

SUNDAY PLUS



LIVERPOOL 2018
ADOREMUS

Believe in Jesus



The Doubt of St. Thomas in church Chiesa di San Faustino e Giovita (artist unknown) Brescia, Italy. Renata Sedmakova / Shutterstock.com

Believing Thomas

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

At the end of the great prologue to John's Gospel the evangelist asserts:

"No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest the Father's heart, who has made him known."

It is the missing apostle, Thomas, now returned to the community who asserts the great act of faith in Jesus: "My Lord and my God." Thomas does what no one else does

in the Gospel: he recognises Jesus not only as his Lord but as his God. The prologue of the Gospel now has to be updated, to respect Thomas' unique recognition of God in the person of Jesus.

Thomas was different from the other apostles, not least because he did not stay behind locked doors like the others did following Jesus' brutal death. He left their secure enclosure behind to walk

the streets because he knew something they did not: that the civil and religious authorities were not hunting them. Without Jesus they were nobodies.

The one we call "doubting Thomas" should be replaced by "believing Thomas". Earlier Thomas refused to believe the other apostles' assertion that they had seen the Lord. He refused to believe and agree with them when he could manage neither belief nor agreement. But he goes much further than the other apostles who proclaimed they had seen the Lord. Thomas sees more than they do: not only does he see the Lord but he also sees God. It is he who teaches us about the true identity of Jesus.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications: www.rpbooks.co.uk

Mercy given and received

by Mgr Roger Reader

Guilt is one of the most destructive emotions bringing many feelings in its wake, among them fear. I am sure the disciples in the upper room we have just heard about were feeling guilty. They had deserted their friend in his greatest need. Peter had even denied ever knowing him. Imagine their astonishment when Jesus comes and stands among them and says "Peace be with you." No words of rebuke however

well deserved. Rather, the Lord speaks of mercy and forgiveness.

Again, when Thomas sees his risen Lord, there is no rebuke for being absent, for failing to believe. Again they hear the words "Peace be with you." Lovingly, Jesus assures Thomas that it is truly he who stands among them.

The disciples saw God among them when their guilt was taken away, and they could learn to love. May it be so with us.

Mgr Roger Reader is the vice-rector of the Royal College of St Alban, Valladolid, Spain.

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The path that the Risen Master shows us is a one way street, it goes in only one direction... We see before us a humanity that is often wounded and fearful, a humanity that bears the scars of pain and uncertainty. Before the anguished cry for mercy and peace, we hear Jesus' inspiring invitation: 'As the Father has sent me, even so I send you'.

Pope Francis

Jesus makes the difference

by Dr Lucy Russell

I woke up feeling rather overwhelmed by life. I was concerned about a friend who had received a diagnosis, about work and my husband's job. I was anxious about a tooth extraction Edgar needed. I felt like I'd lost a bit of faith. When I dropped the boys off at school the head asked if I wanted to board the coach with Year 6 for

"Picnic and Praise" at The Priory. But I had a meeting. Later I saw the head from the secondary school as he was getting into his car on his way to The Priory: did I want to come? The forecast was for rain. I didn't have my raincoat. The children sang beautifully: "My sin was great: your love was greater". I hoped that was true and as I blinked tears from my eyes, three drops of rain fell on me. "Ah," I thought, "it's you". Otherwise, the weather held.

Dr Lucy Russell is the author of Who Do You Say You Are?, available from Redemptorist Publications: www.rpbooks.co.uk

Merciful Lord, touch our hearts and help us to act with love and compassion. May your mercy enfold our troubled world, wherever people are hurting, and bring them your peace. Amen.

Today:

Acts 4:32-35
1 John 5:1-6
John 20:19-31

Monday:

Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10
Hebrews 10:4-10
Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday:

Acts 4:32-37
John 3:7-15

Wednesday:

Acts 5:17-26
John 3:16-21

Thursday:

Acts 5:27-33
John 3:31-36

Friday:

Acts 5:34-42
John 6:1-15

Saturday:

Acts 6:1-7
John 6:16-21

Next Sunday:

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19
1 John 2:1-5
Luke 24:35-48