Greeting, Announcement(s) and Opening Hymn

471 0 Sons and Daughters of the King
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1_ejuX2zhU

ref Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
1 O sons and daughters of the King, Whom heav’nly hosts in glory sing, Today the grave has lost its sting! Alleluia!
2 That Easter morn, at break of day, The faithful women went their way To seek the tomb where Jesus lay. Alleluia!
3 An angel clad in white they see, Who sits and speaks unto the three, “Your Lord will go to Galilee.” Alleluia!
4 That night the apostles met in fear; Among them came their master dear And said, “My peace be with you here.” Alleluia!
5 When Thomas first the tidings heard That they had seen the risen Lord, He doubted the disciples’ word. Alleluia!
6 “My piercèd side, O Thomas, see, And look upon My hands, My feet; Not faithless but believing be.” Alleluia!
7 No longer Thomas then denied; He saw the feet, the hands, the side; “You are my Lord and God!” he cried. Alleluia!
8 How blest are they who have not seen And yet whose faith has constant been, For they eternal life shall win. Alleluia!
9 On this most holy day of days Be laud and jubilee and praise: To God your hearts and voices raise. Alleluia! Refrain

Text: Public domain

Confession and Absolution

Stand
The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,
C who made heaven and earth.
P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Kneel/Stand

P Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized
shall be saved.

Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 105:1–5, 8; antiphon: 1 Peter 2:2–3

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation—
if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!
Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!
Seek the LORD and his strength;
send his presence continually!
Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered.
He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.

Glory be 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.

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation—
if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Kyrie

C Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Gloria in Excelsis https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3jC10dOJS8

P Glory be to God on high:
C and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.
   We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee,
   we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.
O Lord God, heav'ny King, God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.
For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord.
Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,
art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.
C And with thy spirit.
P Let us pray.
Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord’s resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

First Reading

Acts 5:29–42

29 But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. 31 God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

33 When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. 34 But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. 35 And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. 36 For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. 37 After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered. 38 So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; 39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!” So they took his advice, 40 and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. 42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

1 Peter 1:3–9

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia

LSB 190


Holy Gospel

John 20:19–31

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the twentieth chapter.

C Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.”
Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.  

So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**P** Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

**C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
   maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
   who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
      born of the virgin Mary,  
         suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
            was crucified, died and was buried.  
   He descended into hell.  
   The third day He rose again from the dead.  
   He ascended into heaven  
      and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
   From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
   the holy Christian Church,  
      the communion of saints,  
         the forgiveness of sins,  
            the resurrection of the body,  
               and the life everlasting. Amen.

_Sit_

**743 Jesus, Priceless Treasure**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0tm8Wg011k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0tm8Wg011k)

1 Jesus, priceless treasure,  
   Fount of purest pleasure,  
      Truest friend to me,  
         Ah, how long in anguish  
            Shall my spirit languish,  
               Yearning, Lord, for Thee?  
                  Thou art mine,  
                     O Lamb divine!  
   I will suffer naught to hide Thee;  
   Naught I ask beside Thee.

2 In Thine arms I rest me;  
   Foes who would molest me  
      Cannot reach me here.

3 Satan, I defy thee;  
   Death, I now decry thee;  
      Fear, I bid thee cease.  
          World, thou shalt not harm me  
             Nor thy threats alarm me  
                While I sing of peace.
God’s great pow’r
Guards ev’ry hour;
Earth and all its depths adore Him,
Silent bow before Him.

4 Hence, all earthly treasure!
Jesus is my pleasure,
Jesus is my choice.
Hence, all empty glory!
Naught to me thy story
Told with tempting voice.

Pain or loss,
Or shame or cross,
Shall not from my Savior move me
Since He deigns to love me.

5 Evil world, I leave thee;
Thou canst not deceive me,
Thine appeal is vain.

Text: Public domain

Sermon
Grace, Mercy and Peace be to you from God our Father and Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

This first Sunday after Easter is sometimes called Doubting Thomas Sunday. This morning’s gospel focuses on two appearances of Jesus – the first on the evening of Easter and the second, a week later and Thomas’s reaction to the news that Christ has risen! (he is risen indeed, alleluia!).

