



**Diocese  
in Europe**

**THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

# **SS PETER AND PAUL, TORREVIEJA**

*The Church of England worshipping in Word and Sacrament at Lago Jardín, Los Balcones and La Siesta and ministering through the southern Costa Blanca and eastern Murcia.*

*A truly Eucharistic community of faith and love.*

**Chaplain (equivalent of Parish Priest):**

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Chaplaincy Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/anglicantorrevieja>

Chaplain's Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/chaplaintorrevieja/>

**FATHER RICHARD'S WEEKLY NEWSLETTER**

**31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

**EASTER SUNDAY**

**7<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER, DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY**



**WELCOME TO THE CHAPLAINCY OF SS PETER AND PAUL, TORREVIEJA.  
ALL ARE WELCOME TO SHARE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH THIS CHAPLAINCY.**

**Please remember to turn off your mobile phone  
before our services begin.  
Please don't use a mobile phone in church. Pray instead!**

**Please remember to talk to God in prayer before our services begin.  
There is plenty of time to talk to each other afterwards.  
Your talking may distract someone else's praying.  
Please keep a devotional silence.**

Father Richard's contact details are on the front of this newsletter.

**Our Churchwardens are:  
Peter Maude ([churchwardenpeter@gmail.com](mailto:churchwardenpeter@gmail.com))  
Jennifer Saville ([chaplaincywardenjennifer@gmail.com](mailto:chaplaincywardenjennifer@gmail.com))  
They also act as Joint Treasurers.**

**The Vice-Chairman of and Honorary Secretary to the Chaplaincy Council is:  
Joan Berry ([losbalconeswarden@gmail.com](mailto:losbalconeswarden@gmail.com))**

**We take the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults seriously. Our Safeguarding Policy  
is displayed at La Siesta and is available on our website:**

**<https://www.c-of-e-torrevieja.com/safeguarding-policy/>**

**Our Safeguarding Officer is Anna Horsnell who can be contacted at  
[safeguardingtorrevieja@gmail.com](mailto:safeguardingtorrevieja@gmail.com)**

**The Congregational Warden at La Siesta is:  
Sue Maude ([wardenlasiesta@gmail.com](mailto:wardenlasiesta@gmail.com))**

**The Congregational Warden at Lago Jardín is:  
Liz Shouksmith ([shouksmithliz@gmail.com](mailto:shouksmithliz@gmail.com))**

**Our church Lago Jardín is in the process of being used again.  
Nuestra Señora de la Asunción at Los Balcones is closed for a major rebuilding project.**

### **Home Communion**

Father Richard will take Holy Communion to people at home according to their circumstances. This is a privilege and enables for prayer in the home at difficult times and for the communicant to receive Holy Communion at home. Please never hesitate to contact me if you would like Holy Communion at home if you are unable to come to church because of sickness or being housebound.

Here are some guidelines to assist you:

1. If you can, please arrange a surface with a white cloth upon which I can place the Blessed Sacrament. If this is difficult please do not worry too much but it is appreciated.
2. The Priest will not enter into general conversation until after the celebration which lasts about ten minutes. Then he would appreciate a cup of tea and chat with you but if your circumstances don't allow, please do not worry.

3. Please consider giving a donation to the Church for the Priest's ministry. He will have had to drive to you and it also enables you to give your weekly collection to support the priestly ministry in the parish / chaplaincy. This means there can be a Priest available for you and for others with a priestly presence in the parish / chaplaincy.  
It is a long-established custom – if you can – to make an offering to the Church in thankfulness for the ministry of the Church.
4. You don't have to tidy up before the priest arrives! Just prepare spiritually for an encounter with Christ in the Eucharist by being prayerful before his arrival.

**Father Richard writes:**

Dear friends

Writing this at the beginning of Holy Week, I am wishing you all a very Happy and Blessed Easter for when the celebration of the Lord's Resurrection begins. We will have fifty days of Easter joy to celebrate that the Lord is risen indeed. Thank you to all who work so hard in various liturgical ministries to enable us to have a full liturgical programme during Holy Week, the Triduum, and Easter.



It is also great to announce some good news in this letter. Some of you have already met them but I am pleased to welcome Father Martin Ennis SSC and his wife Nikki to our Eucharistic community. Father Martin is a newly-retired priest and he and Nikki moved to Spain at the end of last year.

