

The Second Sunday of Easter YEAR C April 3, 2016

INTRODUCTIONS

In a world of cynicism and suffering, it can be tempting to see celebration as something flippant, irrelevant and heartless. However, in the light of the resurrection, and in witness to Christ, celebration takes on a prophetic character. This week as we continue to remember the resurrection of Christ and the life it brings, we are also called to the prophetic work of celebration.

May our worship be celebrative and our celebration be prophetic as we gather this week.

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

The First Reading - Acts 5: 27-32 or Job 42: 1-6

{During Easter season of, instead of reading the Hebrew Scriptures, we hear the effects of Christians preaching the truth of the resurrection}

The apostles were put in prison by the Jewish authorities for preaching the resurrection. This is Peter's defence of their action before the Sanhedrin. God's witnesses cannot keep silent.

The Psalm - Psalm 118: 14-29 or Psalm 150

The Second Reading - Revelation 1: 4-8

This Easter season we shall hear each week from the often difficult Revelation of John. This opening greeting is more than a conventional letter: it extols the glory of Jesus first-born from the dead, and the God who was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever.

The Gospel Reading - John 20: 19-31

On the first Easter evening, Jesus appears to his disciples with his habitual greeting of peace, and a gift of the Holy Spirit. Thomas must wait another week until he can see, believe, and adore.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Acts%205:%2027-32%0A%2BOR%0AJob%2042:%201-6%0Aacw%20Psalm%20118:%2014-29%0ARevelation%201:%204-8%20%0AJohn%2020:%2019-31

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

Almighty Father,
who hast given thine only Son to die for our sins,
and to rise again for our justification;

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Grant us so to put away the leaven
of malice and wickedness,
that we may always serve thee in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of the same thy Son
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect Two

Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
Grant us so to put away the leaven
of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son
Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

Gathered as believers in Christ, with the living Christ among us, let us offer prayers to God for the life of all the world.

For peace from on high and for our salvation.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.
For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For this holy gathering
and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and fear of God.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For our new brothers and sisters illumined by the light of Christ.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For our bishop and the priests, the deacons and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For the world and its leaders,
our nation and its people.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For all those in need,
the suffering and the oppressed, travellers and prisoners, the dying and the dead.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For ourselves, our families, and those we love.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

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Remembering our St N, and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.
To you, O Lord.

Presider

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, who freed us from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ. Hear the prayers we offer this day, and breathe upon us with your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

The Lord calls us to draw close and examine the wounded hands and feet of the Risen One and to know the depth of his love for us. Let us therefore approach the throne of God in confidence as we pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Lord our Father, as Jesus entered the locked room to show his disciples the beginning of a new world, so enter our hearts and move us to faith in Jesus as the Risen One. Convince us of the reality and significance of the resurrection, and free us from all manner of fears and phobias. Give us courage in the face of death, knowing that this is the gateway to new resurrected life for those who trust in Christ.

Lord, in your mercy... hear our prayer.

Be with your church throughout the world so that its preaching and works of love may continue to testify to our Lord's resurrection. Wherever your church is faithless and lacking in courage to do the work that Jesus has given, visit it and build it up with your Spirit. Be with all our pastors so that they may listen well and then speak with Christ's authority.

Lord, in your mercy... hear our prayer.

Bring peace to all parts of the earth. Wherever nations are at war and people are divided, visit and bring true reconciliation. Especially protect all Christian people in these nations, and help them to influence their country for the good of all.

Lord, in your mercy... hear our prayer.

Wherever homes are disrupted by anger and bitterness, and wherever relationships are distorted and dulled, visit and bring peace and harmony. Wherever young people are gathered in your name, visit and guide them with your holy word and wisdom.

Lord, in your mercy... hear our prayer.

Visit and comfort the sick and suffering too, dear Lord. Heal and strengthen weak bodies, calm and correct confused minds. We pray for those we know with particular needs including (*insert names*). Support them all with your great love and mercy, and be with those others known to us and whom we now name in our hearts...

