



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION**  
**SUNDAY 27 APRIL 2025 – Easter 2**

**COLLECT**

Almighty Father,  
you have given your only Son to die for our sins  
and to rise again for our justification:  
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness  
that we may always serve you  
in pureness of living and truth;  
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Psalm 150**

1 Alleluia.

O praise God in his holiness; ♦  
praise him in the firmament of his power.

2 Praise him for his mighty acts; ♦  
praise him according to his excellent greatness.

3 Praise him with the blast of the trumpet; ♦  
praise him upon the harp and lyre.

4 Praise him with timbrel and dances; ♦  
praise him upon the strings and pipe.

5 Praise him with ringing cymbals; ♦  
praise him upon the clashing cymbals.

6 Let everything that has breath ♦  
praise the Lord.  
Alleluia.

**A reading from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 5, verses 27-32.**

When they had brought the apostles, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.' But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, so that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

***At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:***

The second reading is from John, chapter 20, verses 19-31.

***and then at the end:***

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

***For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an Acclamation (the blue bit), and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):***

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

**Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, Chapter 20, verses 19-31.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

***And then at the end:***

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## 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.

## ***A Reflection from Peter***

Our gospel reading today is the last part of chapter 20 from John's Gospel. Almost the whole of the chapter is set on Easter day itself - 'the first day of the week' – and we are left almost breathless because so much happens. We began with the finding of the empty tomb. Peter and John don't hang around, but go back to report this latest turn of events. Mary Magdalen stays, first encountering the two angels and then, in the most dramatic moment of the chapter, has her unforgettable meeting with the risen Jesus. Her grief and anguish are swept away and, joyful, she goes to tell the disciples. So we come today's reading. It's now the evening. You can imagine the scene. After all the excitement, the disciples must have been tired and in a fairly emotionally charged state. With all that has been going on, they've locked the doors. Despite that, Jesus appears in their midst. "Peace be with you," he says (a sort of version of "Lovely day; how are you all?"). They see the marks of crucifixion still visible and are confident that this is indeed the Lord. "Peace," he says again. This time there is more depth of meaning.

In this moment, the disciples begin to realise that the Resurrection is not a going back to how things were before. Instead, a new world is beginning. This second giving of peace is the beginning of their commission to continue the work of Jesus, not in their own strength, but in the power of the Spirit, in the strength of the Risen Lord.

What happens next is shocking in its intimacy. Jesus doesn't shake them by the hand, or lay his hand on their head: he breathes on them. In a moment reminiscent of the creation itself as told in Genesis when God breathed on the face of the earth, so Jesus breathes his risen power into his disciples.

Today, when perhaps we were thinking we could begin to relax and get back to normal after the extra effort of Easter, we suddenly realise that, like the disciples, our new life is beginning. Jesus calls us too to become part of his continuing saving work. It is not our work, but his. We have to be alert, listening, learning, seeking to hear and understand his call to us. We may think there is little we can do. The Risen Christ values the contribution of each individual. Together, united as his Body, we become part of God's work transforming the world and enabling love, joy and peace to overcome hate and violence and destruction.