

The gospel reading for the Second Sunday of Easter is always the story of how 'doubting' Thomas comes to faith and is able to profess 'My Lord and My God' (John 20:19-31).

It includes closed doors, self-isolation (albeit in a group), fear, and in the case of Thomas moments of doubt and disbelief. Maybe we can identify with some or all of those feelings today.

However it also includes Jesus saying, 'Peace be with you' and we need to hear and experience those words today. Jesus invites Thomas to look at the wounds he received in the crucifixion which still remained in his risen body. The Resurrection doesn't reverse the crucifixion, rather it transforms it so that we can 'believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this we may have life through his name.'

In more recent years the Second Sunday of Easter has also become 'Divine Mercy Sunday'. The Divine Mercy devotion is relatively new in the life of the church, some have embraced it eagerly, others who perhaps grew up without it might wonder what it is all about. It is worth remembering that most devotions were 'new' once. For example the much-loved devotion to the Sacred Heart is only a few hundred years old, and even the Rosary didn't exist until well into the second Millennium of Christianity.

Two prayers that are part of the Divine Mercy devotion that are very appropriate for us at this time are 'Jesus, I trust in you' and 'have mercy on us and on the whole world'. We can at least make those prayers our own this weekend.

I would once again like to encourage us all to pray especially for those whose lives have been directly touched by the Coronavirus and for all those in the many essential services that help us to keep safe and healthy in these dangerous times. As well as praying for them, we can show our support by following closely the guidelines given to us by the Government about staying at home unless there is a specific reason for us to go out.

When we make our spiritual communion this weekend we could do well to reflect on the words of a hymn by a different St Thomas, but which includes an honourable mention for St Thomas the Apostle who features so prominently in the gospel reading today.

'I am not like Thomas, wounds I cannot see,
but can plainly call thee Lord and God as he;
this faith each day deeper be my holding of,
daily make me harder hope and dearer love.'

Taken from 'Godhead here in hiding' (number 228 in our parish hymn book)

With my thoughts, prayers, and best wishes,

Fr Eddy

To find on YouTube click: <https://youtu.be/7DTRLaxgS4E>