

Gospel Lesson for the Week

April 30, 2008

Second Sunday of Easter

Please Read

[John 20:19-31](#)

Read also

[Acts 2:14a](#)

[Acts 22-32](#)

[Psalm 16](#)

[1 Peter 1:3-9](#)

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." 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."

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.

Do you identify with Thomas? I do. This passage, and Eastertide in general, is a reminder to us all that in moments of doubt and fear, the Risen Christ has a way of breaking into life, transforming our dark times into radiant opportunities that evoke from us our exclamations of awe-filled wonder and delighted surprise.

A Prayer for Dark and Fearful Moments

Lord, come to me
amid the obscurity of my nighttime
when darkness shrouds my day
and overlays my heart;
when fear locks the door to real living
and life hangs tentatively, uncertainly.

Come, breach the barrier
Come, stand before me.
Come, speak Peace, your Peace,
to calm my troubled heart.
Come, show me your wounds,
reminding me that you
shared our humanity and felt our pain.

Breathe upon me;
let your Spirit penetrate every pore,
cleansing and transforming
my unforgiving heart.

Come to me in my unbelief.
When doubt clouds my eyes,
sweep away the cataracts.
Equip me with the clarity of vision
that enables me to discern your presence
in every time and place.

Grant to me the imagination
to reach out and touch you
beyond mere flesh.

And in wonder and delight,
with wide eyes and hushed whisper,
I will say,
"My Lord and my God!"

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