



Sunday 12th April 2026

The Second Sunday of April

Gospel Reading

John 20.19-end

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

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 has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said 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.'

Jesus and Thomas

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told 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 in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

The Purpose of This Book

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

Other Readings: Exodus 14:10-end, 15.20-21

Acts 2.14, 22-32

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1.3-9

Homily

Another name for the second Sunday of Easter is Low Sunday – perhaps because after all the excitement and drama of Holy Week and the celebration of Easter itself the Sunday after, despite the continuing extra “Alleluias”, is a bit of an anti climax. Or perhaps because many people involved in church life, lay and ordained, might be really quite tired at this point! In

any case the picture of the disciples we get in our Gospel reading is not a particularly triumphant one initially. It is of a fearful group shut away behind closed doors, uncertain of what the future might hold and what they should do next.

If that sounds too gloomy, we might perhaps take encouragement that in this triumphant and joyful season for Christians, there is still space to consider and make space for human frailty and doubt and to seek the healing of those aspects of our nature through Christ. We are living through some challenging times in our communities and in our world and not to acknowledge that and the effect that it might have on us, is to deny an aspect of our humanity that Christ heals and redeems. At its heart the Gospel is very honest about human nature and the struggles we face in our seeking to know God, to discover truth and to journey with the Lord in faith.

Fear and doubt often come when we feel vulnerable, but faith may be strengthened when, having exhausted our own resources, we turn to God and acknowledge our need of him, his deep and abiding love and his salvation and redemption.

Thomas' doubts are understandable, genuine and human. Jesus recognises Thomas' deep need and gives him what he needs to find the truth he seeks. Thomas' doubts and his human responses to Jesus become part of the Gospel story, part of the good news which is written

“so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.”

So in a world which gives us much cause for doubt and maybe even despair, perhaps we can hold on to the fact that God is still there and Jesus still shows up for us even in our darkest moments. Rather than closing down we might tentatively and honestly bring our doubts and fears into God's presence, into the transforming light of the resurrection.

Peace is also offered to the disciples and to us in this Gospel passage, peace from the ultimate and lasting source of peace. As well as peace the gift of the Holy Spirit is received. This rather anxious and traumatised group are given new hope and new energy to spread the good news. We too are empowered by the Living Spirit to share that good news in whatever way we are able right now, whilst remembering that this is a team effort and good news is more likely to be heard if we are kind to ourselves and others! Even if it is Low Sunday and even if that sums up how we feel we can hopefully take heart and join in with Christians here on earth and those who have gone before us when we say

“Christ is risen, he is risen indeed, Alleluia!”

Conversation Questions

1. How are you feeling today? Can you find some time this week to acknowledge those feelings, positive, negative or maybe a mixture, and speak about them to God in prayer?
2. Do you recognise that having doubts is a normal part of being human or is doubt something you avoid? Can doubts have a positive influence on our lives?
3. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you? What is it?
4. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

Collect of the day

*Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

(or)

*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.*

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