They now live near Hondon de Las Nieves close to Aspe. At various times in his life Father Martin has been a research scientist, a Further Education College Lecturer, Senior Education Welfare Officer, Diocesan Youth Officer, Lay reader, Parish Priest and Rural Dean. As a Swindonian he fondly remembers Swindon Town beating Arsenal 3-1 in the 1969 League Cup Final and keeps abreast of the team after all those years. Not too surprisingly, given his Swindon origin, he loves all things railway, the Great Western especially and is aiming to be working on

his model railway, when time permits, and he has cleared the junk out of the workshop! When in the UK he is partial to real ale, Cornish Pasties and Double Gloucester cheese.

Father Martin's ministry has been in the following places over the years... S. Michael the Archangel, Newquay (Truro Diocese); the parishes of Tewkesbury Abbey; Brockworth; Holy Trinity Longlevens (all Gloucester Diocese); Tividale; S. James Wednesbury and Rural Dean of Wednesbury (Lichfield Diocese). So he comes with a vast array of experience.

He and Nikki are truly welcome among us. Please pray for them and thank God for their arrival in our community.

I approached Father Martin to see if he would be willing to assist me in the Chaplaincy by becoming a Priest with Permission to Officiate to which he kindly agreed. This means he can celebrate the Eucharist with us and for us when needed. It also means that I have a Priest brother and colleague here in Spain for support and back up when I am away on holiday and my other wider diocesan and national church responsibilities. I cannot express my gratitude for this enough. For the last four years I have never been able to have more than one Sunday off at a time so Father Martin being here will make such a tremendous difference. He will be known as Father Martin in our community and I will continue to be known as Father Richard.

Most importantly, I will have a brother Priest to talk and work with. Father Martin is also a Priest of the Society of the Holy Cross, founded in 1855. He did not know of my presence here before he and Nikki came to Spain and I did not know of his presence until a Brother Priest of the Society let me know. It is a true blessing. Working in isolation has its challenges and I am thankful to God that he and Nikki are here. Father Martin will be concelebrating with me at 0930 at La Siesta on Easter Sunday.

Father Robert will continue to have a Permission to Officiate even though he now lives in Wales and is, at the moment, too unwell to travel. But I also look forward to welcoming him back to the Chaplaincy when he can travel once more.

A Happy and Blessed Easter to you all (when Easter arrives). Holy Week and the Triduum first of all.

Your Priest and Friend,  
Father Richard



## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

*The most important week in the Christian Year.*

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March – HOLY (MAUNDY) THURSDAY

1900 Mass of the Lord's Supper with Washing of feet

***Please bring bells to ring at the Gloria in excelsis***

at the end of the Mass we have the Watch of the Passion,  
a time of silent prayer at the altar which becomes the Altar of Repose,  
the Garden of Gethsemane.

*La Siesta*

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March – GOOD FRIDAY

1500 Celebration of the Lord's Passion

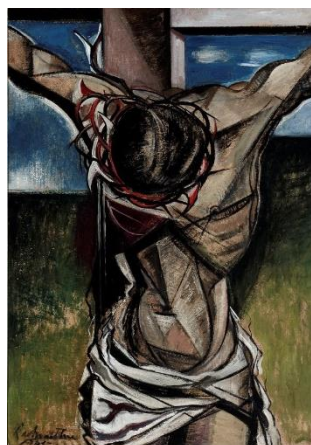
*La Siesta*

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March – HOLY SATURDAY

1900 The Easter Vigil *followed by a  
celebration*

*La Siesta*

***Please bring bells to ring at the Gloria in  
excelsis***



Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March – EASTER  
SUNDAY

0930 Holy Eucharist

*La Siesta*

12 noon Holy Eucharist

*Lago Jardín*

**Followed by Lunch at Al-Lingui restaurant at the Filton Centre,  
Los Balcones. Please see Liz Shouksmith**

**[shouksmithliz@gmail.com](mailto:shouksmithliz@gmail.com)**

**if you would like to share in our Easter fellowship.**

**Lunch at 2 p.m.**

The Vocal Group

# LYRICAL

Invite You To A

# Springtime Serenade

**Wednesday 15th May 7:30pm**



**Featuring a programme of  
well known classic songs,  
show tunes  
and popular  
music loved  
by all**

**La Siesta Church  
Calle Granados  
El Chaparral**



**Tickets 10€ - Proceeds to Support Church Funds**

#### FINANCIAL GIVING TO THE CHAPLAINCY

There are various ways of giving financially to the Chaplaincy for the work of the Church:

1. You can give in the plate each week.
2. You can join our envelope scheme to give a regular amount on a weekly basis - and set aside money for those weeks when you cannot be here.
3. **You are encouraged to set up a standing order to the Chaplaincy - this helps us budget more effectively.**

If you are a UK tax payer you can gift aid your giving.