Today, more than ever before, we can identify with Thomas. Given the events of the last 6 weeks, with Corona Virus, we’ve had many things happen that we didn’t believe possible. Unbelievable things. Would you have believed the Las Vegas strip would close? That the NBA, NCAA, MLB & MLS have all suspended operations? That our Governor had the power to tell people not to assemble in groups larger than 1000? Or 50? Or 10? Or to prohibit on premise consumption of food and alcohol? How about not having church services two weeks in a row without inclement weather? Emailed services, sermon and prayers? Or church services with the Vicar and 1 elder present streamed over the internet, Facebook Live services as a best available option but poor substitute for physically gathering for worship? We too have looked on in disbelief at these and many more events during this pandemic.

What little we know about Thomas we learn from the four times Thomas is mentioned in John’s Gospel. John first mentions Thomas as a devoted and courageous disciple when Jesus wants to visit Lazarus to raise Lazarus from the dead. Second, as questioning Jesus when Jesus proclaims that he is going before them to prepare a place, to which Jesus responds, “I am the way, the truth and the Life”. Third, in this reading and fourth while fishing with Peter and having caught nothing, Jesus directs Peter and Thomas to cast their nets to the right side of the boat where they catch 153 fish.

Even after witnessing Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead, the idea of Jesus’s Resurrection just doesn’t make sense to Thomas. Thomas couldn’t believe what he was told. A witness to all that Jesus had done. All the healing, calming the sea, all the miracles. Even after seeing Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead. Yet, Jesus’s death seemed like the last word. How could this be?

This morning, we are told that the other disciples were present on the evening of Easter, behind locked doors in fear of the Jews. Jesus came to them, calming their fears, proclaiming peace. Jesus passes on His mission to the disciples, the witnesses of His Resurrection, sending the disciples “as the Father has sent me, I am sending you” and bestowing on them as the Church, the power of the Holy Spirit and the office of the keys — the ability to forgive or bind sins, the power of the Gospel that Jesus had so powerfully displayed. And yet, their witness
wasn’t enough to convince Thomas. Only a precious few were ever brought back to life. The widow of Zarephath’s son was raised by Elijah. The Shunamite’s son raised by Elisha, the widow of Nain’s son raised by Jesus and Lazarus’s being raised by Jesus. And Jesus Himself was dead, handed over by the Jews to be crucified by the Romans on Good Friday. There was no prophet to raise Jesus from the dead. How could this be? What sense did it make?

The next Sunday, the eight day, Thomas has rejoined the disciples. Jesus, knowing Thomas’s unbelief, ministers to Thomas’s unbelief, encouraging Thomas to believe. Having seen the Resurrected, Risen, Jesus, Thomas boldly and confidently confesses “My Lord and My God”. Jesus then blesses us, those who have not seen the Risen Jesus with our own eyes “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed”. This reading ends with the reason for John’s Gospel “so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God and that by believing, you may have life in his name.

What do you believe in? For many, man’s observations about the world are much more believable than God’s revelation. For many, the world evolving through random chance is more believable than an all-powerful, all knowing God creating the universe in six 24-hour days. Unable to accept a contradiction in human thinking, people either deny God completely or choose to interpret Genesis 1 & 2 as figurative instead of literal, opening scripture to individual interpretation instead of accepting God’s word as written and proclaimed by the church throughout the centuries by the power of the Holy Spirit. Instead of acknowledging “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORd. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”, some are led away from God by questions like “why are some saved and not others?” or “why does God permit evil in the world?” or “why does God permit suffering?”, questions for which God has not given us answers. Instead, God calls us to “let God be God” and to believe in Jesus, through whom God has revealed Himself. Others question their beliefs when setbacks come their way – Corona Virus, health challenges, family and relationship issues, financial and job challenges, the death of a loved one, almost anything that disturbs the status quo.

Your belief in Jesus is a merciful and gracious gift of your Loving Heavenly Father. While you were still a sinner, Jesus died for your sins. While you were an enemy of God, sinful and condemned, God sent the Holy Spirit to work faith in your heart through the hearing of the Word, creating faith that God can love within you. Without his mercy and grace, you would remain a sinner, an enemy of God, for all eternity. But you have his mercy and grace. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. You are that whoever. God gave His Son for you. To carry your sins of unbelief to His cross. To die for your sins – to accept your punishment – so that you may have his righteousness. That is the forgiveness of sins through the Holy Spirit that you hear in the gospel reading, proclaimed by Jesus on behalf of the Father, proclaimed by the disciples, the church, throughout the ages. God alone works salvation. Having received His salvation, you believe. You cling to God’s promises. You receive God’s good gifts and live in belief that just as Jesus was raised from the dead, so too you will be raised to spend all eternity with God. You are the one that Jesus speaks of “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” Peter also speaks of you in today’s Epistle “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

In response to our redemption, our salvation, we believe, even and especially when surrounded by the unbelievable. We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. We pray like the father of the boy with an unclean spirit, “I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9). As we ponder Jesus’s encounter with Thomas, we too confess with Thomas, “My Lord and my God”. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we seek God’s Will in our lives living out our belief and clinging to God’s promises, giving us a hope and future, even in the most unbelievable times. Amen.
The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**Prayer of the Church**

Hear us, merciful Father, as we pray for ourselves, for the Church, for our nation and for all conditions and manner of people.

