

Readings for the week of April 7, 2024

Sunday:

Acts 4:32-35/Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24 (1)/
1 Jn 5:1-6/Jn 20:19-31

Monday:

Is 7:10-14; 8:10/Ps 40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11/
Heb 10:4-10/Lk 1:26-38

Tuesday:

Acts 4:32-37/Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5/
Jn 3:7b-15

Wednesday:

Acts 5:17-26/Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9/
Jn 3:16-21

Thursday:

Acts 5:27-33/Ps 34:2 and 9, 17-18, 19-20/
Jn 3:31-36

Friday:

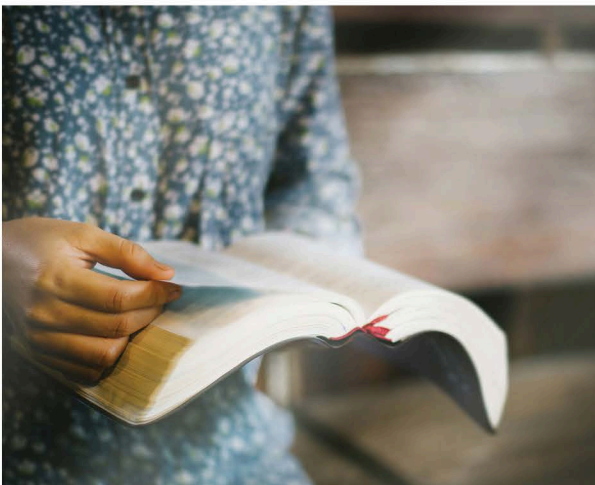
Acts 5:34-42/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14/Jn 6:1-15

Saturday:

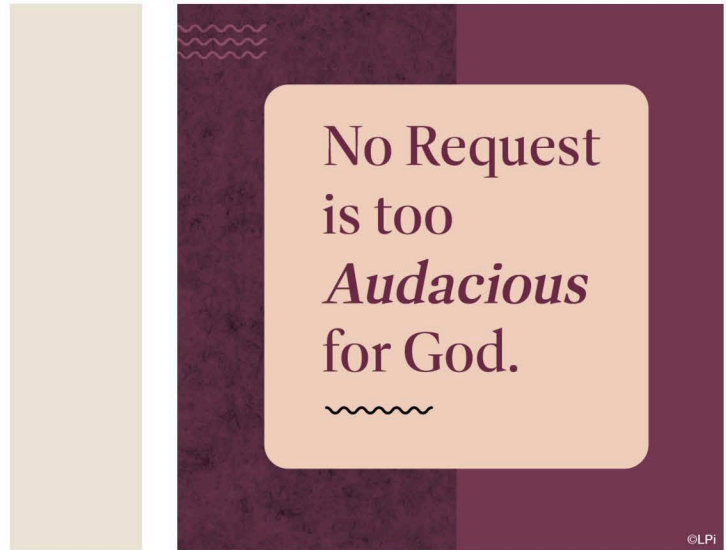
Acts 6:1-7/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19/Jn 6:16-21

Next Sunday:

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19/Ps 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9 (7a)/
1 Jn 2:1-5a/Lk 24:35-48



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

A protestant pastor friend of mine was invited to meet Pope Francis with a group of other pastors. He noticed the Pope's chair was especially ornate and set at the head of the group. He somewhat playfully said, "Holy Father, why do you get that special chair?" The group chuckled nervously at my friend's audacious chide.

The following year, the group was invited to return. They entered the room to find only simple chairs placed in a circle. Pope Francis entered, sat down in one of the humble chairs and, looking directly at my friend, with a twinkle in his eye, asked, "What do you think of my chair now?" My friend was stunned that the Pope remembered his concerns — and took the time to answer them.

Thomas the apostle was certainly stunned by the Risen Jesus displaying his wounds in person. But he also must have been equally shocked that Jesus knew and answered his particular questions, worries, and even demands related to his faith. How humbled — and perhaps a bit terrified — he must have been to realize God remembers his concerns and cares enough to answer them.

What questions or demands about Jesus do you find in your heart? Like Thomas, will you be bold enough to voice them this week? How wonderful to know that if we do so, God will remember and respond even to our most audacious desires.

— *Father John Muir*

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Written in the Wounds

For all the condemnation Thomas the Doubter has received in 2000 years of homilies, I think there's something to admire in him.

Thomas is not unique. We all waver at some point, overcome by hesitation, distracted by the clamor of the world which seeks at every turn to shout above the whisper of the divine.

Thomas knows what he saw on Good Friday: his friend nailed to a cross, a sword driven through his body. He saw the blood and the water. He saw these things with his own eyes, eyes given to him by God, eyes which have never failed him before. And God doesn't ask us to suspend reality to believe in Him. He only asks us to be discerning about how that reality is interpreted in our hearts.

Thomas knows the man before him is either a fraud, preying on the hopes and anxieties of the traumatized disciples, or he is the Christ, the Savior of the world, accomplisher of impossible things. But where to look, to tell the difference?

Satan once appeared to the great mystic saint, Teresa of Avila, disguised as Jesus. She knew instantly that he was a fraud. Enraged, he demanded to know where his deception had failed. "You have no wounds," she told him simply.

Could we have accepted a savior who did not bleed? I don't think we could, because sooner or later, we would all stand before him and say, "Here is where the world hurt me. Here, and here, and here. What about you?" Christ can point to his hands, his feet, his side. "Here, and here, and here," he can say. "And I overcame them all."

It's the wounds, you see. The truth is in the wounds.

*Thomas answered and said to him,
"My Lord and my God!" — John 20:28*

- Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

After a civil divorce, is a Catholic obligated to pursue an annulment?

