

19th April – 2nd Sunday of Easter

The Lord be with you

Collect:

Risen Christ,
for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred:
open the doors of our hearts,
that we may seek the good of others
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,
to the praise of God the Father.

1st Reading : Acts 2 14, 22-32

Peter Addresses the Crowd

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

Fellow Israelites listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him:

“I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,
I will not be shaken.

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;

my body also will rest in hope,
because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
you will not let your holy one see decay.

You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.

Gospel Reading: John 20 19-end

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again, Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Jesus Appears to Thomas

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So, the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

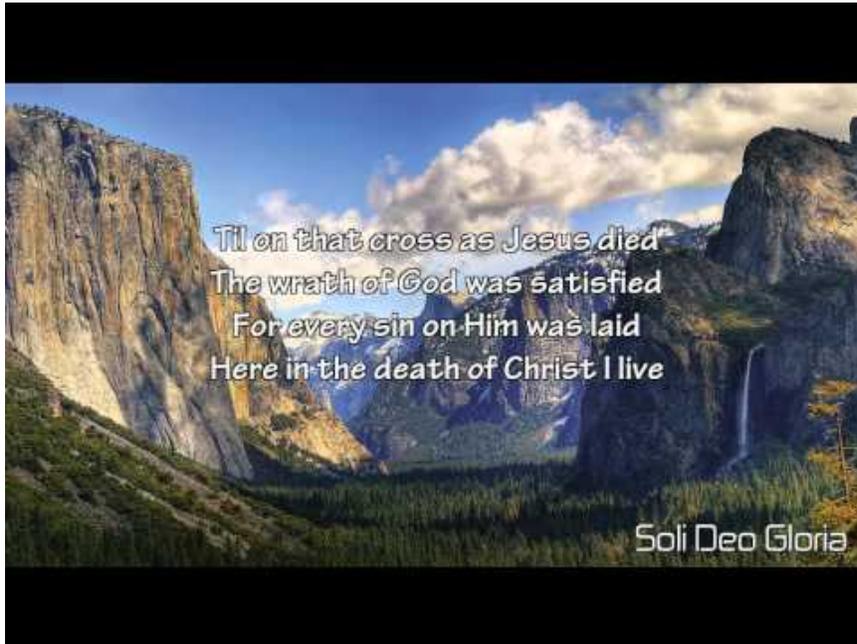
Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Hymn: In Christ alone- Stuart Townsend



In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,

**For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ**

**No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.**

Homily



Prayer

Heavenly Father, Risen Christ, our eternal Savior,

Like the disciples, we are virtually gathered the week after Easter: wondering whether it is true, marveling at the possibility, and daring to hope.

Like the disciples, we too are sometimes afraid, sometimes full of doubt.

But in your extravagant generosity, your boundless love, you appear to us in our fear and love us in our doubts and grant us the oceans of your peace. Thank you for loving us.

Teach us not to hide from our doubt, but to recognize it as a door to mystery and to deeper faith. After all, the disciples' fear became a visitation as they saw you among them, risen and triumphant. Thomas' doubt became a moment of revelation as he saw and finally believed.

This morning we pray for the many people in our society who understandably in the midst of fear from losing loved ones from Covid 19 are struggling with their faith, Grant us the courage to live as witnesses to your resurrection. Risen Christ be light in our world.

We pray for those in our community this morning who find it difficult to believe. Lord knows that they are not alone, but in the best of company: even Christ's own disciples struggled to believe all that they had seen and heard. Loving Christ, it is your presence that removes all fear and erases all doubts: so come, and grant the doubting Thomas or rather 'honest' Thomas's in our midst your presence & peace.

And grant to all of us, living Lord Christ, renewed faith, great courage, and your boundless peace.

Loving God, we pray for those who are on our hearts this morning and lift them to you.

Merciful Father, Accept these prayers for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

Melvin's chosen Voluntary

