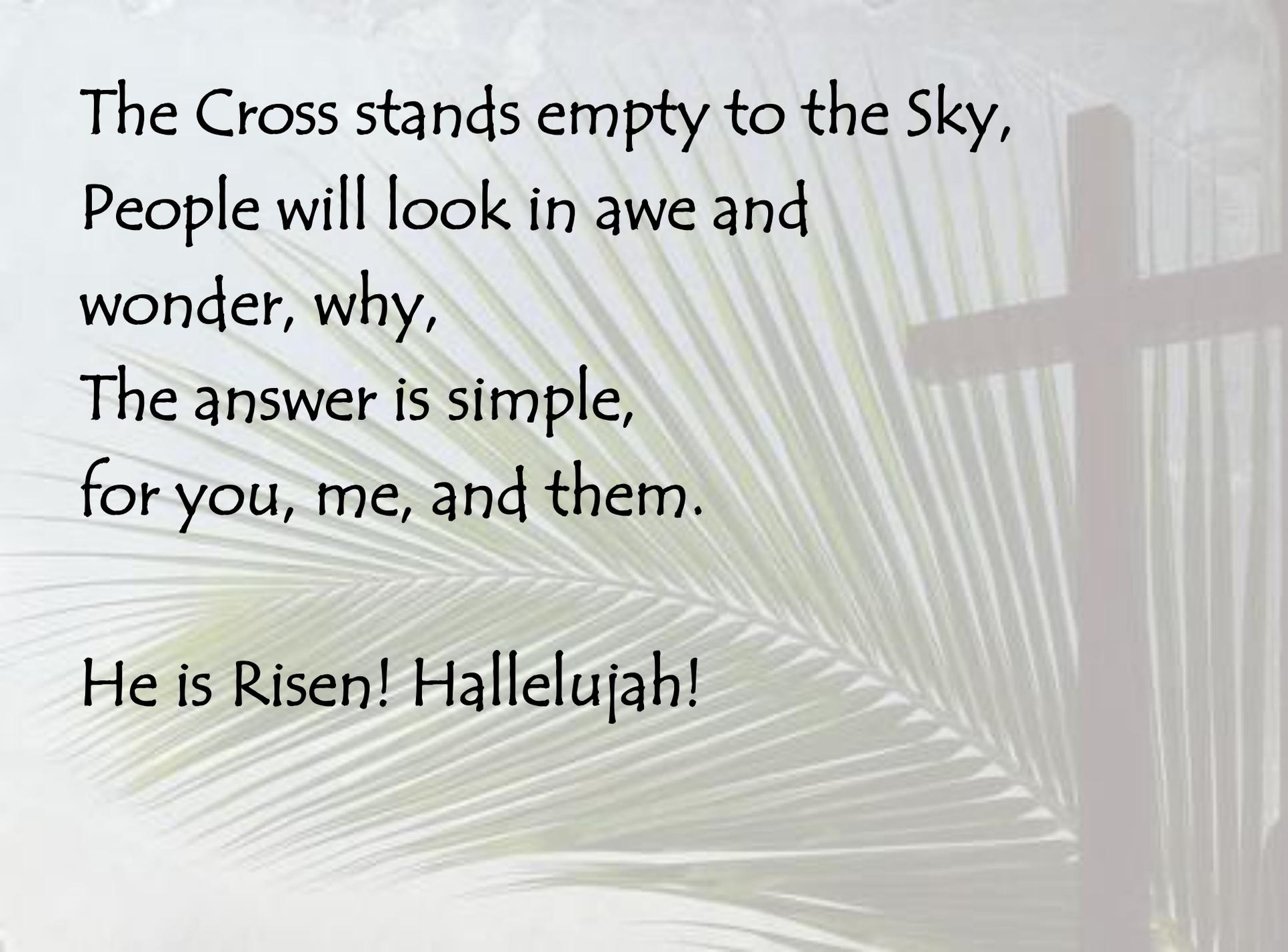


South Leicestershire Group
United Reformed Church
Second Sunday of Easter
19th April 2020

'Oh Lord ,uphold us so that we may extol thee;
give grace to us and all who will read these words understanding
so that our love for you will grow day by day, Amen.

