

Lectionary Texts for April 8, 2018 • *Second Sunday after Easter - Year B*
Acts 4:32-35 • Psalm 133 • 1 John 1:1-2:2 • John 20:19-31



John 20:19-31

The Incredulity of Saint Thomas, 1601-1602

by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, Italian, 1571-1610

Oil on canvas

Sanssouci Picture Gallery, Potsdam, Germany

The composition of four heads arranged in a diamond, the strong lighting from the left, the absence of any background details — all combine to distill the story to its essence. The three disciples are ordinary men, with wrinkled, sunburned faces and torn clothing. The intensity within their eyes and on their faces emphasizes the astonishment and surprise that they are registering. Their eyes are focused upon the place where finger meets wound, where the miracle is proved to be true.

Continued

Vincenzo Giustiniani, an aristocratic Italian banker, intellectual, and art collector, was a patron of Caravaggio and commissioned this painting. His support likely played a significant role in Caravaggio's becoming one of the leading painters in early 17th-century Rome, transforming the depiction of Christian belief.

Caravaggio used models to obtain a realistic physical and emotional presence to his paintings, and dramatic use of lighting added to their realism. His religious paintings showed the moment of action, the critical moment of the narrative. Trained in Milan, he moved to Rome in 1692 where he developed a significant reputation as an artist. A brawl led to a death sentence for murder, and he fled to Naples, Malta, Sicily, and back to Naples. He died in 1610 under uncertain circumstances as he was making his way back to Rome.

Art curated and narrative provided by Norman Mahan

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Acts 4:32-35

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.

Psalm 133

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.

It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore.

1 John 1:1-2:2

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eter-

nal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

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.