If you are a Spanish tax payer you can have a tax offset by notifying your accountant when arranging your yearly tax along with the Spanish bank account number who will then arrange a claim and the money will be donated back to the Chaplaincy.

One off donations would be gratefully received to assist us at this difficult time.  
Thank you for your help.

For more information contact Father Richard, the Churchwardens, or your Congregational Warden.

The Chaplaincy relies on generous and sacrificial giving in response to a generous God who sacrificed his Son for us all on the cross.

#### **Spanish Bank details.** Banco Sabadell.

IBAN number ES65 0081 2061 7900 0106 0414

BSAB ESBB / Capellania Anglicana de Torrevieja

#### **UK Bank details.** Barclays Bank PLC Account name: Diocese in Europe Fund

Account number: 40317039 Sort code: 20-06-13. Address : Tufton Street,London Please state TORREVIEJA as the reference so the money is correctly applied. The IBAN number is: GB16 BUKB 2006 1340 31 70 39.

God bless you all for your support. *Peter and Jennifer (Churchwardens)*

DIOCESE IN EUROPE  
THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



#### **Church of England Chaplaincy of SS Peter and Paul, Torrevieja**

The Chalice containing the Precious Blood of Christ is offered for those who wish to receive it. Holy Communion is offered with the words "The Body of Christ" to which you say **Amen** before consuming the Sacred Host. The words "The Blood of Christ" are said to which you say **Amen** before receiving from the Chalice. The Chalice is optional.

**INTINCTION IS NOT PERMITTED  
FOR HEALTH AND HYGIENE REASONS.**

**ONGOING INFORMATION FOR OUR THREE CHURCHES**  
**SERVICES ARE SHARED BETWEEN LAGO JARDÍN AND LA SIESTA**  
**Los Balcones, Nuestra Señora de la Asunción**

*remains closed for re-building.*

**Services in the Chaplaincy:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Church</b>
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	1900 <i>HOLY THURSDAY</i>	La Siesta
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	1500 <i>GOOD FRIDAY</i>	La Siesta
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	1900 <i>HOLY SATURDAY</i>	La Siesta
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	<u>0930</u> <i>EASTER SUNDAY</i>	La Siesta
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	<u>1200</u> <i>EASTER SUNDAY</i>	Lago Jardín
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> April	1130	La Siesta
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	1700	La Siesta
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> April	1130	Lago Jardín
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> April	1130	La Siesta
Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> April	1700	La Siesta
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> April	1130	Lago Jardín

There is a liturgical Facebook group.

Go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/chaplaintorrevieja> and ask to join the group.

You will be asked three questions. Please complete them and agree to the rules of the group.

**The Blessed Sacrament Lamp at Lago Jardín**

*burns this week for the Chaplaincy.*

If you would like to dedicate the Blessed Sacrament for a week for a person, an intention, or in memory of a departed loved one, please see Father Richard. The cost is five euros for the week.



**Father Richard's Prayer List for March / April 2024:**

*Please pray for the sick and those in particular need at this time:* HM King Charles, HRH The Princess of Wales, Barbara Cooper, Rhys Miles, Chris Hughes, Fiona, Neil Harrison, David Corfield, Michelle Lane, Father Robert, Garth Sutherland, Tanya Ziegler, Patricia Welch, Gary Wilkes, Joey McNab, Keith Palmer, Eileen Shaw, Anna Horsnell, Dick Horsnell, David Horsnell, Liz Shouksmith, Chloe and Lorena, Peter John, Martin Skillen, Jamie Hill, Raj Panchal, Peter Passey, Paul McNab, Lesley Critchley, Luke Thompson, Gwen Simmons.