This power point is intended for personal use, hymns have
been reproduced under SWURC CCL 543786



The Cross stands empty to the Sky,
People will look in awe and
wonder, why,
The answer is simple,
for you, me, and them.

He is Risen! Hallelujah!

1. Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
His cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
His love in death shall never die.

2. Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
he comes to claim the here and now,
and conquer every place and time.

3. Not throned above, remotely high,
untouched, unmoved by human pains
but daily, in the midst of life,
our Saviour, with the Father reigns.

4 In every insult, rift and war,
where colour, scorn or wealth divide,
he suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, though ever crucified.

5 Christ is alive! His Spirit burns
through this and every future age,
till all creation lives and learns
his joy, his justice, love and praise.

Brian Wren (1936-)

© Oxford University Press
R & S260 Truro in D

Come before your risen Lord and confess all that you have done wrong. Come with a penitent heart,

Confess your sins.

Take a few moments to remember those things that you might have done in a different way.

Spend a few moments of quiet and ask for God's forgiveness



Jesus said
'Your sins are forgiven'

He also said
'Go, do not sin again'

Let us go forward
Knowing that we are
forgiven



NIKE'S SLOGAN, "JUST DO IT," WAS INSPIRED BY THE LAST WORDS OF GARY GILMORE, A MURDERER ON DEATH ROW!



A SPECIAL BICENTENNIAL FLAG STOLEN IN 1976 FROM A PARK IN MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, WAS RETURNED BY A REMORSEFUL THIEF IN 2014 — WITH AN APOLOGY.

Submitted By
Richard Gibson, Lafayette, La.

www.gocomics.com

www.ripleys.com



GUGULOTHU LACHIRAM, FROM KHAMMAM, INDIA, PERFORMS YOGA WHILE RIDING A MOTORBIKE!

There are some stories that are more outrageous than others – what would you believe?

Would you believe it?

Jesus Christ was found guilty

Jesus Christ was beaten

Jesus Christ was forced to carry his cross

Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross
Mocked, humiliated and died on the cross

Jesus Christ was buried in a borrowed tomb

Jesus Christ rose from the dead
and was seen by many people!

2nd Sunday after Easter

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1:3-9

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

John 20:19-31

Psalm 16

1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

2 I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.

4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

5 The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

7 I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.

8 I keep the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.

10 For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful
one see the Pit.

11 You show me the path of life.

In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand
are pleasures forevermore.

1 Hail the day that sees him rise,
Alleluia!
taken from our wondering eyes!
Alleluia!
Christ, awhile to mortals given,
Alleluia!
Re-ascends his native heaven.
Alleluia!

2 There the glorious triumph waits:
Alleluia!
lift your heads, eternal gates;
Alleluia!
Christ has conquered death and sin;
Alleluia!
let the King of glory in!
Alleluia!

3 Though returning to his throne,
Alleluia!
still he calls the world his own;
Alleluia!
him though highest heaven receives,
Alleluia!
still he loves the world he leaves.
Alleluia!

4 See! he lifts his hands above;
Alleluia!
see! he shows the prints of love;
Alleluia!
hark! his gracious lips bestow
Alleluia!
blessings on his Church below.
Alleluia!

Cont'd)

5 Still for us he intercedes,
Alleluia!
his prevailing death he pleads;
Alleluia!
near himself prepares our place,
Alleluia!
first-fruits of our human race.
Alleluia!

6 There we shall with thee remain,
Alleluia!
partners of thine endless reign;
Alleluia!
there thy face unclouded see,
Alleluia!
find our heaven of heavens in thee.
Alleluia!

Charles Wesley (1707-88) alt. *
Mission Praise 202(382)
Rejoice & Sing 252

2nd Sunday after Easter

Psalm 16

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

John 20:19-31

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

19 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." 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side.

Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." 22 When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

24 But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 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."

26 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."

27 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."

28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

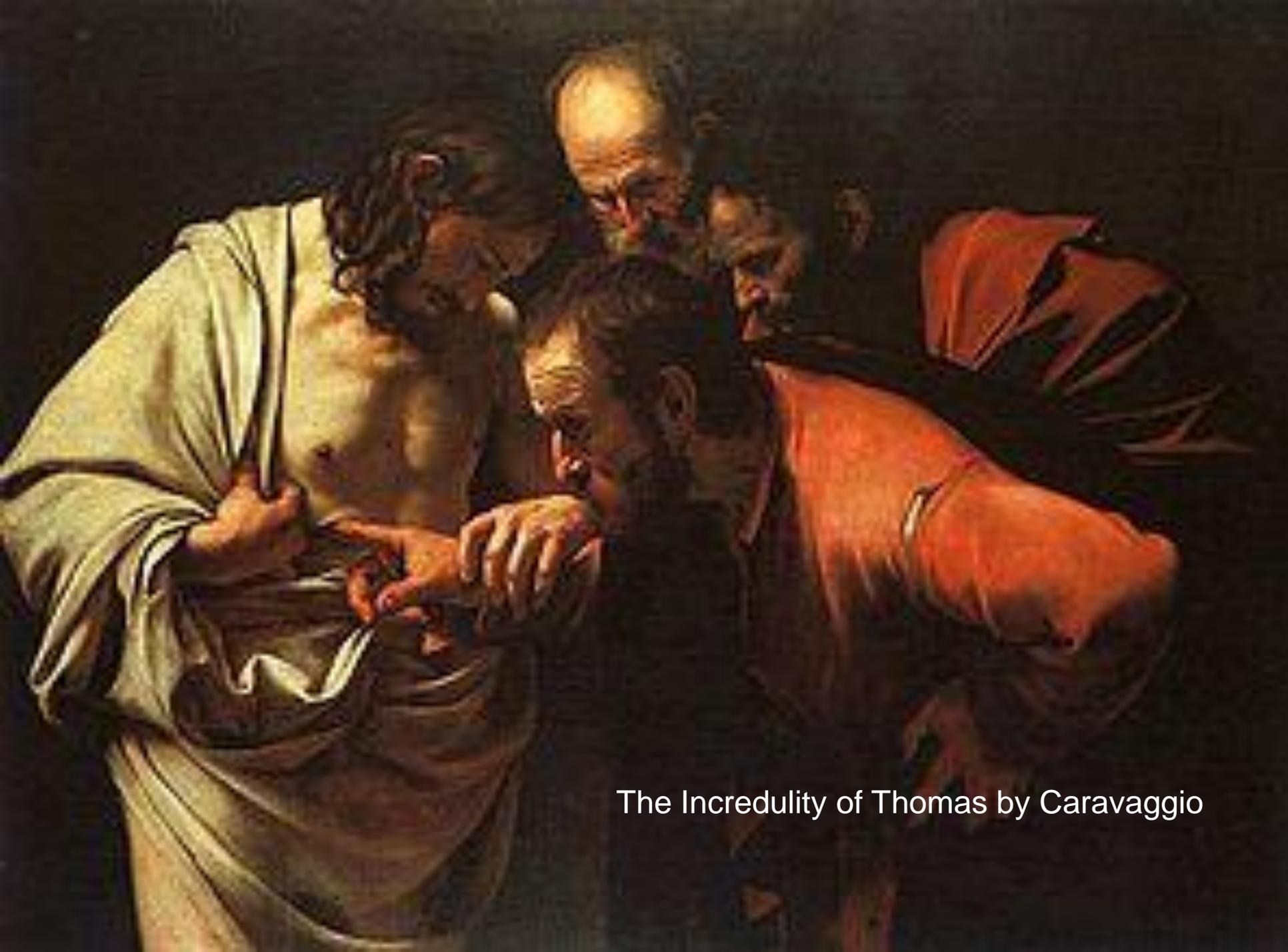
29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

31 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.

