

THE LIVING
WORD
OF
EASTER

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

April 9 - April 15



SEASON OF EASTER

Second Sunday of Easter

On the second Sunday of Easter we may find ourselves, like those first disciples, gathered behind locked doors—afraid, uncertain, and caught between the impossible news of Easter and the ordinary weight of the world pressing in on us.

Resurrection, it turns out, does not wait for us to be ready.

Jesus comes into that locked room and says, “Peace be with you.” Then he shows them his hands. His side. The wounds are still there and are still real. Whatever Easter means, it doesn’t mean suffering has disappeared. It means that God has gone all the way through it and brought it back, transfigured, into the light of risen life.

The cross is inside the resurrection. The wounds are inside the peace.

And then there’s Thomas. He wasn’t there when Jesus came the first time. When the others tried to tell him, “We have seen the Lord,” he couldn’t receive it. His words have the ring of one who has already hoped once and paid for it: “Unless I see. Unless I touch. I will not believe.” This sounds like a grief that is trying to protect itself.

A week passes. The doors are still locked. Jesus comes again, and this time Thomas is there. Jesus doesn’t correct him or shame him. He just offers himself: “Put your finger here. See my hands. Reach out and put it in my side.”

What happens next is that Thomas is undone by this encounter with Jesus: “My Lord and my God.”

This is the oldest confession in the Church’s memory—drawn out of him by the pierced hands of a friend. The risen Christ is not offering Thomas, and us, an escape from questioning. He is offering himself to the questions. The wounds are there. He is simply asking us to look.



Jude's strange little letter carries this word: "Be merciful to those who doubt." The reason, perhaps, is simpler than it first appears. This is how Jesus is with us. Merciful. He has never been otherwise.

Faith, then, is something that grows in us slowly, the way a plant grows toward the light. Our questions don't disappear. They become reoriented. They stop being the final word and become the open door instead. And through that door, the risen Jesus still comes—bearing the marks of his love, speaking peace into rooms that still smell of fear.

"Peace be with you."

He says it twice in this passage. Perhaps because we need to hear it more than once. Thomas needed a week. Perhaps we need some time as well.

Whatever brought you to this devotional today, whatever locks you have fastened against the world or against hope itself, the risen Jesus is already in the room. And it may well be that the very place where your faith has worn thin is the place where his nail-riven hands reach first.

That, at least, is what Thomas found.

FOR reflection

***When you feel doubt, where do you find hope?
Ask Jesus to strengthen your faith and give
you his peace in all circumstances.***



SCRIPTURE

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Thursday	Psalm 16; Song of Solomon 2:8-15; Colossians 4:2-5
Friday	Psalm 16; Song of Solomon 5:9-6:3; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Saturday	Psalm 16; Song of Solomon 8:6-7; John 20:11-20
Sunday	Psalm 16 ; Acts 2:14a, 22-32; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31
Monday	Psalm 114; Judges 6:36-40; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
Tuesday	Psalm 114; Jonah 1:1-17; 1 Corinthians 15:19-28
Wednesday	Psalm 114; Jonah 2:1-10; Matthew 12:38-42

Why do the daily readings begin on Thursday?

The daily readings for each week begin on Thursday and end on the following Wednesday. The Thursday through Saturday readings prepare the reader for the Sunday ahead. The Monday through Wednesday readings reflect on what was presented on Sunday.

The Morning Liturgy

Opening Scripture

This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:24

Opening Prayer *(based on Psalm 51)*

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

Amen.

Scripture Reading *(read Psalm and Gospel text here)*

Period of Silence

Confessing Our Faith *(Apostles' Creed)*

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect *(Second Sunday of Easter)*

Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery established the new covenant of reconciliation: Grant that all who have been reborn into the fellowship of Christ's body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

A Midday Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, “Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you.” Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever. *Amen.*

An Early Evening Prayer

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.*

A Bedtime Confession and Prayer

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. *Amen.*

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