*Please help Father Richard by letting him know when people can be taken off the prayer list.*

**Please pray for the recently departed:**

Jill Dorsett, John Clift, Kenneth Binns

*Those killed as a result of the conflicts in Ukraine, Israel, and Gaza.*

+ Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

**Please advise Father Richard if there are any corrections to the above list.**



*If you wish a name to be added to the list of the sick you need to email Father Richard or write to him giving permission for yourself or ensure permission has been granted by someone else for their name to appear on this list. (GDPR regulations).*

## **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

### **Entrance Antiphon**

**Cf. Ps 138: 18, 5-6**

I have risen, and I am with you still, alleluia.  
You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia.  
Too wonderful for me, this knowledge, alleluia, alleluia.

### **Or:**

**Lk 24: 34; cf. Rv 1: 6**

The Lord is truly risen, alleluia.  
To him be glory and power  
for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.

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### **Collect**

O God, who on this day,  
through your Only Begotten Son,  
have conquered death  
and unlocked for us the path to eternity,  
grant, we pray, that we who keep  
the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection  
may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit,  
rise up in the light of life.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

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### **First reading**

**Acts 10:34,37-43**

#### **'We have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection'**

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: 'You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses – we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the

dead – and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.’

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### **Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 117(118):1-2,16-17,22-23**

*This day was made by the Lord: we rejoice and are glad.*

**or**

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

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.’

*This day was made by the Lord: we rejoice and are glad.*

**or**

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

The Lord’s right hand has triumphed;  
his right hand raised me up.

I shall not die, I shall live  
and recount his deeds.

*This day was made by the Lord: we rejoice and are glad.*

**or**

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

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.*

**or**

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

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### **Second reading**

**Colossians 3:1-4**

#### **Look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is**

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God’s right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed – and he is your life – you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

### **Sequence**

## **Victimae Paschali Laudes**

Christians, to the Paschal Victim  
offer sacrifice and praise.  
The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb;  
and Christ, the undefiled,  
hath sinners to his Father reconciled.

Death with life contended:  
combat strangely ended!

Life's own Champion, slain,  
yet lives to reign.

Tell us, Mary:  
say what thou didst see  
upon the way.

The tomb the Living did enclose;  
I saw Christ's glory as he rose!

The angels there attesting;  
shroud with grave-clothes resting.

Christ, my hope, has risen:  
he goes before you into Galilee.

That Christ is truly risen  
from the dead we know.  
Victorious king, thy mercy show!

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### **Gospel Acclamation**

**1Cor5:7-8**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed:  
let us celebrate the feast then, in the Lord.  
Alleluia!

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### **Gospel**

**John 20:1-9**

#### **He must rise from the dead**

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb' she said 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been

over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

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### **Homily**

Today we begin the Easter Season, our 50-day meditation on the mystery of Christ's Resurrection. Our Gospel today tells us about the disciples' discovery of the empty tomb. It concludes by telling us that they did not yet understand that Jesus had risen from the dead. Thus, the details provided are not necessarily meant to offer proof of the Resurrection. The details invite us to reflect upon a most amazing gift, that is faith in Jesus and his Resurrection.

Each of the four Gospels tells us that Jesus' empty tomb was first discovered by women. This is notable because in first-century Jewish society women could not serve as legal witnesses. In the case of John's Gospel, the only woman attending the tomb is Mary of Magdala. Unlike the Synoptic accounts, John's Gospel does not describe an appearance of angels at the tomb. Instead, Mary is simply said to have observed that the stone that had sealed the tomb had been moved, and she runs to alert Simon Peter and the beloved disciple. Her statement to them is telling. She assumes that Jesus' body has been removed, perhaps stolen. She does not consider that Jesus has been raised from the dead.

Simon Peter and the beloved disciple race to the tomb, presumably to verify Mary's report. The beloved disciple arrives first but does not enter the tomb until after Simon Peter. This detail paints a vivid picture, as does the detail provided about the burial cloths. Some scholars believe that the presence of the burial cloths in the tomb offers evidence to the listener that Jesus' body had not been stolen (it is understood that grave robbers would have taken the burial cloths together with the body).

The Gospel passage concludes, however, that even having seen the empty tomb and the burial cloths, the disciples do not yet understand about the Resurrection. In the passage that follows, Mary of Magdala meets Jesus but mistakes him for the gardener. In the weeks ahead, the Gospel readings from our liturgy will show us how the disciples came to believe in Jesus' Resurrection through his appearances to them. Our Easter faith is based on their witness to both the empty tomb and their continuing relationship with Jesus—in his appearances and in his gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

### **Entrance Antiphon**

**1 Pt 2: 2**

Like newborn infants, you must long for the pure, spiritual milk,  
that in him you may grow to salvation, alleluia.