This the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God



The Incredulity of Thomas by Caravaggio

'Believe it or not, I can tell you that this really happened.....' I wonder how many conversations have begun in that way. Usually when someone starts a sentence with that phrase or something like it we are usually in for either a weird piece of truth or a complete fabrication designed to impress us. Today's Gospel reading from The Gospel According to St. John sees the other disciples recounting to Thomas that they had seen the Lord, I wonder how Thomas must have felt when he heard that piece of news? He must have felt a little sceptical, but how did he rationalise that all the other disciples were telling him the same story? He must have felt left out and deprived! It would not be unreasonable to excuse Thomas and his doubts, but we must remember however, that he was the only disciple to volunteer to go with Jesus to Jerusalem to die (John 11:16) he also suggested that all the disciples should share the fate of Jesus.

This Gospel reading is about believing and having faith in Jesus. Thomas, poor man, is feeling left out at the start of the reading, the other disciples have received from Jesus the power and authority to forgive sins, 'Jesus' breathed on them, (something that he couldn't do today because of the restrictions), but he breathed on them signifying the passing on of the Holy Spirit and the giving of the power of forgiveness. The fledgling church was beginning to develop its gifts. Thomas, was rightly indignant, why should he have been left out? Did Jesus know that he was not with the disciples? Thomas displays the same levels of incredulity that we sometimes display when we try to rationalise some of the Gospel stories. How do we rationalise the feeding of thousands of folk with only five loaves and two fishes? How do we rationalise giving sight to the blind? Or healing the lame? Or raising those who had died back to life? It doesn't ring true sometimes; for many theologians a lot of the miracles can be explained away, but for me that isn't the way, the best way to accept that these things happened and not to reduce the Gospel miracles to the rationalisation and limitation of our intellect.

The fact is these things happened in the power of God aka Jesus, aka the Holy Spirit! The same goes for the resurrection, Jesus is seen by at least 500 people, he eats and drinks with the disciples, he prepares them and us, for a new life in the Spirit of God; Thomas was lucky, he had a week to mull things over, a week to assess what had happened without him. But when Jesus made contact with him, there was no doubt that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead. As we have seen in Caravaggio's representation of Thomas and Jesus; Jesus shows Thomas the wounds, Thomas has his finger physically inserted by Jesus, who looks to be guiding Thomas' finger into the gaping spear wound, this prompts the declaration of 'My Lord and My God' and brings Thomas onto an equal footing with the other disciples. Jesus understands that there will be times when we do not fully comprehend his Divinity, but it is an individual journey of faith that we have to undertake, just like Thomas did, but it is a journey that will have only one destination, our eternal life with God. Amen.

Have faith in God, my heart,
trust and be unafraid;
God will fulfil in every part
each promise he has made.

Have faith in God, my mind,
although your light burns low;
God's mercy holds a wiser plan
than you can fully know.

Have faith in God, my soul,
his cross for ever stands;
and neither life nor death can pluck
his children from his hands.

Lord Jesus, make me whole;
grant me no resting-place,
until I rest, heart, mind and soul,
the captive of your grace.

Bryn A. Rees (1911-83) altd.
© Mrs M Rees
Rejoice & Sing 499

2nd Sunday after Easter

Psalm 16

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

John 20:19-31

1 Peter 1:3-9

^{14a} But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,

²² "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know—²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law.

²⁴ But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power.

²⁵ For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. ²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption.

