

The Parish of  
**STONY  
 STRATFORD**  
 with  
**CALVERTON**



**THE PARISH NEWSLETTER**  
**2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
**SUNDAY 3rd April AD 2016**

The Holy Gospel that the Liturgy presents to us on this second Sunday of Easter, is one of the most well known, discussed, and appreciated - the meeting of the Risen Lord with St Thomas. The Fathers of the Church have given us numerous insights into this Gospel text. Likewise, it is has proven the inspiration to the numerous artists who have physically represented the events of this Gospel in order to give us a clear idea of what happened, 'eight days after' the first apparition of the Risen Lord, to the disciples gathered in the Upper Room.

Jesus' response to Thomas, after he recognised Him as 'My Lord and my God', has a mysterious fascination that must relate not so much to the disciples - those who 'have seen' - but rather to those, like us, who were added to their number afterwards. 'You have come to believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.' (John 20:29)

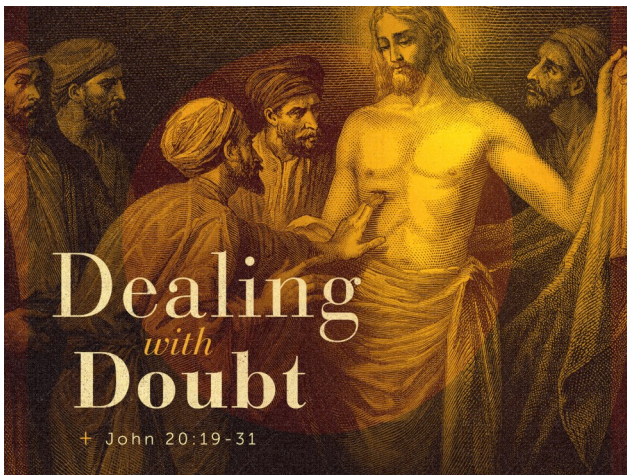
The attention that these words evoke seems yet more paradoxical if we remember that the Lord had proposed, to the same author of the Gospel, what can be justly referred to as the Christian method, 'come and see' (John 1:39). How can we possibly reconcile these two phrases by Jesus that from the ideal setting for the whole of the fourth Gospel? Perhaps, in the end, the Lord decided to change His method? What do the words 'have not seen' really mean?

The timely recollection of the 'eight days after,' which is the Sunday after the Resurrection, permits us to tie our reflection to one of the most significant Eucharistic hymns composed by another Thomas, St Thomas Aquinas. In the *Adore Te Devote*, which refers to the Eucharist, we read: 'Sight, touch, taste are all deceived in their judgement of you. But hearing suffices firmly to believe'. Combining these words with today's Gospel we can justly affirm that the experience 'to see' was not denied to us, but it is in contrast with the Apostle Thomas' physical experience, who was able to put his own finger into the holes in Christ's hands and side, whilst we can only comprehend it in the faith which is guarded and transmitted by the Church, our Mother and Teacher.

That which we 'have not seen' is therefore the glorious Body of the Risen One. However, today we have the ability to 'listen' to the Word of God and the Magisterium of the Church and so we can 'see' the real Body of Christ which is the Eucharist. We can 'see' His Mystical Body which is the Church. We can 'see' Him in our lives and in the lives of our many brothers and sisters who, after meeting the Lord in a real but mysterious way, are united to Him in His Spirit!

Like Thomas, Christ calls us to fill the holes left by the instruments of the passion in His Body with our own hands so that our lives and the verbal witness that we give proclaim His Resurrection. Our senses could betray us, but we know that we have met the Risen One and we have recognised Him!

The certain hope that Peter, who betrayed the Lord three times for fear of death, proclaims to us with the words, 'rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy' (1 Peter 1:8), become fully comprehensible because blessed are they that 'have not seen' the Risen Lord, but seeing the joy of His disciples 'have believed' in Him!



**THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH**

**TODAY:** **2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
**9:30am PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**  
**11:00am FAMILY MASS at All Saints**  
 Pray for: Our Parish

**Monday:** **The Annunciation of the Lord**  
 9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in Parish Hall  
 8:00pm Bell Ringing Practice  
 Pray that: we may welcome Christ

**Tuesday:** **Feria**  
**10:30am Mass at All Saints + 'Elevenses'**  
 Pray for: The Sick, Housebound and handicapped

**Wednesday Feria**  
 6:30pm Handbell Ringing Practice at SMSG School  
 7:15pm The Band - Practice at SMSG School  
**7:30pm Mass at St Mary & St Giles**  
 7:30pm Ladies Group  
 Pray for: For those on Retreat

**Friday:** **Feria**  
 7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal  
 Pray that: the Homeless and Unemployed

**Next Sunday: 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
**9:30am PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**  
**11:00am FAMILY MASS at All Saints**  
 Pray for: Our Parish

**READINGS NEXT SUNDAY 3rd Sunday of Easter**  
 1st Reading: Acts 5:27b-32, 40b-41  
 Psalm: 30 (part)  
 2nd Reading: Revelation 5:11-14  
 Gospel: John 20:1-19

