

Church of the Divine Love
SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER
APRIL 27, 2025 10:15 AM
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

A Morning Prayer – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Acts 5:27-32**

Psalm 150

Second Lesson: **Revelation 1:4-8**

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **John 20:19-31**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Confession page 360

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer B	page 367
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn #	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace (on insert)	
Prayer for the Parish	page 817
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #	
Dismissal	

Acts 5: 27-32; Psalm 150; Revelation 1: 4-8; John 20:19-31.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, “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.” That one sentence has left Thomas forever labeled Doubting Thomas. That's the Thomas with whom we are most familiar. Maybe, however, there's another side to Thomas, a twin, that we often overlook. That's the Thomas that wants to believe. That's the Thomas Jesus comes to in today's gospel.

This is a story about believing, not doubting. If it tells us anything it tells us that resurrection is difficult to accept, to believe. It's not just an idea or a fact to which we give agreement or assent. It is a whole new way of being. If we're not wrestling with what resurrection means, it's place in our life, and how it manifests itself then maybe it's just not that real for us. Thomas may be the one that gets labeled but the other disciples also reveal the difficulty of believing. On the evening of the first day of the week, the day Jesus was resurrected, they are hiding. God opened the tomb and they locked the doors. God emptied the tomb and they filled the house. Jesus appears to them in their locked room. He speaks to them. He breathes life into them. A week later they are in the same place, behind the same locked doors. Not much has changed.

Every time, however, we shut the doors of our life, our mind, or our heart we imprison ourselves. For every person, event, or idea we lock out, regardless of the reason, we lock ourselves in. That's what has happened to the disciples in today's gospel. It is Easter evening, the first day of the week, the day of the resurrection, the day they saw the empty tomb, the day Mary Magdalene announced, **"I have seen the Lord."** The disciples are gathered in the house, the doors are locked with fear. A week later they are in the same place. It is the same house, the same walls, the same closed doors, the same locks. Nothing much has changed. Despite how we've labeled him Thomas is not doubting. He is struggling with how to believe and what to believe in. He wants to see and touch for only one reason. So that he too might believe. There's something faithful and authentic about that. It's a struggle most of us probably know. What do you want to believe about Jesus' resurrection? What gets in the way? What makes it difficult to believe? How are you wrestling and struggling with the resurrection of Jesus in your life?

I want to believe that Jesus' resurrection offers peace but I see wars across the world, families in conflict, and relationships broken. I want to believe that Jesus' resurrection overcomes death but I still cry for and feel the absence and loss of my mother and my father. I want to believe that Jesus' resurrection is real but I don't see much difference between my life this week compared to the week before Easter. Most of you can probably make similar statements about how your belief doesn't really fit with what you see and experience. We can quickly and easily get to the same place as Thomas. I know I can. Unless I see wars cease, conflict resolved, and relationships reconciled, I will not believe. Unless I feel my father's presence, the tears dry up, and the pain goes away, I will not believe. We're not all that different from Thomas. We each live with at least one **"unless clause."** Unless I see, unless I touch, unless I feel, unless I experience, I will not believe. It reveals our struggle and desire to believe. It also reveals our misunderstanding of faith and the resurrection.

Far too often we condition the resurrection not on the power of God but on the sufficiency of the evidence. Each condition becomes just another lock on the door. It won't keep Jesus out but it will keep us trapped inside and it won't be long before our house becomes our tomb. Thomas has put conditions on his faith, his believing. He wants tangible evidence that can be seen and touched. He wants objective proof that is consistent with the testimony of his companions. In some ways it is difficult to fault Thomas. We are not so different from him. We live in a world that relies on the marks of the nails. And I suspect most of us have our own **"unless clause."** We want something tangible in order to believe. It is the basis for our legal system. Give the jury evidence so they will believe you. Scientists make a conclusion based on observable data. Doctors use test results to make an objective diagnosis. Parents want to see their child's report card as proof of learning. Like Thomas we live in a world where seeing is believing. So, Thomas' request is not that unusual. In fact, he does not ask for anything the other disciples did not have. Just the week before, on the evening of the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the other disciples. **"Peace be with you,"** he said. Then he showed them his hands and his side and they rejoiced when they saw the Lord. He breathed on them giving them the Holy Spirit and then sent them out.

And yet, one week later those same disciples are in the same place. They are in the same house, behind the same locked door, in the same fear. How was their life changed? What did seeing do for them? Not much, it seems. Seeing is believing may work for scientists, the legal system, doctors, and report cards. It works pretty well for the world around us but not so well for the world within us. Seeing is believing just does not work when it comes to ultimate matters, matters of the heart. It simply does not apply to things like faith, love, relationships, real life, or resurrection. The resurrection of Christ does not meet our conditions. It empowers and enables us to meet our conditions. It lets us unlock the doors and step outside even when we don't know what is on the other side. The resurrection does not end wars. It reveals the sanctity and dignity of life so that we might speak and work for justice, freedom, and peace. It is the compassion behind the tears we weep and the prayers we offer for all who are victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression. The resurrection does not magically fix relationships. It is the energy and perseverance behind our work to reconcile relationships and resolve conflict. It is the power by which we love our neighbor as ourselves. The resurrection does not eliminate our pain or tears over the death of a loved one. It is the strength to meet the days to come with steadfastness and patience; not sorrowing as those without hope but in thankful remembrance of God's great goodness, and in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those we love. The resurrection does not offer measurable results, productivity, or efficiency. It guarantees our life and our future with God. Resurrection is not an idea to be grasped or a case to be proved. It is a life to be lived. Every time we live in the power of the resurrection we engage the world, one another, and our life in a new way. We move from saying, "**Unless...**," to saying, "**My Lord and my God.**"

I don't know if Thomas put his finger in the mark of the nails or his hand in Jesus' side. St. John doesn't say and for good reason. It doesn't really matter what Thomas did. That's not the issue. This story isn't about Thomas. It's about us. How will we live? What will we do? Have we come to believe? Believing is not simply an intellectual agreement or acceptance of a fact. Believing itself becomes a way of seeing, a way of being, a way of loving, a way of living, a way of dying, and ultimately, the way of blessing. **Amen.**

All baptized Christians, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church.

2 EASTER	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
TUESDAY		NO BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP

SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
3 EASTER	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
		VESTRY MEETING

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Jess Berbeck
Coffee Hour	Janet Croft	Nolans

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Jess
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Art
Chris Dickson	John Roccoo	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Bobby
Manetta Family	Robert Hosey	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Dorothy	Del
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Aidan

Sally & Roger	Vincent & Barbara	Ciara
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Sophia
Michael & Family	Kristen	Mo
Michelle & Baby	Christopher	Annie
Jerry & Family	Shannon & Family	Donna A.
Moises Parra	Misael Varas	Joseph

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.

The homeless and food insecure.

Help us to speak word of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.

Bring us, with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email

Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

A Morning Prayer

Father in heaven, I stand ready to receive Your wisdom and guidance. In each decision, big or small, lead me to discern your will and to act accordingly. Help me to understand the depth of Your wisdom, finding guidance in Your word and through prayer. Teach me to be patient as I wait for Your direction, trusting that Your timing is

perfect. May I navigate this day with the assurance that
Your wisdom is a treasure far greater than any earthly
knowledge. Guide my thoughts and actions, that they may
be a reflection of Your discernment and love. In Your
guidance, I find the path to a life of purpose and peace.
Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

(Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
And third verse starting with Spirit.)

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen

