

1. Read (Seek) — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate (Find) — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray (Ask) — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate (Taste) — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence. **How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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[1] John 11:16

[2] St. Gregory the Great, Homilies on the Gospels, 26, 7

[3] The Church's Year pg. 270

[4] John 20:29

[5] The Jerome Biblical Commentary pg. 464

[6] In Conversation with God 2.54.2

[7] Mark 9:24

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? John 20:19-31 — Pg. 1

What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3

What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4

Gospel Reading – John 20:19-31 – Daily Roman Missal

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. 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.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to 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 into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.” Thomas answered and said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.” Now, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings (Sunday within the Octave)

From a sermon by Saint Augustine, bishop

I speak to you who have just been reborn in baptism, my little children in Christ, you who are the new offspring of the Church, gift of the Father, proof of Mother Church's fruitfulness. All of you who stand fast in the Lord are a holy seed, a new colony of bees, the very flower of our ministry and fruit of our toil, my joy and my crown. It is the words of the Apostle that I address to you: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh and its desires, so that you may be clothed with the life of him whom you have put on in this sacrament. You have all been clothed with Christ by your baptism in him. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female; you are all one in Christ Jesus. Such is the power of this sacrament: it is a sacrament of new life which begins here and now with the forgiveness of all past sins, and will be brought to

completion in the resurrection of the dead. You have been buried with Christ by baptism into death in order that, as Christ has risen from the dead, you also may walk in newness of life...This is the octave day of your new birth. Today is fulfilled in you the sign of faith that was prefigured in the Old Testament by the circumcision of the flesh on the eighth day after birth. When the Lord rose from the dead, he put off the mortality of the flesh; his risen body was still the same body, but it was no longer subject to death. By his resurrection he consecrated Sunday, or the Lord's day. Through the third after his passion, this day is the eighth after the Sabbath, and thus also the first day of the week.

Saint Thomas the Apostle – Lesson and Discussion

“Unless I see the mark of the nails...I will not believe.”

Who is Thomas? Thomas was one of the twelve Apostles. He was known as a “twin” but we do not know anything of the other twin. He is mentioned in all four gospels, but it is in John's Gospel that he has pivotal roles. First, when Jesus went back to see and raise Lazarus from the dead, Thomas knowing their lives would be endangered, spoke up to the others and said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him"[1] He also spoke up at the Last Supper asking how and where Jesus was going. Of course, the climax of his story in the Gospel was his doubting Jesus rose from the dead because he was not present the first time Jesus appeared to the other Apostles.

Why was he not in the upper room with the other apostles? There is no specific reason, written or known, why Thomas was not present when Jesus first appeared. St. Gregory the Great, however, gives an explanation of why Thomas would be missing. “Surely it was not by chance that this chosen disciple was missing in the first place? Or that on his return he heard, that hearing he doubted, that doubting he touched, and that touching he believed? It was by divine dispensation and not by chance that things so fell out. God's mercy worked wonderfully, for when that doubting disciple touched his Master's wounded flesh he cured the wound of our disbelief...So this doubting disciple, who actually touched, became a witness to the reality of the resurrection.”[2]

Why does he doubt? Can we honestly blame Thomas for doubting? In just seventy-two hours, he was eating supper with Jesus, and then saw Him arrested, tried, and sentenced to death. Thomas knew Jesus was dead. Now, his friends were telling him that Jesus was alive again. It is understandable for Thomas to question and even doubt that this could be true. It is through faith that we believe Jesus is God, and the Catholic Church is the one true Church He founded, and God is guiding it through the Holy Spirit. God permitted Thomas to doubt because as St. Gregory says, we should be strengthened in humble belief in the Resurrection of Christ. “When Jesus did come to Thomas all fears and doubts were removed”.[3] **When have there been times you doubted? When was a time when something was “too good to be true”?**
Discuss a time when you may have doubted but later found out

what you doubted to be true.

Why did Jesus come back again for Thomas? It was a merciful act of bursting through Thomas' disbelief and doubts. It was so Thomas may fully embrace everything Jesus was, is, and ever will be. The Gospel of John is also speaking to us when Jesus says, “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed”[4] We should never doubt that Jesus is our Lord, who died, and rose again. If we believe this, we will be blessed as Jesus promised.

Why did he proclaim, “My lord and my God”? St. Thomas, who is referred as the “doubter”, makes the most complete affirmation of Christ's nature in all of the Scriptures.[5] These five simple words were confessed and speak of the true divinity of Jesus. Thomas through his faith has professed that Jesus indeed is the Son of God. “His faith springs not so much from the evidence of seeing Jesus as from an immense sorrow. It isn't so much the proof, as his love, that leads him to adoration and to renewing his apostolate.”[6]

What did St. Thomas do after he saw Jesus? After witnessing the resurrection of Jesus, Thomas traveled the greatest distance of any of the Apostles away from Jerusalem. He is responsible for bringing Christianity Eastward to present day Afghanistan, Syria, and as far as India. He was a martyr in India, and his Shrine is still there today. To this day, the western and southern part of India is heavily Catholic, while the northern and eastern parts are Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim.

While Thomas gets a bad rep for “doubting” Jesus' resurrection, his emphatic statement, “My lord and my God” clearly shows his doubt was removed. He traveled further than any other Apostle and is a great witness for all of us who have any doubts in our faith to no longer doubt, but to proclaim Jesus Christ as our king and our Lord. In the Gospel's, there is a simple prayer uttered by the father of a son who was healed by Jesus. The Father says, “I do believe, help my unbelief.”[7] This is also the prayer of Saint Thomas and the prayer of every Christian. We believe, but yet we struggle with unbelief. We know, love and serve God, yet God is still a mystery, we prefer other things to the love of God at times and we serve self rather than God. This one short prayer sums up the desire of our hearts and the reality of our thoughts and actions. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.