

Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER (DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY) / B

7 APRIL 2024

RADICAL TRANSFORMATION

As we bask in the light of resurrection, today we see two witnesses to the resurrection, and the transformation of lives.

The first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles, the second volume attributed to Luke, and it presents to us a changed way of living. Firstly, the whole group of believers are described as 'of one heart and soul' (v. 32). The apostles appear as testifying with great power to the resurrection and 'great grace was upon them all' (v. 33). The remarkable addition here is that they shared everything in common, sold property and distributed funds so no-one was in need (v. 34-35). This radical transformation of their way of life is not a defining feature of our communities today, even though adopted by many religious congregations throughout the Church's history. While not diminishing the great charitable works operating today, this way of life remains a challenge to us in a world where rich become richer and poor increase in number and poverty.

In juxtaposition to the Acts account, the Gospel outlines the appearance of Jesus among the apostles and the repetition of 'Peace be with you' (vv.19, 21). In this gathering behind closed doors, Jesus tells the apostles that he is sending them out. He breathes the Holy Spirit upon them, commissioning them. Eight days later in the same room Jesus arrives saying once again 'Peace be with you' (v. 26) and here is the experience of the doubting Thomas, forever recorded for anyone who might doubt that the resurrection happened and is real.

How will our lives be transformed by the resurrection?

FIRST READING

Acts 4: 32-35

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The whole group was united, heart and soul.

The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed for his own use anything that he had, as everything they owned was held in common.

The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power, and they were all given great respect.

None of their members was ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from them, to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any members who might be in need.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

RESP PSALM Ps 117: 2-4, 15-18, 22-24. R. v. 1

R. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting. (or Alleluia)

1. Let the sons of Israel say: / 'His love has no end.' / Let the sons of Aaron say: / 'His love has no end.' / Let those who fear the Lord say: / 'His love has no end.' **R.**

2. The Lord's right hand has triumphed; / his right hand raised me up. / I shall not die, I shall live / and recount his deeds. / I was punished, I was punished by the Lord, / but not doomed to die. **R.**

3. The stone which the builders rejected / has become the cornerstone. / This is the work of the Lord, / a marvel in our eyes. / This day was made by the Lord; / we rejoice and are glad. **R.**

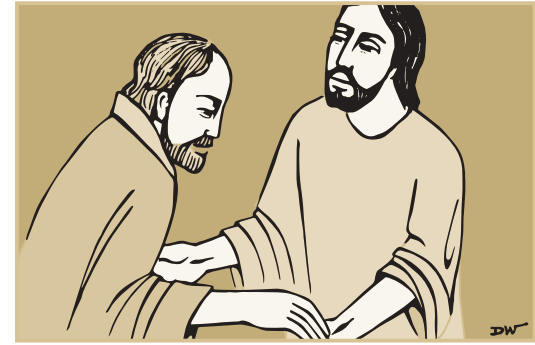
SECOND READING

1 Jn 5: 1-6

A reading from the first letter of St John

Anyone begotten by God has already overcome the world.

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and whoever loves the Father that begot him loves the child whom he begets. We can be sure that we love God's children if we love God himself and do what



he has commanded us; this is what loving God is – keeping his commandments; and his commandments are not difficult, because anyone who has been begotten by God has already overcome the world; this is the victory over the world – our faith. Who can overcome the world? Only the man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God; Jesus Christ who came by water and blood, not with water only, but with water and blood; with the Spirit as another witness – since the Spirit is the truth.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 20: 29

Alleluia, alleluia! / You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me; / happy those who have not seen me, but still believe! / Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Jn 20: 19-31

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

After eight days, Jesus came in and stood among them.

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'

'As the Father sent me,
so am I sending you,'
After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit.
For those whose sins you forgive,
they are forgiven;
for those whose sins you retain,
they are retained.'

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.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

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Dr Rosemary Canavan



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OF THE HOLY MARTYRS OF ANDREW & AGNES**

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Our Parishes acknowledge and honour the Bidjigal and Gadigal People as traditional custodians of this land, that we stand on.



2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Go Make Disciples, The Mission Plan for the Archdiocese of Sydney



Please pray for the:

Recently Deceased: George Atrash, Caryll Perira, Doyn and Marlene Casperez, Graziella Vitale (Rose André's mother), Keith Lawson, Faye Smith, Ivan Micallef, Marshall Kandur, Ange Portelli, and all those who have died from the Covid-19 Virus.

