

2nd Sunday of Easter A

The faithful all lived together, and owned everything in common. They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously. (Ac 2:44.46)



First Reading

Acts 2:42-47

These (the new converts) remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together, and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

Second Reading

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you loved him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious, that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you," and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you." After saying this he breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained."

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, "We have seen the Lord," he answered, "Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe." Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, "Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe." Thomas replied, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him: "You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe."

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

Meditation

"We have seen the Lord!" The risen Lord appeared to his disciples. Only Thomas was absent. Jesus showed them the wounds of his passion, shared with them his peace, and breathed on them the Spirit who would bring the work of salvation to fulfilment through them. But Thomas, who shared the experience only by hearsay, demanded physical proof.

We are surprised by his change of heart. Accepting the risk of faith is not easy. Thomas reminds us of ourselves with our need to touch. He mistrusts any claim upon his faith not rooted in daily experience. The Lord accepts this need. Eight days later he takes Thomas at his word and gives in to his demand, "Put your hand into my side. Do not persist in your unbelief, but believe!"

Shall we, the believers of the twentieth century, remain unmoved by the liturgical celebration of the Easter season? Are we content simply to repeat, "Blest are they who have not seen and have believed?" Thomas' experience must become ours. We must strive to make tangible the power of the resurrection in our lives. We must allow the power of the Lord to heal the wounds begotten by oppression. Our sense of wonder leaves us open to the surprise of faith. Thus we can believe in the seemingly impossible and do all we can to give flesh to our hope. May we so live that Jesus becomes for each of us, "my Lord and my God!"