



**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**Second Sunday of Easter**

**The Beacon Parishes Mission Community of Ipplepen with Torbryan,  
Denbury, Broadhempston and Woodland**

**FIRST READING**

**Acts 2.22-32**

'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— 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. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. 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;  
therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;  
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.  
For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,  
or let your Holy One experience corruption.  
You have made known to me the ways of life;  
you will make me full of gladness with your presence."

'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. 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. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

"He was not abandoned to Hades,  
nor did his flesh experience corruption."

This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

**SECOND READING**

**John 20.19-end**

**Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

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.'

**Jesus and Thomas**

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.'

## **The Purpose of This Book**

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.

## **A REFLECTION BY TESSA AMIES**

What a strange Easter! So barren and bereft in some ways yet joyful and full of hope in others. Luckily the Easter message is not just for one day, it goes on for ever. Churches were empty. We, the church, had moved outside into our homes, our gardens, fields and woods. Perhaps that's where we are meant to be?

The Easter cross, full of flowers on the cistern in Denbury, proclaiming the Good News, the Hope to all who passed by. The wonders of IT and technology bringing Easter hymns and prayers straight to our arm chairs. The Archbishop of Canterbury celebrating the Eucharist from his kitchen. (It meant a bit of a tidy up he admitted!) He began his address with a short story - you may have heard it:-

"Towards the end of the last war, two soldiers sat in their tent discussing what they wanted to do when the war was over. The younger one, who had just finished his architect's training before the war, let slip that he wanted to build a cathedral. The older soldier smiled knowingly to himself. A strange wish, an ambitious wish, a dream, a bit of a vision perhaps. Only two cathedrals had been built in England since Wren had built St. Paul's in the late C17th. The younger man's name was Basil Spence, later Sir Basil Spence and within twenty years of the war finishing he had won the competition to design and build Coventry Cathedral, consecrated in 1962. Ambition, inspiration, dedication and hope."

Our readings today are full of dreams, inspiration and above all hope. For the next few Sundays, the readings come from the Acts of the Apostles instead of the Old Testament; finding out how the ordinary people of the day were inspired to lay the foundations of the early Church. We start today with the second half of Peter's great proclamation at Pentecost. Peter who only a short while ago had denied Christ, but now who was the leader and the spokesman for the Apostles. He had the confidence, inspiration and hope to stand up before the crowd and declare the teachings and actions of Jesus and his death and resurrection.

Our Gospel reading today is one of the appearances of Christ to the Apostles after the resurrection. Wonderful events. Today's is about Thomas, sometimes wrongly (to my mind) called Doubting Thomas. A man who needed actual proof. A man who did not quite believe in the resurrection until he had seen and touched the wounds in Jesus' hands and side. Then he believed and was able to proclaim;- 'My Lord and my God'.

Finally - Rainbows! - Walk through our villages and you cannot but notice all the rainbows in the windows, especially in the windows where children live. Painting, colouring, paper, all sorts of rainbows. Yes, these are to remind us to thank the NHS for all they are doing at the present time, to remember the doctors, nurses and all those who work on the front line in our prayers. The rainbow is a sign of hope and trust of God's love and inspiration. Look up Genesis 9 to read the story of Noah, the flood, the rainbow and God's promise:-

"I have set my rainbow in the sky and it will be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth."

Look to the rainbow. In these dark times we need to look for our dreams, our inspiration, our faith and love and above all HOPE - and may God be with you.