

livingtheword

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hearing and living the Sunday Readings

Reading 1 Acts 4:32-35

The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common.

With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

R. (1) Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Let the house of Israel say,
"His mercy endures forever."

Let the house of Aaron say,
"His mercy endures forever."

Let those who fear the LORD say,
"His mercy endures forever."

R. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

or:

R. Alleluia.

I was hard pressed and was falling,
but the LORD helped me.

My strength and my courage is the LORD,
and he has been my savior.

The joyful shout of victory
in the tents of the just:

R. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

or:

R. Alleluia.

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.

By the LORD has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.

This is the day the LORD has made;
let us be glad and rejoice in it.

R. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Reading II 1 Jn 5:1-6

Beloved:

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the Father loves also the one begotten by him. In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments.

For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith.

Who indeed is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the one that testifies, and the Spirit is truth.

Gospel
Jn 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.

The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

Reflection Questions

- What word, phrase or idea struck you in the reading?
- What do you think God is trying to say to you personally?
- Easter lasts for 7 weeks in the Catholic experience. It is called Eastertide and marks the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost. What practice or ritual could you live for the next 50 days to celebrate Easter and let its message get 'under your skin' and change you?
- The followers of Christ became a "community". A love in their hearts was expressed in love to others - especially those 'in need'. What change happened in the lives of the disciples to enable them to share everything in 'common'? What change am I invited to make in my own life with regard to possessions? How could I show a deeper commitment to my parish community?
- The victory that conquers the world is our faith. John in writing his letter seeks to encourage disciples to know clearly of the victory of Christ over sin and death on the cross. For John, the cross is a 'glorious' event. If you were to write for 5 minutes about the cross, what would you write about it. Can you understand it as a 'glorious victory'?
- The final gift of Christ to his disciples as they huddled in a locked room in fear is peace and the guaranteed forgiveness of their sins through the gifting of the Holy Spirit in the Church. What is the source of your 'un-peace' and fear that Jesus wishes to heal?
- Thomas struggles to believe. He asks for some 'signs' to help him. What do you need in your life to help you believe and grow stronger in your faith journey? Spend time in prayer asking Jesus.
- What is one action that you will do to 'livetheword' this week?