



# 32A ONLINE LITURGY

## EASTER 2A

Peace be with you

### Abstract

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."  
John 20:26

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## 32A Online Liturgy Easter 2A

Peace be with you

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2020 | EASTER | SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER  
YEAR A

*First Reading* Acts 2:14a, 22–32  
*Psalm* Psalm 16  
*New Testament* 1 Peter 1:3–9  
*Gospel* John 20:19–31

### John 20.19-31

The risen Jesus appears among his disciples when Thomas is absent. Jesus breathes on them and says, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'. A week later, Jesus appears again and speaks to Thomas directly. Thomas cries out, 'My Lord and my God!'

**This week's resources explore:** accepting the invitation to embrace the risen Jesus.

Slide	Text
	<p><b>Pre-Service</b></p> <p>TIS #390 – "ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA, GIVE THANKS TO THE RISEN LORD" (verse 1 only)</p>
	<p><b>Greeting</b></p> <p>May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all</p>
	<p><b>We Gather</b></p> <p>Come, embrace the risen Christ. Come, embrace the Prince of peace. Come, embrace his pierced hands. Come, meet your Lord and your God.</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i> We are the people of God. Risen Lord, as we gather today, may we see you and hear you, may we feel you and touch you, may we know your presence with us now. Amen.</p>

	<p><b>Hymn/song</b> TIS #376 – “I know that my redeemer lives” (11 I Know That My Redeemer Lives)</p>
	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>There are some very well-known optical illusions available (<a href="#">it might be helpful to look at two or three examples</a>. what do you see)?</p> <p>They work because our brains easily miss things when we’re not expecting to see them.</p> <p>Thomas was convinced that Jesus was dead, and the dead do not come back to life! Even when his friends had all told him that they had seen Jesus, Thomas refused to believe.</p> <p>Part of the life Jesus invites us into is one where our blind spots are gently revealed, so that we can appreciate more of who God is.</p> <p>Has God ever surprised you in the way he surprised Thomas? If not, is it possible that you are missing seeing God because you don’t expect to see him?</p> <p>The resurrection stories in John’s Gospel often centre on a particular character. It is as if John is saying: if you want to understand what this event means, look closely at what it meant for this individual (e.g. Peter during the trials of Jesus Mary Magdalene at the tomb).</p> <p>Here we see the disciples’ encounter with the risen Jesus through the prism of Thomas’ unique experience of being left out of the group, and then being included when Jesus speaks directly to him.</p> <p>There is a common thread running between these two encounters one week apart: it is crucial that the disciples realise that this is truly the one who was crucified.</p> <p>Jesus shows them his hands and his side, and he says to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here and see my hands.’ It is only when they all see the continuity between the one who suffered and the risen one that they know that they are not seeing a ghost or a vision.</p> <p>Death and resurrection are found to be equally real, and so the disciples rejoice and Thomas utters one of the most profound statements of the early creeds: ‘My Lord and my God!’</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i> As the disciples in the locked room reached out and touched you,</p>

	<p>let us reach out and touch you today, living Lord Jesus.          Let us feel your scarred hands and feet.          Let us put our hands in your side.          Let us be still                  and know that you are our Lord and our God.          Amen.</p>
	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>John 20:19–31</p> <p><i>respond</i>          For the word of the Lord  <b>Thanks be to God</b></p>
	<p><b>Hymn/song/video</b></p> <p>See/hear the video here <a href="https://youtu.be/cBcdekLiNZw">https://youtu.be/cBcdekLiNZw</a></p> <p>Dale and David McGregor have written a reflective piece called We've Lit a Candle – for these COVID-19 times and directly inspired by the prayer the Scottish churches offered for a National Day of Prayer from 22 March 2020 inviting folk to place a lit candle in their front window and offer this prayer:</p> <p>For all that is good in life, thank you,          For the love of family and friends, thank you,          For the kindness of good neighbour and Samaritan stranger,                  thank you.</p> <p>May those who are vulnerable, hungry or homeless, experience support,          May those who are sick, know healing,          May those who are anxious or bereaved, sense comfort.          Bless and guide political leaders and decision-makers, with wisdom,          Bless and guide health workers and key workers, with strength and well-being,          Bless and guide each one of us, as we adapt to a new way of living.          And may the light shining from our windows,          ** across road and lane, hill and valley, channel and isle,          be reflected in our hearts and hands and hopes.          Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.          ** <i>I've loosely translated the original Scottish English words through this line.</i></p>
	<p><b>We say Sorry</b></p> <p>Prince of peace, we are sorry                  that we choose not to forgive but to hold grudges;                  that we doubt you and do not trust;                  that we choose to rely on our own resources and not on you;                  that we believe only when we have proof.          Help us to forgive more readily, and to trust more willingly.          Amen.</p>
	<p><b>Words of Assurance</b></p>