**Or:**

**4 Esdras 2: 36-37**

Receive the joy of your glory, giving thanks to God,  
who has called you into the heavenly kingdom, alleluia.

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**Collect**

God of everlasting mercy,  
who in the very recurrence of the paschal feast  
kindle the faith of the people you have made your own,  
increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed,  
that all may grasp and rightly understand  
in what font they have been washed,  
by whose Spirit they have been reborn,  
by whose Blood they have been redeemed.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

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**First reading**

**Acts 4:32-35**

**The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul**

The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed for his own use anything that he had, as everything they owned was held in common.

The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power, and they were all given great respect.

None of their members was ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from them, to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any members who might be in need.

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**Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 117(118):2-4,15-18,22-24**

*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.’

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

The Lord’s right hand has triumphed;

his right hand raised me up.  
I shall not die, I shall live  
and recount his deeds.  
I was punished, I was punished by the Lord,  
but not doomed to die.

*Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for 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.

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

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## **Second reading**

**1 John 5:1-6**

### **Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has already overcome the world**

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ  
has been begotten by God;  
and whoever loves the Father that begot him  
loves the child whom he begets.  
We can be sure that we love God's children  
if we love God himself and do what he has commanded us;  
this is what loving God is –  
keeping his commandments;  
and his commandments are not difficult,  
because anyone who has been begotten by God  
has already overcome the world;  
this is the victory over the world –  
our faith.

Who can overcome the world?  
Only the man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God:  
Jesus Christ who came by water and blood,  
not with water only,  
but with water and blood;  
with the Spirit as another witness –  
since the Spirit is the truth.

## **Sequence**

### **Victimae Paschali Laudes**

*Please see Easter Sunday.*

## Gospel Acclamation

Jn20:29

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus said: 'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

Alleluia!

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## Gospel

John 20:19-31

### Eight days later, Jesus came again and stood among them

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.

## Homily

Today's reading from the Gospel of John is proclaimed on the Second Sunday of Easter in each of the lectionary cycles. This fact alone should alert us to the significance of the encounters with the resurrected Jesus that are described in this reading. This Gospel

combines two scenes: Jesus' appearance to his disciples after his Resurrection and Jesus' dialogue with Thomas, the disciple who doubted.

Part of the mystery of Jesus' Resurrection is that he appeared to his disciples not as a spirit, but in bodily form. We do not know, however, exactly what this form looked like. Earlier in John's Gospel, when Mary of Magdala first encountered the risen Jesus, she did not recognize him until he spoke to her. In Luke's Gospel, the disciples walking along the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus until he broke bread with them. We know from readings such as today's that in his resurrected form, Jesus was not bound by matter; he appeared to the disciples inside a home even though the door was locked. Yet the disciples could still touch the marks of his Crucifixion.

In today's Gospel, Jesus greets his disciples with the gift of peace. Jesus then commissions his disciples to continue the work that he has begun; as Jesus was sent by God, so Jesus sends his disciples. He gives his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit so that they will be able to accomplish this task. Jesus' words to his disciples also highlight the integral connection between the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, we can share forgiveness and reconciliation with others.

Thomas, the doubting disciple in today's reading, represents the reality of the Church that comes after this first community of witnesses to Jesus. All but the first disciples of Jesus must believe without seeing. Like Thomas, we may doubt the news that Jesus, who was crucified and buried, appeared to his disciples. Our human nature seeks hard evidence that the Jesus who appeared to his disciples after his death is indeed the same Jesus who was crucified. Thomas is given the opportunity to be our representative in obtaining this evidence. He gives witness to us that the Jesus who was raised is the same Jesus who died. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are among those who are blessed, for we have not seen and yet believe.

### **The Second Sunday of Easter is celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday.**





The Regina Cæli  
*(used during Eastertime)*



Joy to thee, O Queen of Heaven, alleluia!  
He whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluia!  
As he promised hath arisen, alleluia!  
Pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluia!

Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia!  
For the Lord is risen indeed, alleluia!

Let us pray.

O God , who by the resurrection of thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ, didst vouchsafe to give joy to the whole world, grant, we beseech thee, that through his Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life.  
Through the same Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