²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' ²⁹ "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, 'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.' ³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

Is this the same Peter that denied Jesus three times? Surely it cannot be? Here, we have a man who is so passionate about the way that Jesus died and the way Jesus overcame death and sin, that he is willing to stand up and be counted. He is so passionate that he gives those around him a lecture on the history of the Jews and their relationship with God, even to the point of highlighting the royal links that Jesus had with the most revered King of Israel, David. He also points out that the crowd were responsible for the death of Jesus despite the fact that they had witnessed many deeds of Jesus, the healings and the raising of the dead, and still they hadn't believed that Jesus was the Son of God, they hadn't had enough courage to go against the Temple Leaders. Perhaps we are a bit like them when we fail to stand up for the rights of Christians in the modern civilised world of ours? Perhaps we fail Jesus when we fail to object to bad moral pathways? Perhaps we need to be like Peter willing to stand up and be counted, even when we feel not encouraged to do so.

There have been times in my life when I was challenged but I wasn't sure, I shied away from my responsibilities as a Christian, I used to hide away my faith because the three things that was most likely to divide people in the armed forces was Politics, Religion and Sport. So you tended not to speak of these things. I remember a time when over a lunch time I would get out my 'Dobson' (Greek Language Primer) and look at the New Testament in Greek and try and make sense of this strange New Testament Language, one of my colleagues noticed what I was doing and asked me about it, we had a fascinating conversation and we discussed for the whole of that lunch hour New Testament stories, from then on we had many discussions (all in our lunch hour) they ranged from Ethics, Law, Miracles, it was a fascinating time. Peter was a changed man, full of confidence, no doubts whatsoever of his mission in life, a mission that would indeed end in his death, but he would have changed the course of human history by his testimony. We might not change the course of history, but we can change people's lives so that they can come and know the love of God, I suppose if you change one life you have changed history. Let us do just that as we continue to grow in confidence, and in the faith, that will see us worshipping God with all the saints who have gone on before us, singing the praise of God and being enfolded in the Love of God, forever. Amen.

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down!
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

2 Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

3 Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee;
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place;
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love and praise.

Charles Wesley (1707-88)
Songs of Fellowship 377
Mission Praise 449(149)
Rejoice & Sing 663

OFFERTORY

We offer up to God the gifts that we have

*We ask that you bless these gifts and bless us too
As we work for you.*

*Take these gifts and use them and us
to the glory of your Holy name
AMEN*

As we have all been unable to hold fund raising events at our churches I am making a special appeal, please give a one off donation to your church funds So that we can continue to maintain the fabric of the buildings and that there is money towards the cost of keeping the buildings in good condition in readiness for our return to normality (whatever you may have spent at any of the fundraisers across the Group, Thank you.

Please note – please put aside your weekly offering or if you haven't already done so consider setting up a weekly/monthly bank transfer, all treasurers across the Group will be able to give you the necessary information for you to do this

THANK YOU

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for all who are affected by the virus

Lord in your mercy, hear our Prayer

We pray especially for those health and care workers who have lost their lives

Lord in your mercy, hear our Prayer

We pray for the anxious, the lonely and the lost

Lord in your mercy, hear our Prayer

We pray for the church dispersed and in lock down

Lord in your mercy, hear our Prayer

We pray for the families learning together

Lord in your mercy, hear our Prayer

We pray for those of our fellowships who are suffering alone

Especially

Use this space to pray for issues/people known to you and known to God

Lord in your infinite grace and mercy, hear these prayers of your people, we ask this in the name of Jesus, Amen

1 At the name of Jesus
every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him
King of glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.

2 Humbled for a season,
to receive a Name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
he became a witness,
faithful to the last,
and returned victorious,
when from death he passed.

3 In your hearts enthrone him;
there let him make new
all that is not holy,
all that is not true.
He is God the saviour
He is Christ the Lord,
ever to be worshipped,
trusted and adored.

4 When this same Lord Jesus
shall appear again
in his Father's glory,
there with him to reign,
then may we adore him,
all before him bow,
as our hearts confess him
King of glory now.



STAY HOME

**PROTECT
THE NHS**

SAVE LIVES

Minister's Contact details

 0116 271 4751 (Office and answerphone.)

email : richard.eastman163@gmail.com



May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ

The Love of God and the

Fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Be with us all now and forevermore,

AMEN

