

John 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

24 Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

L: The Word Of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

- It is Easter Sunday evening.
 - The disciples are still grieving, confused, and afraid.
 - Jesus appears to them and offers them peace, breathes on them the Holy Spirit, and sends them out to proclaim the forgiveness of sins.
- When the disciples tell Thomas, he is reluctant to believe. He has to see for himself.
 - However, Thomas is present the next Sunday evening, when Jesus appears again. Jesus gives Thomas the assurance that he needs in order to believe.
- Notice some things...
 - Thomas remained in the community.
 - Thomas was open to the experience.
 - Thomas responded in faith.
- We can each have a new, or renewed, encounter with Jesus, if we stay in community, if we are open to the experience, and if we respond in faith. Then we also can say, "We have seen" the Lord.