

# Sunday Message

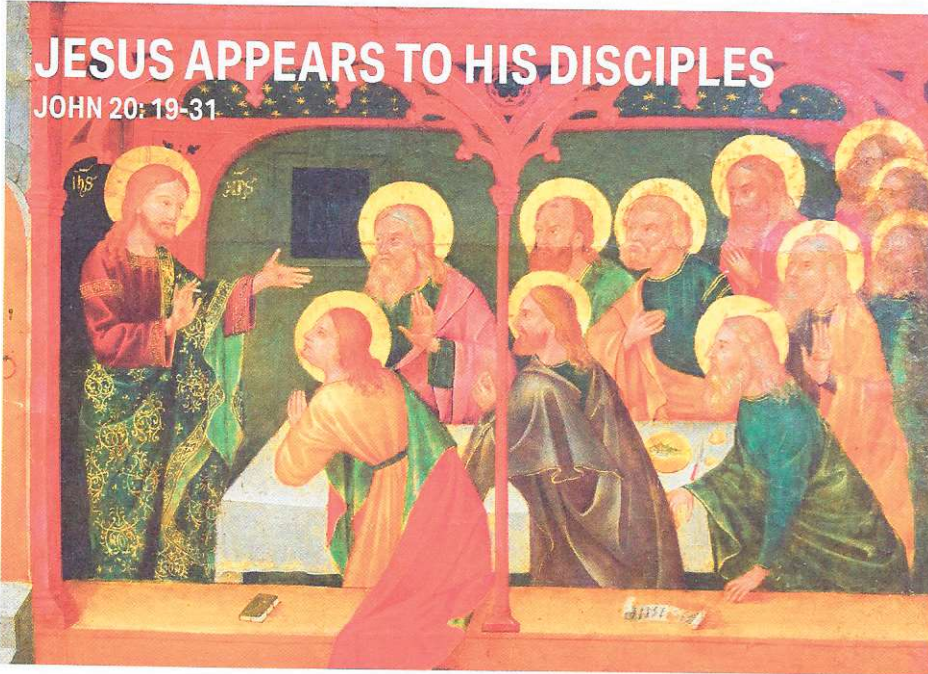
2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE WORD

Year C • 27th April 2025 • Psalter Week 2

## JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES

JOHN 20: 19-31



In today's Gospel the disciples are gathered in a locked room. You can imagine how scared they are, and the recent violence has made them security conscious. They have run away from society and are left pondering the question, 'what happens next?'

The atmosphere is charged with fear and yet, for all their defensiveness, they cannot keep out the love of the risen Christ. Jesus seeks them out and he appears in their midst. The encounter is framed by Christ's offer of peace and love. The response of the disciples is one of joy. For the evangelist John, Easter Sunday is Pentecost and the gift of the Spirit is the breath of the risen Christ. The disciples breathe in and the Spirit becomes part of their lives. But Thomas is missing and when he arrives to hear the story, he refuses to believe. Thomas is an interesting character. He is part of the group but he is also very independent. He can think for himself. Scripture scholar Denis McBride states that for Thomas, honesty is more important than loyalty. His doubt cannot be transformed into faith by willing it. The other disciples only come to believe in the risen Jesus when they see him. Thomas comes to believe in the risen Christ in the same way the disciples do. He stands for all those who have not seen the Lord but are asked to believe in him. ■

## REFLECT

Everybody has some kind of faith. Think about the countless people who pass through airports on an annual basis. They journey through the web of passages that eventually brings them to a cigar shaped aluminium tube, also known as an airplane. With its engines and travelling at incredible speeds 35,000 feet above the earth, most passengers don't really understand much of what's happening, but are content to have faith that it will all work!

The main character in today's Gospel is the famous Doubting Thomas. The admirable quality he brings to the gathering is his questioning mind. He's not casual about his faith and belief in Jesus. Everybody in the locked room is called to believe in the risen Christ and witness the wounds of Christ and his greeting, 'peace be with you.' For Thomas, the signs and miracles of Jesus during his public ministry are one thing, but it's quite another to encounter Jesus risen from the dead. Like Thomas, we are all free to question and to react to God's works in our own way. Thomas was broken-hearted when Jesus was crucified and buried. He possibly wanted to be alone in his grief, needing time to process the events that unfolded. But there is something admirable about Thomas. Remember, it had been Thomas' wish for himself and the other apostles to go to die with Jesus. In today's encounter, he professes his faith once again with the words, 'My Lord and my God.' ■

## DO

The Church must constantly be in appreciation of the missionary work that has gone before us. Take the opportunity this week to read about the missionary life of a lay person or religious. What inspiration can you gather from their stories?

## LEARN

'Only the certainty that the Crucified Christ lives on as the Risen Christ, glorified by God, gives us the solution to the riddle of Jesus as a person and makes the Church possible and real.'

(Fr. Hans Kung)



## SAY

'Sweetest Jesus,  
Body and Blood most Holy,  
be the delight and pleasure of my soul,  
my strength and salvation in all temptations,  
my joy and peace in every trial,  
my light and guide in every word and deed,  
and my final protection in death.  
Amen'

St. Thomas Aquinas  
(The Aquinas Prayer Book)



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*Like newborn infants, you must long for the pure, spiritual milk, that in him you may grow to salvation, alleluia.*

Or

*Receive the joy of your glory, giving thanks to God, who has called you into the heavenly kingdom, alleluia.*

**COLLECT**

God of everlasting mercy,  
who, in the very recurrence of the paschal feast  
kindle the faith of the people you have made your own,  
increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed,  
that all may grasp and rightly understand  
in what font they have been washed,  
by whose Spirit they have been reborn,  
by whose Blood they have been redeemed.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Acts 5:12-16

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the Apostles. And they were all together in the Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns round Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 118(117):2-4, 22-24, 25-27a. R. 1

**R: Give praise to the LORD for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.**

Or **Alleluia.**

1. Let the house of Israel say,  
'His mercy endures for ever.'  
Let the house of Aaron say,  
'His mercy endures for ever.'  
Let those who fear the LORD say,  
'His mercy endures for ever.' **R.**
2. The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone.  
By the LORD has this been done,  
a marvel in our eyes.  
This is the day the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice in it and be glad. **R.**
3. We beseech you, O LORD, grant salvation;  
we beseech you, O LORD, grant success.  
Blest is he who comes  
in the name of the LORD.  
We bless you from the house of the LORD;  
the LORD is God, and has given us light. **R.**

**SECOND READING** Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

A reading from the Book of Revelation.

I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the LORD's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, 'Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches.'

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash round his chest. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, 'Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL** John 20:29

**R: Alleluia, Alleluia.**

You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

**R: Alleluia.**

**GOSPEL** John 20:19-31

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.' And 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 withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.'

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, 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 in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.'

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although 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, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, 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 believed.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, O Lord, we pray,  
the oblations of your people  
(and of those you have brought to new birth),  
that, renewed by confession of your name and by Baptism,  
they may attain unending happiness.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

*Bring your hand and feel the place of the nails,  
and do not be unbelieving but believing, alleluia.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that our reception of this paschal Sacrament  
may have a continuing effect  
in our minds and hearts.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**