Lord, in your mercy... hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we present these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is risen from the dead, and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

POST COMMUNION

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Lord God our Father,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ
you have assured your children of eternal life
and in baptism have made us one with him.
Deliver us from the death of sin
and raise us to new life in your love,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYERS

Awesome God we gather today to bring our praise and worship, and unlike the disciples of old we do not have to fear attack by the authorities for being your followers. We come Lord with loud Hosanna on our lips and in our hearts and ask that you will help us to celebrate your awesomeness. We ask you to pour out a blessing on our preacher this morning and make the words of their mouths and the mediation of all our hearts acceptable in your sight. May we be an Easter people whose song is indeed Hallelujah and Amen. With ask these things through your Son our Lord. Amen

God of mercy,
you wash away our sins in water,
you give us a new birth in the Spirit,
and redeem us in the blood of Christ.
As we celebrate Christ's resurrection,
increase our awareness of these blessings,
and renew your gift of life within us.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.
International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL)

Mighty God,
in whom we know the power of redemption,
you stand among us in the shadows of our time.
As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life,
uphold us with knowledge of the final morning
when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son,
we will share in his resurrection,
redeemed and restored to the fullness of life
and forever freed to be your people. Amen.

Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,
and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true. Amen.

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Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.

We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his
teaching them to love all people as neighbours.

As his disciples in this age,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe
in which we are privileged to live
and our neighbours with whom we share it.

Intercessions...

Open our hearts to your power moving
around us and between us and within us,
until your glory is revealed in our love of both friend and enemy,
in communities transformed by justice and compassion,
and in the healing of all that is broken. Amen.

Holy God,

you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,
and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the world.

Intercessions...

Guide us in the path of discipleship,
so that, as you have blessed us,
we may be a blessing for others,
bringing the promise of the kingdom near
by our words and deeds. Amen.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,
God invites us to bring our doubts and fears,
our joys and concerns, our petitions and praise,
and offer them for the earth and all its creatures.

Intercessions..., concluding with:

Receive these prayers, O God,
and transform us through them,
that we may have eyes to see and hearts to understand
not only what you do on our behalf,
but what you call us to do
so that your realm will come to fruition in glory. Amen.

O God,

you raised up Jesus Christ
as your faithful witness and the first-born of the dead.
By your Holy Spirit, help us to witness to him
so that those who have not yet seen

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may come to believe in him
who is, and was, and is to come. Amen.

This world would silence your name
but we will not be quiet.
This world would deny your name
but we will speak it out.
God of all beginnings,
who breathed and this world lived,
who spoke and this world moved,
who loved and brought us to a garden,
a gift of grace to provide for our needs.
God of our Salvation,
who chose a people for his own,
who spoke the Word of Life,
who poured out love, and in a garden
showed the world what love could be.
This world would silence your name
but we will not be quiet.
This world would deny your name
but we will speak it out.

For peace which passes understanding,
shalom,
your desire
for all that is good and fruitful,
all that makes us whole,
we thank you.

For grace that we do not deserve,
freedom,
your forgiveness
for all that is wrong in our lives,
all that separates us from you
we thank you.

For life poured out on a cruel Cross,
Salvation,
your mystery
of love by which all might become
the children of a heavenly King
we thank you.
Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES 1

A Peace Presence

Psalm 150; Acts 5:27-32; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31

It is amazing that the narrative of Jesus' new life-giving presence (John 20:19-31) generates bold apostolic preaching (Acts 5:27-32) that eventuates in lyrical expectation of the coming rule of God (Revelation 1:4-8).

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The narrative of John 20 concerns the doubt of the early church about Easter, and the peace-uttering presence of Jesus that overrides that uncertainty. The church reports its doubt that culminates in the affirmation of Thomas.

The apostolic preaching of Acts 5 caused early witnesses to the resurrection to be continually called “on the carpet” for asserting that the old authority of the empire had been broken by the eruption of God’s power for life. The ultimate testimony is that “We must obey God rather than any human authority” (Acts 5:29). Such defiance refers to Roman authority, but since then evokes bold witness and action in defiance of settled authority.

From that preaching comes hope that what God has begun in Easter, God will complete in the fullness of time. The lyric of Revelation 1:4-8 (matched by the lyric of Psalm 150) celebrates the fullness of God’s good rule from A to Z (alpha to omega). Such new life, lyric hope, and bold civil disobedience mean the undoing of the old world. Easter is not rumination on an odd miracle. It is rather the mounting of a new practical way in the world, a way that dazzles and threatens and ultimately transforms.