	<p>Let the breath of peace be upon you. None of what we fear need have power over us, for God holds our lot. We are held in love and forgiveness, given a new birth in a living hope.</p> <p>Our sins are forgiven <b>Thanks be to God!</b> Amen.</p>
	<p><b>Hymn/Song</b> SCE[3] 1311/Thankyou Music In Christ alone Townend/Getty</p>
	<p><b>Response</b></p>
	<p><b>Hymn/song</b> TIS #256 – “From heaven you came, helpless babe (Servant King)”</p>
	<p><b>Prayers for all people</b></p> <p><i>Imagine you are holding one of those nails, they are large, heavy feeling its sharp and rough edges, Think about the verse from the sone we just heard: 'Come, see his hands and his feet the scars that speak of sacrifice, hands that flung stars into space to cruel nails surrendered.'</i></p> <p><i>in your mind's eye, reach out and touch Jesus, see his scars and thank him for his sacrifice.</i></p> <p>Let us feel the touch of peace, the touch of life, the touch of the risen Lord, beside us, behind us, and before us all the days of our lives.</p> <p>Heavenly Father, we pray for all the places in the world that need your peace: places where wars continue to threaten the stability of the nations; and the lack of peace has caused so much destruction; places where people have to flee their homes, their families destroyed, lives lost. Lord, bring your peace which passes all understanding.</p> <p>Give wisdom to world leaders: to presidents, prime ministers, politicians of all governments, that they may strive for lasting peace and true justice, not putting personal ambitions before the needs of their people. Lord, bring your peace which passes all understanding.</p> <p>We pray for those who need peace of mind:</p>

	<p>those weighed down by the stresses and strains of everyday life, or who suffer with anxiety, or are oppressed by worry and fear; for those who find it hard to let go of things and simply trust. Lord, bring your peace which passes all understanding. Amen.</p>
	<p><b>Lord's Prayer</b></p> <p>Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. AMEN</p>
	<p><b>Hymn/song</b></p> <p>TIS #675 – "Shine Jesus Shine" V1C (77 Shine Jesus Shine)</p>
	<p><b>We are sent out</b></p> <p>Let us take the touch of the risen Christ, and the peace that he gives, out with us into the world. Let us breathe his life-giving Spirit on all those we meet this week.</p> <p>and .....</p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace</p>
	<p><b>Thank you</b></p>

## The Phrase We Never Want to Hear

John 20:19-31

If there is the one phrase that everybody likes to say but not hear, "*I told you so.*"

There was an "I told you so" moment in the 1970s.

The mayor of a Japanese town had  
what every person thought was a ridiculous idea  
to build a very high, expensive tsunami wall  
to protect his town from future tsunamis.

In 2011, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake hit off the northeast coast of Japan,  
creating a massive tsunami wave twelve stories high.  
20,000 people were killed or went missing and 50,000 lost their homes in the aftermath,  
but the mayor's tiny town of was completely undamaged.  
All because of the crazy mayor's tsunami wall.

The former mayor had passed away many years earlier.

He never got to say, "I told you so."<sup>i</sup>

Another great "I told you so" story comes from Australia.

Dr. Barry Marshall was an Australian who treated patients suffer with peptic ulcers.  
He found many patients who had to have their stomachs removed or even died.

Others developed stomach cancer.

The fraternity believed that ulcers were caused primarily by stress,  
and the best treatment was antacids and stress mitigation.

But Marshall and his colleague, Dr. Robin Warren,  
did research that led them to believe

that ulcers were caused by a common and easily treated stomach bacteria, *H. pylori*.

They wrote papers on their research,  
but the medical journals they approached refused to publish them.

When they finally did get published,  
no medical institutions paid attention and they couldn't attract research funds.