Answer:

Many Catholics are not exactly sure what an annulment does. An annulment does not deny that a marriage took place, nor does it deny that there once was love. It does not mean that people say anything untrue, such as they never loved each other or that everything in their marriage was wrong. An annulment does not negate children, nor make them illegitimate. An annulment addresses the spiritual aspect of marriage. In effect, an annulment says that at the time of the wedding, there was either something present or something absent that prevented the sacrament from taking place. It is a spiritual determination that, if granted in the affirmative, allows a person to marry in the Church.

Annulments have no legal standing and are unable to be used in a civil court. Therefore, a Catholic has no moral obligation to pursue an annulment. However, when the tragedy of divorce occurs, and there is no hope for reconciliation, annulments may help bring some spiritual closure to a person's life. Some people have found the process to be healing and others have found it to be difficult. Speak to your priest or a member of the Diocesan Tribunal staff to decide what is best for you.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. (Acts 4:32)

Psalm:

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, his love is everlasting. (Ps 118)
Or: Alleluia.

Second Reading:

For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. (1 Jn 5:3-4)

Gospel:

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." (Jn 20:19)

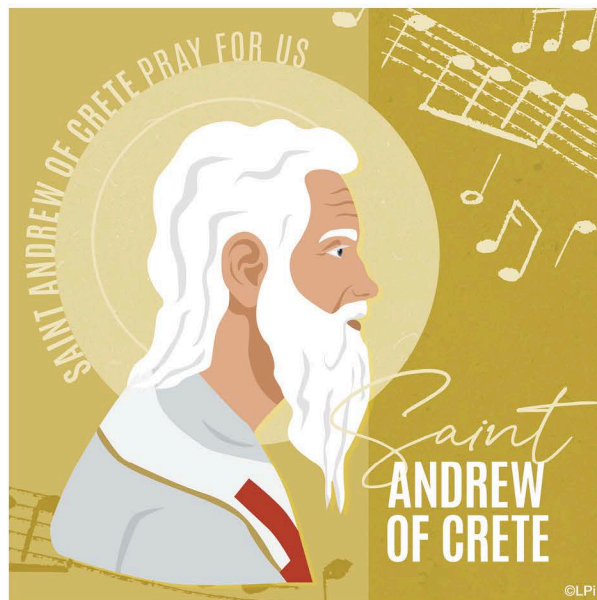
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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

We find unfathomable mercy and everlasting love in the wounds of Christ — even when we are skeptical, even when we carry doubt. God meets us there in the confusion. He reaches for our hand and places them at his side. We just have to call his name.

Observances for the week April 7, 2024

- Sunday:** 2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)
- Monday:** The Annunciation of the Lord
- Thursday:** St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr
- Saturday:** St. Martin I, Pope and Martyr
- Next Sunday:** 3rd Sunday of Easter



Saint of the week

St. Andrew of Crete was born in Damascus and was mute until he received his First Communion at age 7. He went on to be an influential archbishop and hymnist in Crete. His most renowned work, the Great Canon, is chanted during Lent in Eastern Orthodox churches.

Prayer for the 2nd Sunday of Easter

Dear Jesus,
As you greeted your disciples after you rose, fill us, too, with your peace.
As you breathed your spirit on them, breathe on us, too.
As your presence was known to Thomas, make it known to us, too.
Help us to live in your peace, power, and presence.
Amen.

Thomas answered and said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.” - Jn 20:28-29

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

We hear how the early Christians lived in unity and holiness, bearing witness to Jesus, and living in community as friends. Which of these traits do you see at work in your faith community?

Second Reading:

John teaches his community that our faith in Jesus helps us “conquer the world.” What struggles are you facing that you need to confront and defeat?

Gospel Reading:

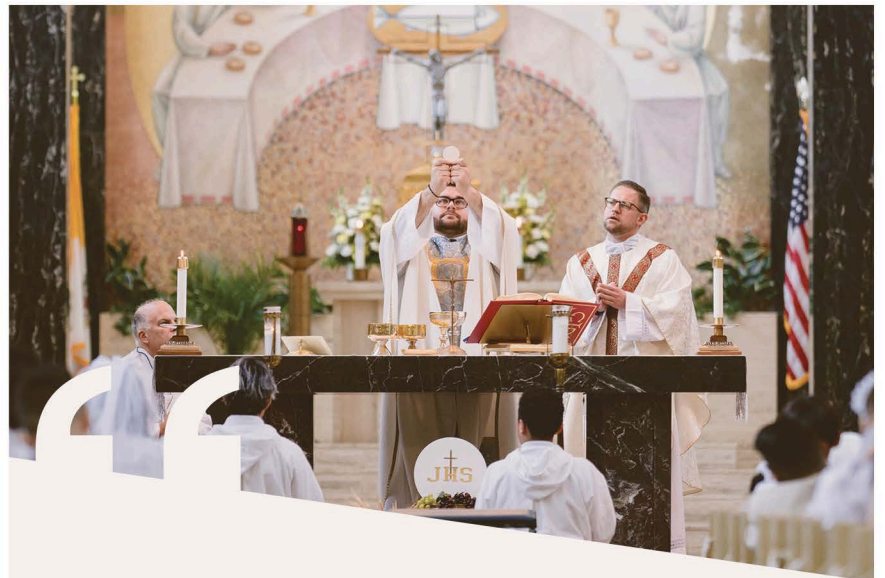
The risen Jesus meets Thomas in the midst of his doubt and encourages him to believe. Who could you encourage this week to have faith in the resurrection of Jesus?



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Since Christ Himself has said,
'This is My Body,' who shall
dare to doubt that it is His Body?

- ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM

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STOOD IN THEIR MIDST.

JN 20:19



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Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.” - Jn 20:26b-27

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