**PARISH NOTICES**

Organ News: we are celebrating the restoration of the Willis pipe organ with its re-dedication on 1 May at the 9:30 am Parish Mass by the Bishop. A series of inaugural concerts will subsequently take place - for choir with organ, organ solo and organ with orchestra. The Open University choir will sing with the Willis organ on 23rd April for the first choral concert with organ, Jonathan Kingston a week later on 30th April for the first organ recital concert and MK Sinfonia on 2nd July for the first ever orchestral performance with the organ now that it is at concert pitch. Posters and flyers are available to take and display. Please see Anna if you wish to obtain a concert ticket as sales are going very well. More news on the display boards.

**Very advanced notice!** 60 seats for the pantomime Dick Whittington have been booked at Milton Keynes Theatre for Tuesday, 3rd January 2017 at 6pm. The tickets are still £18 (and free to accompanied children who are part of our congregations). Reservations can be made anytime - see Lesley Salter.

# MASS TEXTS PROPER TO TODAY'S OBSERVANCE

## Reflection prior to Mass

The Mass is studded with calls to give praise and thanks: 'Let us give thanks .... it is right to give him thanks and praise. The word 'alleluia' is a call to praise the Lord; the consecration is introduced by recalling the thanks (and praise) given by Jesus. The Mass is the celebration of God's love for us, and the most natural result of the Christian's appreciation of God's love is to give thanks and praise, and to carry this attitude into our daily lives.

## The Collect

Almighty Father, you have given your only Son to die for our sins and to rise again for our justification; grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness that we may always serve you in pureness of living and truth; through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

### The First Reading

Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16

SMSG Reader: Rosie Page

New Testament Page 103

All Saints Reader: Rita Oakley

### The Responsorial Psalm

(from Psalm 118)

**R/. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
for his love has no end.**

Let the sons of Israel say:

'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say:

'His love has no end.'

Let those who fear the Lord say:

'His love has no end.' ®

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord;  
we rejoice and are glad. ®

O Lord, grant us salvation;

O Lord, grant success.

Blessed in the name of the Lord  
is he who comes.

We bless you from the house of the Lord;  
the Lord God is our light. ®

### Second Reading

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

Reader: Tricia Brassington

New Testament Page 207

### Gospel Acclamation

(STAND)

**Alleluia, alleluia!** You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me says the Lord; blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. **Alleluia!**

### The Gospel

John 20:19-31

New Testament Pages 98

## The Prayer of the Faithful

(Biddings: Ray Rowilson)

*Priest:*

My brothers and sisters let us pray to Jesus who is present with us to eternity

*Intercessor:*

Jesus, light of the world, bring the light and peace of your gospel to the nations . . .

V/. Jesus, Lord of life:

**R/. in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, bread of life, give food to the hungry . . . and nourish us all with your word.

Jesus, our way, our truth, our life, be with us and all who follow you in the way . . . deepen our appreciation of your truth, and fill us with your life.

Jesus, Good Shepherd who gave your life for the sheep, recover the straggler, bind up the injured, strengthen the sick, especially... Wendy, Fiddy Abraham, Anna Archer, Maggie Baker, Mary Barry, Henry Blake, Peter Brazell, Richard Coley, Richard D'Souza, Gill Edwards, Sue Gower, Eileen Haseldine, Russell Herbert, Paul, Rebecca, Magnus John, Ray Lewis, Kay Lucas, Isaac Lyon, Sue Maton, Cyril Millward, Joyce Samuels, Shirley Scrutton, Alma Steinmetz, Fr Edmund, June Wilde, Janis Williams, Marian Wright... and lead the healthy and strong to share in your continuing mission of redemption.

Jesus, the resurrection and the life, we pray for all who have lived and believed in you... Mick Lang, Capt John Richards CA, Norman Stokes, Sylvia Storer, Glyn Wyatt...and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week...**3<sup>rd</sup>** Ann Butler, Emily Mundy, Ronald Cole; **4<sup>th</sup>** Doris Jackson, Terri Rixon, Edward Albon; **5<sup>th</sup>** Sig-gie Vom Dorp, Connie Gascoine, James Bull; **6<sup>th</sup>** Mary Richardson; **7<sup>th</sup>** David Meakins, Cyril Wood, Albert Wilde, Josephine Worley; **9<sup>th</sup>** Lionel Odell, Antoni Zastawny, Thomas Bennett, Edward Blow... raise us with them to eternal life.

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

**And let light perpetual shine upon them.**

*Priest:*

Almighty God and Father, we know that you hear our prayers, and we ask you to grant them, through your Son, the prince of life, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

### Communion Reflection:

*Father, in instituting the Eucharist, Jesus took the bread and gave you thanks and praise. May we always approach the altar with that same spirit of thanks and praise. May the joy we find in giving you thanks and praise show to the world that you are really a loving father. Amen.*

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