Their successful treatment of a patients' ulcers with antibiotics,  
and saving these patients from a lifetime of pain or early death was ignored.

Finally, Dr. Marshall decided to infect himself with the bacteria.

Within days, he was in horrible pain and vomiting frequently.

He developed a peptic ulcer soon afterwards.

Then he treated himself with a course of antibiotics and completely healed his ulcer.

Drs. Marshall and Warren were awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 2005.<sup>ii</sup>  
I 'betcha' he could have said "I told you so".

It's an odd world we live in,  
and it's hard to work out what day it is, isn't it.

Let me remind you,  
Last Sunday we celebrated Easter,  
the most important and joyous day of the Christian year.

There is no news that can compare to the message that Jesus rose from the dead.

So why aren't we more excited?  
The Bible reading today,  
takes place on Easter Sunday night.  
Jesus' disciples have locked themselves away in a room,  
hiding from the Jewish leaders,  
scared to death by what they had seen that morning.  
Jesus' tomb was empty. His body was missing.  
Surely, they were going to be accused of stealing it as a political stunt.

And don't forget,  
the disciples had pretty well abandoned Jesus in his time need.  
If he really had risen from the dead,  
then surely he would be fairly upset with his faithless friends.

And so, can you imagine the disciples  
huddled in their locked room,  
nervously discussing all the possible disasters waiting to hit them,  
and then suddenly  
Jesus just shows up in the room among them and says . . . Hold on!  
What would you say if you were Jesus?  
If I were Jesus, I would have said, "I told you so! . . .  
I told you I was going to be arrested and crucified and die.  
I told you I was going to rise from the dead."  
Aren't you glad that I'm not Jesus?

The risen Christ greeted his terrified disciples with four little words,  
but they weren't "I told you so."  
Jesus said, "Peace be with you!"

The last thing Jesus said directly to his disciples was in John 16:33.  
He had just explained that he was returning to his Father, God,  
and the disciples would be scattered and persecuted for following him.  
And then he said,  
"I have told you these things,  
so that in me you may have peace.  
In this world you will have trouble.  
But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus' last conversation with them  
was focused on giving them peace,  
and his first conversation with them after his resurrection  
was about giving them peace.

Before Jesus' death, his disciples were just a group of men with a lot of potential,  
but not much power.  
They were fearful and uncertain.  
Jesus wanted them to know that they did not need to be afraid.  
They were not alone.  
From this day forward,  
peace would be a defining mark of those who follow Jesus Christ.



Isn't that a message the world needs to hear right now,  
as we sit in our houses behind locked doors?

The peace that Jesus promises his followers  
is not based on our circumstances  
or our comfort or our confidence in our own abilities.

Jesus' peace comes from our knowledge of God's unfailing love  
and God's plan for the world.

Jesus' peace comes from knowing the end of the story:  
that God plans to redeem all of creation  
and undo the destruction and distance caused  
by our sin and separation from Him.

That's the peace that Jesus is offering to his disciples then,  
and that he offers to us now.

What does that peace look like in our lives?

Easter isn't a onetime holiday or even an annual event.  
Easter is every day for the follower of Jesus Christ.  
We don't just celebrate the Resurrection,  
then go back to our old lives.

We have seen Jesus' scars.  
We have experienced his resurrection.  
We've been given the Holy Spirit.  
And we've been called to share that good news to the whole world.

There are people outside your doors  
who need to know the joy, the peace, the courage and the purpose of Jesus Christ.  
And we've been equipped to share it with them.

And if you ever forget that, remember Jesus' scars.  
Is there anything we can't do with his power living in us?

Amen

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<sup>i</sup> "The 5 Most Satisfying 'Told You So' Moments Of All Time" by Zachary Frey, Feb. 9, 2017. Cracked.com  
[https://www.cracked.com/article\\_24605\\_the-5-most-satisfying-told-you-so-moments-all-time.html](https://www.cracked.com/article_24605_the-5-most-satisfying-told-you-so-moments-all-time.html).

<sup>ii</sup> "The Doctor Who Drank Infectious Broth, Gave Himself an Ulcer, and Solved a Medical Mystery" by Pamela Weintraub, Discover, March 2010, <http://discovermagazine.com/2010/mar/07-dr-drank-broth-gave-ulcer-solved-medical-mystery>.