

## Second Sunday of Easter

Sunday, April 27, 2025

### Introduction to the day

In spite of all we have heard and all we have seen, it is often hard to believe. Because it is hard to believe, we will invest ourselves in the Easter mystery for fifty days (a week of weeks). Because it is hard to believe, John the evangelist will provide sign after sign celebrating Jesus' victory over death. Because it is hard to believe, the risen Jesus will return to us again and again in the mystery of Holy Communion, inviting us to touch and taste his presence, and offering us his peace.

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, with joy we celebrate the festival of our Lord's resurrection. Graciously help us to show the power of the resurrection in all that we say and do; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen**

### FIRST LESSON: Acts 5:27-32

A reading from Acts.

*Peter has been arrested for proclaiming the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. His response to the charges of the high priest summarizes the early church's proclamation of forgiveness of sin through repentance.*

### PSALM: Psalm 118:14-29

You are my God, and I will exalt you. (Ps. 118:28)

### SECOND LESSON: Revelation 1:4-8

A reading from Revelation.

*The book of Revelation recounts a mystical vision of the risen Christ experienced by a Christian prophet named John. Here he describes Christ as a timeless redeemer, the beginning, present, and end of all time.*

### GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

The Holy Gospel according to \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ chapter.

*The unprecedented events of the day of resurrection continue as the risen Jesus appears to his fearful disciples. A week later, after Thomas worships Jesus, Jesus pronounces that the blessings of the resurrection are also for those who "have not seen and yet believe."*

### SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER - Scar Stories

Do you know a person without any scars? It is hard to imagine anyone getting through the years without a few cuts and scrapes, or worse. Some scars we regard with a sense of humor, even pride. These tend to be the marks of superficial injuries that we describe in stories with mostly happy endings. But other scars lay bare deeper physical and emotional pain—the scars of trauma, heartbreak, loss. These are precisely the wounds that benefit most from the attentiveness of others but may be harder to talk about.

If you were to guess what physical form the risen Jesus would take on Easter evening, would you imagine that any sign of suffering and shame would remain? And yet, his scars are intact. What remarkable continuity between the Jesus the disciples have known and the Jesus they encounter in resurrection.

Even more remarkable is Jesus' readiness to draw attention to his scars. "Peace be with you," he greets them (John 20:19). Then he immediately shows them his hands and his side, as if to say, "See my scars? These are the signs of my suffering. They will always be part of me, even though I've overcome them."

In this way, Jesus models courageous vulnerability. If he can tell his scar story, defying the shame of the cross, then maybe his friends can tell theirs too. Rather than locking their pain away, the disciples have permission to throw open the doors. They can own their grief instead of letting it own them.

Easter does not erase Good Friday. Risen life incorporates our scars. But by acknowledging our pain and the pain of others, we bear one another's burdens in the spirit of Christ. This mutual caring engenders trust and closeness. And together we can tell our scar stories with confidence, making way for healing and new life.

### **THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Inspire the church with the breath of your Holy Spirit, that we sing the good news of the resurrection. Inspire deacons and pastors, lay leaders and bishops to boldly proclaim your love for all people. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Preserve the earth as a safe home for all creatures. Restore habitats contaminated by pollution or overuse, strengthen efforts to shape more sustainable communities, and make us mindful of the impacts of our daily lives on the well-being of creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Kindle in the nations a spirit of cooperation and mutual care. Raise up creative and courageous leaders committed to shaping just solutions to complex challenges in our local and global communities. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Embrace all who carry wounds, that they might know your compassion. Draw near to those with chronic pain or anxiety, and all for whom death is near. Comfort individuals and communities suffering in any way *especially* Linda Boland, Shirley Glickman, Donna L. Hoffman, Cassie Jessup, Bill Lorbetskie, Glenda Panke, Barry Rogers, Marilyn Schneider, Danny Schultz, Doug Sell, Debbie Thom, Keith Weckwerth, Elaine Yourth, Stephanie Yourth, and those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts those who need your healing touch. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Transform our fear into curiosity and love, especially across differences in race, religion, sexuality, gender identity, and economic situation. Unravel stereotypes that lead to discrimination, and destroy oppressive systems that marginalize vulnerable communities. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember the faithful departed from all times and places. Confident that you are the Alpha and Omega, we pray for your wisdom and guidance until our earthly pilgrimage is complete. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior. **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

### **BLESSING**

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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