

Living the Word

John 20.19-31

On the day of his Resurrection, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene. 'In the evening of that same day,' the Gospel explains, he came and stood among the disciples. Thomas was absent, however, and so Jesus comes again eight days later. The Resurrection appearances of the Lord do not end with Thomas: at the end of today's Gospel we read, 'There are many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book.' With great care, Jesus comes to each group, one after the other, to strengthen their faith and fill them with his peace. Each receives what they need to believe in him: for Mary it was to hear her name spoken; for Thomas it was to touch Christ's wounds; for Paul it would be a life-changing encounter on the road. These are acts of mercy: Jesus' actions show us that each one of us is precious in God's eyes, and that each one of us will receive all that we need to follow him with joy.

24th April 2022

Second Sunday of Easter/
Divine Mercy Sunday



Eight days after the Risen Lord had appeared to the Twelve minus Thomas, Thomas was blessed to experience what he had longed to see for himself. But Jesus assures him that even more blessed shall be those who have not seen and yet believe. This spiritual virtue of believing without seeing speaks of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. When the Risen Christ appears to his Apostles he breathes on them the sanctifying gift of the Holy Spirit and says: 'Peace be with you.' The Apostles are filled with the Spirit and his gifts. First among these is the gift to forgive sins in the name of Jesus. God's Divine Mercy dispels the curse of sin and death and through the ministry of reconciliation in the Church we are set free. Outwardly our circumstances may not change, but whenever we allow Christ to breathe his Spirit into our lives, we are made new and receive the opportunity to start again. Blessed indeed are we if we acknowledge that even though we were dead, we are now alive in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. The Spirit of the Lord is truly upon us.

Today's Gospel: St John 20: 19-31

Elements of the Mass: Aspergilium

The aspergilium refers to the brush or silver/brass ball on the end of the stick which is dipped in the holy water bucket (aspersorium) so that the holy water can be sprinkled over people or objects. You will see the aspergilium used at Holy Baptism to sprinkle the congregation or sometimes in the Penitential Rite at Mass called 'the Asperges', when the Priest sprinkles the People with holy water to remind them of their baptism and that their sins are forgiven. During the Eastertide the aspergilium is used at the beginning of Mass for the ceremony called the 'Vidi Aquam'. The baptismal water blessed at the Easter Vigil is sprinkled over the congregation who are reminded that in the book of Revelation, the prophet sees water flowing from the right side of the Temple, just as water flowed from the right side of Christ on the cross. By this water, the water of baptism, we are all saved.
