

Year A; Second Sunday of Easter
Liturgical Elements
Developed for April 16, 2023
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Lectionary Texts

- Acts 2:14a, 22-32
- Psalm 16:1-11
- 1 Peter 1:3-9
- John 20:19-31

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (*from Psalm 16*)

One: Protect us, O God, for in you we take refuge.

All: We say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; we have no good apart from you."

One: As for the hoys in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all our delight.

All: Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their practices we will not imitate nor take the names of their gods upon our lips.

One: The LORD is our chosen portion and our cup; he holds our lot.

All: The boundary lines have fallen for us in pleasant places; we have a good heritage.

One: We bless the LORD who gives us counsel; in the night also our hearts instruct us.

All: We keep the LORD always before us; because he is at our right hand, we shall not be moved.

One: Therefore our hearts are glad, and our souls rejoice; our bodies also rest secure.

All: For he does not give us up to Sheol, or let his faithful ones see the Pit.

One: He shows us the path of life.

All: In his presence there is fullness of joy; in his right hand are pleasures forevermore. Let us worship God!

CALL TO WORSHIP (*alternate, from Psalm 16*)

One: Bless the Lord who gives us counsel;

All: in the night also our hearts instruct us.

One: Keep the Lord always before you;

All: because he is at our right hand, we shall not be moved.

One: Therefore our hearts are glad, and our souls rejoice;

All: our bodies also rest secure.

One: The Lord shows us the path of life.

All: in his presence there is fullness of joy.

All: Let us worship God!

CALL TO CONFESSION *(from 1 Peter 1)*

Peter writes we rejoice that by Christ's mercy, we have been given a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. For a little while, though, we have had to suffer various trials so that the genuineness of our faith may be tested by fire. Let us confess where we have failed a test, give our thanks for being offered new chances, and ask God's strength for the tests to come.

CALL TO CONFESSION *(alternate, from 1 Peter 2)*

Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. Trusting in God's grace let us confess our sins. Let us pray.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(30 seconds)***CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION** *(from 1 Peter 1)*

Almighty and loving God, we do truly rejoice in Christ's mercy including his gift of new birth into a living hope through his resurrection from the dead. We, though, have failed your tests at times — failing to love you with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength and failing to love our neighbor as ourselves. Thank you that you are a God of second chances. Give us strength for the tests and trials to come that we might be prepared to exhibit the life our Lord exhibited. It is in his name that we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from 1 Peter 1)*

Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Friends, hear and believe this good news.

All: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(alternate, from 1 Peter 2)*

By the wounds of our Lord Jesus, we have been healed from sin. We were all going astray like sheep, but now we have returned to the shepherd and guardian of our souls. May we ever follow the shepherd, deny the temptations of sin, and rest in that steadfast guardian. Know that we are forgiven and be at peace. AMEN.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(from John 20)*

Almighty God, we thank you for the example of the Apostle Thomas who demonstrates struggles we might have in understanding and trusting in the resurrection. Thank you, also, for his example upon seeing our resurrected Lord and expressing a profound faith, "My Lord and my God!" Continue to grow our faith and our understanding that we might be blessed as those who have not seen and yet have come to believe. In thankfulness for the gifts of the Lord to us in crucifixion and resurrection and for saints who model faith for us, we give these gifts that more might have faith. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*in unison*)

Almighty God, thank you for your scriptures that explain God to us, explain his expectations to us, and demonstrate human struggles with understanding and with living into true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. This day we particularly thank you for the Apostle Thomas — that we can understand his struggles in understanding and trusting in the resurrection but, also, in his realization that you were truly the Jesus he knew, the one crucified. In his words, “My Lord and my God,” we see through his wrestling that he comes to understand you as his true Lord but also as very God. Father, continue to grow our faith that we might hold steadfast to the same confession. May you be our Lord and our God! In this day, we thank you, also, for all those who are serving us and our community in this pandemic. Thank you for all essential workers serving in healthcare facilities, grocery stores, distribution facilities, our transportation industry, pharmacies, general stores, restaurants, fuel stations, prisons, social services organizations, government, and other places. Thank you, also, for emergency workers such as police, fire, and ambulance workers. Protect them and their families, give them much needed rest, and eliminate this pandemic from our world. We thank you, also, for the ways you sustain each of us in all our days. Bless those, also, who have been able to give to the church, and enable our session members and staff to allocate it to your glory and for your work on earth. For those who suffer hardship in this time, encourage them to make their needs known that we might be a help and blessing. In the name of the same Lord and God Thomas confessed, our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN.

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