

### Acts 3.32-35

Over the next six Sundays of the Easter season we hear the story of the earliest Christian communities. Each Eastertide, the Church puts it forward as a model for us, highlighting important aspects of their common life. This passage from Acts stresses the unity of the community and the mutual care necessary to ensure that no one is in need. The care of those in need, and particularly in financial hardship, remains a strong challenge for us today. The care of the needy is a recurrent theme in the Bible from the law codes of Israel to the epistles and beyond. As man and woman we are made in the image of God; we are to care for one another and especially for those in need, as God cares for us. We are called to foster human life and care for creation. St Luke's gospel stresses the dangers of wealth and the need to use wealth responsibly and generously. Everything we have is a gift from God, a gift given to be shared. This theme is reflected in the Acts of the Apostles where unity in heart and mind and bold proclamation of the Resurrection of the Lord is a distinctive feature of the community's common life.

#### Prayers to Remember

O Lord, who by triumphing over the power of darkness, didst prepare our place in the New Jerusalem; grant us, who have this day given thanks for thy resurrection, to praise thee in that city whereof thou art the light; where with the Father and the Holy Spirit thou livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

A Easter prayer by William Bright (1824-1901)

#### O Sing Unto the Lord

Sometime Bishop of Lincoln, Christopher Wordsworth (1807-85), is the author of several well-known hymns. Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to heaven and voices raise (NEH 103) was one of two he wrote for Easter Day. The hymn proclaims the Resurrection, looks forward to the harvest of the Second Coming, asks God's blessing on the worshippers, and concludes with a doxology. The hymn is particularly lovely due to the harvest imagery used to convey a sense of brightness and joy. The lively tune generally used Lux Eoi, is by the great Victorian composer Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900), best known for his comic operettas in partnership with the lyricist W. S. Gilbert.

11th April  
2021

The Second Sunday  
of Easter  
Divine Mercy Sunday

### Doubt to Faith



On the Second Sunday of Easter, we hear again the familiar story of the day when Jesus appears to the disciples, but Thomas is not present and will not believe until he touches the marks that the nails have made in the hands and feet of Jesus.

Poor Thomas! Since this amazing event took place, Thomas has been renamed 'doubting Thomas!' And maybe we too quickly dismiss him for this doubting and apparent lack of faith. But on the other hand, he is really a particularly good role model for us in our genuine seeing and believing. Our faith and believing ultimately cannot be based on hearsay, blind acceptance or what others have seen and believed, valid as this may be for them.

Our believing during this Easter season and our whole life must be grounded in a deep and personal encounter with Christ. The life of the risen Jesus is now within us and helps us to put aside our fears and doubts so that we can experience his peace, which is his gift to us and the whole church. The resurrection not only changed the world, but it also made all the difference in the world!

Fear is overcome by peace; doubt is transformed into a great acclamation of faith and sin is defeated by forgiveness. Today let us like Thomas reach out in faith to the risen Christ and offer our prayer in faith and hope - My Lord and my God.