By Walter Brueggemann

LECTIONARY NOTES 2

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

While this week’s Gospel reading naturally draws us to reflect on doubt and faith, the other readings encourage a slightly different approach, which focuses instead on Thomas’s final proclamation of worship. My suspicion is that we make far more of Thomas’s doubt than Jesus does. The focus on praise, however, draws us into a whole different place. It is their faith and determination to worship Jesus that makes the disciples so bold in the face of the threats from the religious leaders. It is the worship of the Psalmist that provides the celebration at the end of the Psalter – bringing all of the lament, grief, pain and suffering that we find in those songs into this moment of final celebration. It is John’s worship of Jesus, and his faith in the Risen One, that moves him to write about his vision of hope and grace in the final consummation of Jesus’ saving work.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: The opposite of faith is not doubt, but fear, cynicism and despair. It is these negative forces that constantly lead our world into violence – from the World Wars, to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to religious conflicts like those in Nigeria recently. It is these negative forces that so often lead to oppression, exploitation and abuse of those we fear. To commit to hope and justice and life is, in the light of this, a subversive and confrontational act – as the disciples found out. The challenge, of the resurrection then, is to be people who refuse to co-operate with the forces of fear, cynicism and despair, and who work constantly to bring faith, hope, life and worship into places of fear and pain. What global movements of prayer, faith, hope and worship can you join or initiate – even if it means joining or inviting those you disagree with? It is these acts of unity that defies the power of fear and cynicism, and prophetically offers hope and life. If you live in the United States, what might this have to say about the ongoing failure of bipartisanship in your political life?

LOCAL APPLICATION: It is tempting, even in faith communities, to align ourselves only with those with whom we agree. People who are different are challenging, and move us out of our comfort zone. This can make them frightening. It is also tempting to stick with

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ideas, practices and customs that we are familiar with, because they are safe. New ideas and ways can be threatening and difficult to navigate – which is why we so often struggle with change – and so we easily find ourselves resisting them automatically. Neither response – staying only with familiar people or familiar situations – lead us into life, though. It is when we are willing to embrace the other, the new, the different, with faith, hope and love, that we enter into the life that Jesus offers. When we can believe in resurrection enough to build our lives on this faith, hope and love, then we begin to be able to move out of our safe spaces, and find life in all the unexpected places where it is hiding. What new people, new experiences, new ideas or new practices can you explore as a faith-action this week in your community?

SERMON OUTLINE

Jn 20:19-31 “My Lord & my God”

Everything had happened so fast - difficult to make sense of it all... *Early on the 1st day of the week MM had gone to the tomb & saw that the stone had been removed (20.1). Then Peter & John had run to the tomb- empty; & then Jesus appeared to Mary in the garden & she went to the disciples...*

1. The Fear of the Jews:- The disciples had witnessed the hatred & hostility of the authorities - so for security *the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for the fear of the Jews*. The future seemed bleak - disciples hiding behind locked doors - fearful frightened men...

2. The Figure of Jesus:- *Jesus came with & stood in their midst..* He had risen indeed - further reassured them with

a) his Presence - proof of the Resurrection - **1 Cor 15:5,6** - *he appeared to Peter & then to the 12. After that he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living* - story could be verified!

b) his Peace - v21 *Peace be with you*. Their troubled hearts/minds needed this peace - so too do ours/our world!

3. The Forgiveness of Sins: Jesus brought pardon, joy, peace, calm & reassurance... He gave them authority to pronounce the forgiveness of sins - *if you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.* No man can forgive sins - but it is the church's privilege to convey his message of forgiveness > **BCP Absolution:-** *He pardoneth & absolveth all them that truly repent & unfeignedly believe his holy gospel.*
By Norman Porteous

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

"Trust Jesus and Elvis," the Rev. Susan Sparks, Day 1
http://day1.org/1870-trust_jesus_and_elvis

"Exchanging the Peace," the Very Rev. Anthony F.M. Clavier, Sermons that Work
<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2013/03/26/2-easter-c-2013/>

"Opening Day," the Rev. Matthew Gaventa, Day 1
http://day1.org/4650-opening_day

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CHILDREN

[Worshiping with Children](http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2013/02/year-c-second-sunday-of-easter-april-7.html), Easter 2C, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown,
<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2013/02/year-c-second-sunday-of-easter-april-7.html>

"And Also with You," On the Chancel Steps, children's resources by Frances Woodruff
<https://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2013/03/24/also/>

Children's Sermon, Easter 2, Faith Formation Journeys
<http://faithformationjourneys.org/?p=807>

[Sermon of the Week](http://www.sermons4kids.com/) Sermons 4 Kids, Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Coloring Pages, Puzzles. Sermons4Kids.com.
<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Hallelujah! What A Saviour
How Can We Sinners Know
To God Be The Glory
Blessed Assurance
I Cannot Tell Why He Whom Angels Worship
Jesus Messiah (Link to YouTube video)
Hallelujah! What A Saviour (YouTube video)
Grace Like Rain (YouTube video)
A Tomb So Cold
Glorious (YouTube video)