



THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

QUASIMODO GENITI

Study Notes for the Christian Layperson

by: Rev. Roberto E. Rojas, Jr.

Collect of the Day:

Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Introit:

Psalm 81:1, 7a, 10, 16b; antiphon: 1 Peter 2:2a — *The Spiritual milk of the Word*

Psalm:

Psalm 33 (antiphon: v. 6) — *The steadfast love of the LORD*

Old Testament Reading:

Ezekiel 37:1-14 — *The valley of dry bones*

Gradual:

(During the celebration of Easter and Pentecost, the Gradual is omitted and the verse is expanded.)

Epistle:

1 John 5:4-10 — *Overcoming the world*

Verse:

Matthew 28:7b; John 20:26a, c — *He has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee. Alleluia. Eight days later Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."*

John 20:19-31 ESV

Author and Date:

The Holy Spirit caused the words of this Gospel to be written by John the Apostle around AD 90. This text is the historical account of Jesus' appearance to the disciples after His physical crucifixion and resurrection.

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

- "The first day of the week"—Jesus appears to the disciples on Sunday evening, one week after His resurrection.
- The doors were locked because the disciples were afraid that they would be arrested for supporting Jesus against the authority of Rome. Yet Jesus manifests Himself in the flesh through locked doors by the power of His divinity.
- Jesus proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that He is the risen Lord. "[T]he very same Christ who was born of Mary and who was nailed to the cross truly rose again. It was He and no other, as He showed His disciples the scars in His hands and His side" (*Luther's Works* 28:150).

²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.

- "Breathed on them"—Jesus delivers the Holy Spirit by breathing (Greek: *pneuma*) and speaking to them. The Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son.

- Christ gives institutes the Office of the Holy Ministry and gives the authority to forgive sins (See Matthew 18 and the 5th Petition of the Lord’s Prayer).
- “Why does Christ attach to the ministry the name keys of the kingdom of heaven? To indicate that the preaching of the Word is not a vain and useless babbling of words, but that the Holy Spirit is present in this ministry, is efficacious through it, and wants, by this means as with a kind of keys, the kingdom of heaven to be unlocked and many to be brought into it. Therefore, ministers of the Word should, by this term, since they hear that the keys of the kingdom of heaven have been given and entrusted to them, bestir themselves to speak of the doctrine of sin, repentance, faith, forgiveness of sins, new obedience, etc., not coldly and lightly, nor only in general or superficially, as a story, but set it forth and apply it to their hearers faithfully and diligently, sure that the Holy Spirit wants to kindle, increase, strengthen, and preserve repentance, faith, and new obedience in the hearts of their hearers through this their ministry. . . . Similarly the name keys should admonish the hearers not to despise the Word and ministry and regard it as a vain sound of words by which only the ears are struck, but that they might know and be firmly persuaded that if they want to enter the kingdom of heaven, the approach and entrance is not given and granted to them except through these keys. . . . [L]et them not think that they are only words, and that of a man; but let them consider and firmly believe that it is the voice of the Holy Spirit Himself, bringing comfort to our hearts through this means, and that whatever is loosed on earth in that way is loosed and forgiven in heaven by God Himself, because it is done through the keys and the kingdom of heaven.” (Martin Chemnitz, *Enchiridion*, paragraph 283).

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

- Thomas didn’t accept the testimony of the other disciples; rather he remained skeptical and demanded proof of Jesus’ physical resurrection.
- “This account is helpful for unseasoned Christians who are still weak in faith, who never seem able to trust in God, and do not know how to get faith, and in whom there is no end of vacillation and doubt. These people are presented

with a comforting example here in Thomas, who was deeply immersed in these thoughts of unbelief, and who took a great deal of effort before he was confirmed in faith” (Johann Spangenberg, *The Christian Year of Grace*, 170).

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” ²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

- Jesus continues to appear to the disciples on Sunday, the eighth day. This is the third time that Jesus declares His Peace which the world cannot give to them (See John 14:27-31). This peace is not external, temporal, or political, but it is eternal reconciliation with God.
- Thomas confesses the same words of John 1:1.
- “...God so arranged it that Thomas was not present, so that Thomas’ unbelief might benefit us. . . . By his refusal to believe without seeing and feeling, Thomas laid such a foundation for the article of Christ’s resurrection that we can have no more doubt about it” (Johann Spangenberg, *The Christian Year of Grace*, 170).
- “[Jesus] showed His own hands, feet, and sides, as if to say, ‘Here behold the wounds and scars that I received when I fought for you. By these learn of My great love which I have had toward you in that I gave life and limb for you, and for your sake overcame the devil, harrowed hell, slew death, and blotted out sin, and will now be gracious and merciful to you” (Johann Spangenberg, *The Christian Year of Grace*, 171).

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

- “Signs”(Greek: *semeia*) – This is more than a miracle; it reveals God’s mind and work (John 10:38). This is used 17 times in John.
- The Scriptures were written to give the hearer faith, which only comes through the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Faith is the gift and work of God (Ephesians 2:8-9). Faith confesses that Jesus is “My Lord and my God,” as Thomas confessed. Without this confession no one can be saved (Romans 10:9-10).

