around the room, breathing out upon everyone there. Now he looks at you and breathes upon you, saying "Receive the Holy Spirit". **What do you feel in this moment?**

Now, he sends you out of the room and into the light of the day. **What is happening within you as you move from indoors to outdoors?**



"What I do is me: for that I came"

Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves — goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,
Crying, *Whát I dó is me: for that I came.*

- Part of the poem 'As Kingfishers Catch Fire' by Gerard Manley Hopkins

In your own time, ask yourself these questions:

- When do you feel most at home with yourself?
- What work gives you the most joy?
- What do you feel passionate about?
- What expression of yourself keeps breaking through?
- What do other people seem to appreciate about you?
- What is something that comes from you naturally and freely, even when no-one demands it of you?

Is there a direction, step or self-expression that your answers to these questions suggest?

Exchanging labels for your name

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are mine. [Isaiah 43.1-4]

What labels have attached to you over time, whether from how people have responded to you, or how you see yourself? It might help to write them down.

Listen to God calling you by your name. Now look at these labels, one by one. Do they belong? Do they limit and confine you in some way? Maybe, it's time to rip those labels off!