

Welcome to "Virtual Grace" from Grace Episcopal Church
Honesdale, Pennsylvania



the Easter window at Grace Church

The Second Sunday of Easter

11 April 2021

PRELUDE

“O Sons and Daughters”

Hymnal #206

setting by Jean François Dandrieu

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hello and a blessed Easter to you all from Grace Episcopal Church
in Honesdale, PA.

I'm Fr. Ed Erb, rector of our parish.

We are pleased that the Church is able to be open again for in-person worship,
though we will continue offering these “Virtual Grace” broadcasts.

This week, April 10-11th, we return to our normal schedule
with Holy Communion on Saturdays at 5:00 in the handicap-accessible
Parish Hall,
and Sunday mornings at 8:00 and 10:00 in the Church.

If you are in any pastoral need,
or know anyone who would benefit from a visit,
please e-mail me or call my cell-phone.

Let us now praise our God and Savior.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

A SONG of PRAISE “*Glory to God in the highest*”

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The COLLECT of the DAY

Let us pray. *silence is kept.*

Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery established the new covenant of reconciliation: Grant that all who have been reborn into the fellowship of Christ's Body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The LESSON

Acts 4: 32-37

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"). He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Here ends the Reading.

GRADUAL

Psalm 133

- 1 Oh, how good and pleasant it is, *
when brethren live together in unity!
- 2 It is like fine oil upon the head *
that runs down upon the beard,
- 3 Upon the beard of Aaron, *
and runs down upon the collar of his robe.
- 4 It is like the dew of Hermon *
that falls upon the hills of Zion.
- 5 For there the Lord has ordained the blessing: *
life for evermore.

The HOLY GOSPEL of our Savior Jesus Christ

John 20: 19-31

✝ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, 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 the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, 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. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt 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 come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of Christ.

MEDITATION

I feel a certain affinity with St. Thomas,
he was just a little behind the rest,
"a day late, (or, in his case a week late,)
and a dollar short."

When people ask me my birthday, I give them a trivia quiz -
Figure it out.

My birthday is the first day that Easter cannot be,
and if you want to know, you can go to the back pages
of the Book of Common Prayer for the time-frame
in which Easter can fall.

Would you be surprised to know that there actually is a formula?
It has to do with the second full moon on the Thursday following the..
no, not really.

It has to do though with the Spring Equinox.

And my birthday can never be Easter - the day before, April 25th,
but never April 26th.

Oops, I've told you!

The motto of my life, and why I feel like St. Thomas -
I am a day late and usually a dollar short.

Researching that familiar phrase,

the McGraw-Hill Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrases
gives this example of how to use it:

"Tommy, you show up a day late and a dollar short all the time.
You need to get organized."

Yeah, Tommy. Where were you when Jesus appeared?

Why weren't you with the other 10 disciples that Easter night?

Did they lock the door before you could get in?

Did you misplace the invitation?

Didn't you get the e-mail?

You're always in the wrong place at the wrong time.

And so what do you do?

You make up some silly throw-away, like:

"Unless I myself see the marks in his hands, you can tell me anything.

But I'm not going to believe it!"

A simple exercise of self-justification.

Come on, be responsible, Tom!

I hold responsibility as one of the highest qualities -

be responsible for what you've done, or not done:

hold yourself accountable, and do your duty.

Sadly, we clergy see a lot who play the system.

And it is hard not to be a "bleeding heart" at times,

and to be taken advantage of,

giving out discretionary funds to anyone who comes in the door.

Yet, the cynic must come into play at times as well:

"Unless I'm sure of the marks and am convinced of your need,

I won't give you a voucher for food."

Where is the Gospel in that?

What is the message of the Apostles today?

With great power the Apostles testified to the risen Christ, and great grace was given them all. Everyone who had property sold it and laid the money at the Apostles' feet and the profits were distributed to anyone who was in need."

Thomas, after all this, went to the far extremes of the known world,

to preach the Gospel and establish the Church in India,

known to this day as the Mar Thomas.

In a sense, he repented of his incredulous nature,

and became responsible for believing.

To what end are you willing to go to witness to the risen Christ,

and experience both the peace and the joy of believing?

Some of our parish family will be thus challenged

when they are confirmed in a few weeks standing before the Bishop,
whose charge it is to guard and proclaim the Apostolic Faith,
to be convinced of their belief in the Risen Christ.

The rest of us will join with them as faithful witnesses.

Don't be late.

Catch the e-mail.

And be present with our new Apostles

when Jesus moves their hearts,
convinces them of the reality of his salvation,
and then be sent out to proclaim the Good News of Redemption.

Blessed are you who believe.

And blessed are those who have not seen,

yet still believe for themselves what others have seen and heard,
and proclaimed.

Let us together shout,

“Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Jesus is risen indeed! Alleluia!”

APOSTLES' CREED

Let us proclaim that faith, using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbors.

CONFESSION of Sin

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive all our sins through the grace of
Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit
keep us in eternal life. *Amen.*

PRAYERS, Form II, adapted BCP, p.385

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for Justin, the
Archbishop of Canterbury; Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Kevin, our Bishop;
and for all ministers and faithful. Pray for our parish family, and the Church
throughout the world.

I ask your prayers for peace; for Joe and Kamala, President and Vice President
of our country; for Tom our Governor; Sarah, our mayor; for goodwill among
nations; and for the well-being of all people. Pray for justice and peace in our
country, in our homes and abroad.

I ask your prayers for the poor, the hungry, the oppressed, those in prison,
those separated from loved ones, for the sick, the crippled, the disabled and
those suffering from Covid-19 symptoms. Pray for those in any need or
trouble.

I ask your prayers for the departed, those who have succumbed to the virus, and those killed by violent acts. Pray for those who have died.

I ask your thanksgiving for loved ones, and the creative ways they and we have found to share our love, especially in this holy season. Pray for our families wherever they may be.

To sum up all these petitions, let us pray the words which Christ has taught us:

Our Father...

SEASONAL BLESSING for EASTER

May Almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.

POSTLUDE

“ *‘Little’ Fugue in B^b*”

J. S. Bach