

Spiritual Communion Feast of St Thomas, Apostle Friday 3 July 2020

**My Jesus,
I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.**

**I love you above all things
and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever.
Amen.**

based on a prayer of St Alphonsus Liguori

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**



Concluding Prayer

O God, as we truly receive in this Sacrament the Body of your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that we may recognize him with the Apostle Thomas by faith as our Lord and our God and proclaim him by our deeds and by our life. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.



The apostle Thomas is famous for doubting the resurrection of Jesus when his fellow apostles told him about it; but if he is the sceptical apostle, he is also the believing apostle, for having seen and touched a risen man, he made the immediate leap of faith and so became the first apostle to call Jesus God.

Nothing is known about Thomas's later career. A well-known apocryphal document called the Acts of Thomas relates his missionary journeys to Persia and India. Although the document as it stands is not historical

evidence (it was written to provide evidence for certain heretical Gnostic teachings), it still bears witness to the likelihood of a tradition that Thomas did go to India. If you are writing something that you intend to use to convince people of a controversial doctrine, you do not invent completely new facts: instead, you weave the existing facts and traditions into something that suits your purpose. Thus the very fact that the heretics used a journey of St Thomas to support their case shows us that, in the third century at least, there would have seemed nothing implausible about such a journey. The journey would have been easy enough – important trade routes lay that way – and if some of the apostles went west, to Rome, the centre of the world, there is no reason why some others should not have chosen to go east, to the edge of the known world.

We will probably never know for certain; but the Christians of Kerala have called themselves for centuries “St Thomas Christians”, and they may very well be right.

Opening Prayer

Grant, almighty God, that we may glory in the Feast of the blessed Apostle Thomas, so that we may always be sustained by his intercession and, believing, may have life in the name of Jesus Christ your Son, whom Thomas acknowledged as the Lord. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A reading from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians

2:19-22 .

You are no longer aliens or foreign visitors: you are citizens like all the saints, and part of God's household. You are part of a building that has the apostles and prophets for its foundations, and Christ Jesus himself for its main cornerstone. As every structure is aligned on him, all grow into one holy temple in the Lord; and you too, in him, are being built into a house where God lives, in the Spirit.

The Word of the Lord

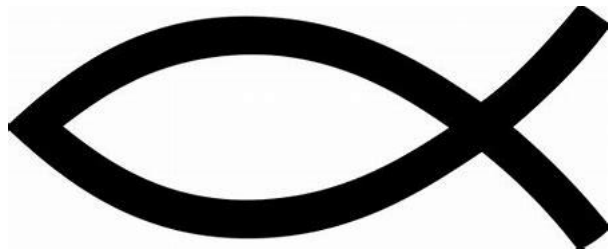
Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus said: 'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

Alleluia!



A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

20:24-29

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

The Gospel of the Lord