Anniversary: Donald Wright, Morgan Hill, Kenneth Phillips, Adam Towner, Karim, Betty Johnston, Daniel Soriano, Adelaida Soriano, Gerard Dalton, Alfred & Helena Gainge, Joseph & Lydia Bujeya, Robert & Yolande Aquilina, Antonino Torrisi, Joe Smith, Patricia (Trish) Simmonds, June (Nonie) Power, Inez D'Souza, Peter Heany, and Alice Payet.

Deceased: Grace Abela, Francis Abela, Sime Pedisich, Joyce Gander, Agnes Brisbane. All the souls in Purgatory.

The Sick: Esperance Mankarios, Helen Facione Stephany Hiew, Margaret Gately, Maureen Maron, Sandra Russell, Bishop Peter Ingham, Ha Oi Lan, Mario Assini, Sam Strano, Josephine Regan, Mary Vella, Beatriz Visperas, Michael Victor, Marcus O'Dean, Angela Beveridge, Merley Nate Fien, John Sarniak Thomson, Heracleo & Mamerta Dela Torre, and Santa Viselli. Pray for the sick, the dying, the poor and homeless in our parishes, and pray for World Peace, and those suffering from Covid.



Where will Fr. John be celebrating Mass next weekend?

Saturday - 13 April, 2024 - 5.30pm St Agnes'
Sunday 14 - April 2024 - 9.00am St Andrew's (Livestreamed)

Please see Parish websites for further notices.



Greetings dear parishioners and visitors to our Twinned Catholic Parishes of the Holy Maytrs of Andrew & Agnes.

'Peace be with you' was the greeting of Jesus on meeting his frightened apostles. Who has come to you bringing peace at times when you were frightened? For whom have you been an agent of peace?

The Lord has Risen, He has Risen Indeed! Alleluia. We conclude this Sunday our Octave (8 days) of Easter Sunday and now proceed into our Easter Season. May we turn to our Lord Jesus, who over came death and rose from the dead especially when we feel down and out, when life feel so empty. May the Light of Christ burn alight in our lives and bring joy and peace. I wish to thank once again all those who have had made our Lent, and Easter Triduum so beautiful. Our Churches of St Andrew and St Agnes sparkle with the newness of the light and life of Christ. Congratulations to all.

As many may know that the Parishes of St Andrew's, Malabar, and St Agnes', Matraville are now in a process to being merged as one parish. The Archdiocese of Sydney through its mission plan 'Go Make Disciples' speaks about amalgamation of parishes due to lack of vocations and building up of resources of parishes into one. The Archbishop's desire in building Eucharistic communities paves way in new possibilities in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in 21st Century. I have spoken about tools of consultation which will be used in this amalgamation. One of the tools is that there will be a parish meeting at St Andrew's and St Agnes', two meeting one in each parish, (to be announced after Easter) in which people can hear all matters concerning the amalgamation and questions will be answered. To be quite clear the names of St Andrew's and St Agnes' Churches will remain. There will be one Parish Council, One Parish Finance Committee and the resources of both parishes would be combined building up the resources for the one new parish. Please attend the meetings to have your questions answered, so watch this space!

Every 25 years, the Church proclaims a Holy Year, a special gift of grace and mercy for all God's people. Not only is Italy a land of unforgettable charm and beauty, it is also a land rich by its colourful history of holy men and women. In this dedicated Jubilee year, be inspired to encounter the pathways of some of the Church's greatest saints, from St Francis and St Clare of Assisi to St Peter and St Paul in Rome, the Eternal City, where we will cross the threshold of the Holy Door in St Peter's and receive the Jubilee blessing. We will pilgrimage with the Parish of Sydney City South and our Parishes of Malabar—Matraville. Our proposed itinerary 13 nights/16 Days departing 23 April—8 May 2025 an approximate cost is around \$10,000 twin share, Single supplement an extra \$1,250.00. Our pilgrimage has been customised by Harvest Journeys and it would be helpful if you were keen about joining the pilgrimage, could you please leave your names at the entrance of our churches.

Gods Blessings of Easter be with you all

Fr John

As Fr John and the rest of the Clergy of the Archdiocese will be on Conference this week, our mass timetable on Tues, Wed and Thurs has changed:

St Agnes: Mass 7am—Tues and Wed,
St Andrew's: Communion Service 9am—Tues, Wed and Thurs.

Friday Mass As Usual

St Agnes' 7am and St Andrew's 9am