*Brief silence*

God of mercy, keep us from the doubts and fears that cripple us and prevent us from knowing the fullness of Your saving peace and gracious presence. Teach us to trust in Your Word and to believe with all our hearts, minds, bodies and strength in Jesus Christ, crucified for our sins and raised for our justification. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of grace, bestow upon Your Church Your Holy Spirit and all the gifts that come down from on high. Grant to us faithful pastors who will preach faithfully, and give us ears to hear Your Word proclaimed. Sustain us while apart, and bring Your scattered Church together again quickly. Give us boldness in our witness before the world and courage to speak Your name without fear. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of power, give courage and strength to those persecuted for the faith, and comfort the families of the martyrs. In uncertain times, keep Your Church from being tossed about by the winds of change. Keep her steadfast in the doctrine of the apostles and the faith once delivered to the saints. Help us to admonish those who have fallen away and to restore with gentleness those who have wandered from the truth. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of might, counsel the nations and their leaders to act wisely in all matters. Bless us with faithful and just leaders who will protect the sanctity of life and defend us against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Make us wise and discerning citizens who use the gift of liberty for noble purpose. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of love, teach us to love one another as You have loved us. Guide us to make manifest the love and strength of Christ to our troubled and fearful world. Deliver us from disease and everything else that would threaten our homes and families. Protect the police, firefighters, disaster-relief workers and medical personnel who attend to us, as well as the places where we live and work. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of comfort, give Your aid and relief to all who suffer want or need, to the sick in their afflictions, especially those in our ongoing prayers, to those troubled in mind, and to those to whom death draws near. Heal and sustain them according to Your gracious will, and preserve them in faith to eternal life. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of hope, be with those who grieve the loss of a loved one, especially the family and friends of Vicki, Edna, David, and Barbara. Point them to the promise of the resurrection and the gift of everlasting life to all who die in Christ. Deliver us from distractions, that we may focus on Your needful Word and Sacraments and so be found faithful when our Lord returns in His glory. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of compassion, bless us with the good gifts of the earth, with the fruits of our honest labors, and with kind and generous hearts. Accept the worship of our hearts and voices, along with the tithes and offerings we bring in gratitude and thanksgiving. Look with mercy on the unemployed, and open our eyes and hearts to the needs of the poor, that we may serve them in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of peace, give harmony and unity to Your people, both in our various vocations before the world and in our common life at this altar. Help us to receive with repentance and joy the gift of Christ’s body and blood in this blest communion, that we may be strengthened in faith and enjoy the gift of a clear conscience through the forgiveness of our sins. Comfort and sustain those who are unable to gather together this day for Your Holy Sacrament. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

O blessed God and Lord, hear the prayers of Your people and teach us to trust in Your will to answer our prayers with all that is needful and beneficial, both for us and for all for whom we pray; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Collect

Let us pray.

- O Lord, graciously receive the prayers of Your Church that, being delivered from all adversity and error, it may serve You in safety and freedom and dwell in Your peace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Amen, amen, amen.

527 O Savior, Precious Savior

1 O Savior, precious Savior,
   Whom yet unseen we love;
   O name of might and favor,
   All other names above,
   We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
   To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
   We praise Thee and confess Thee,
   Our holy Lord and King.

2 O bringer of salvation,
   Who wondrously hast wrought
   Thyself the revelation
   Of love beyond our thought,
   We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
   To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
   We praise Thee and confess Thee,
   Our gracious Lord and King.

3 In Thee all fullness dwelleth,
   All grace and pow’r divine;
   The glory that excelleth,
   O Son of God, is Thine.
   We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
   To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
   We praise Thee and confess Thee,
   Our glorious Lord and King.

4 O grant the consummation
   Of this our song above
   In endless adoration
   And everlasting love;
   Then shall we praise and bless Thee
   Where perfect praises ring,
   And evermore confess Thee,
   Our Savior and our King!