## Sunday, April 28, 2019 Second Sunday of Easter, Year C

### Introduction

In spite of all we have heard and all that we have seen, it is often hard to believe. Because it is hard to believe, we will invest ourselves in the Easter mystery for fifty days (a week of weeks). Because it is hard to believe, John the evangelist will provide sign after sign celebrating Jesus’ victory over death. Because it is hard to believe, the Lord Jesus will return to us again and again in the mystery of the holy communion, inviting us to touch and taste his presence, and offering us his peace.

### Prayer of the Day

O God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit’s breath revive our faith in your mercy, and strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Blessed are those who | have not seen\* and yet have come | to believe. Alleluia. (John 20:29)

### Readings and Psalms

[**Acts 5:27-32**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-4-28/0)

The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus

[**Psalm 118:14-29**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-4-28/0)

You are my God, and I will exalt you. (Ps. 118:28)

[**Revelation 1:4-8**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-4-28/0)

Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, is coming

[**John 20:19-31**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-4-28/0)

Beholding the wounds of the risen Christ

### First Reading: Acts 5:27-32

Peter has been arrested for proclaiming the good news of Jesus’ death and resurrection. His response to the charges of the high priest summarizes the early church’s proclamation of forgiveness of sin through repentance.

27When they had brought [the apostles,] they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, 28saying, “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man’s blood on us.” 29But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than any human authority. 30The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. 31God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.”

### Psalm: Psalm 118:14-29

*You are my God, and I will exalt you.*(Ps. 118:28)

14The Lord is my strength | and my song,  
  and has become | my salvation.  
 15**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents | of the righteous:**  
  **“The right hand of the | Lord acts valiantly!**  
 16The right hand of the Lord| is exalted!  
  The right hand of the | Lord acts valiantly!”  
 17**I shall not | die, but live,**  
  **and declare the works | of the Lord. R**  
 18The Lord indeed pun- | ished me sorely,  
  but did not hand me o- | ver to death.  
 19**Open for me the | gates of righteousness;**  
  **I will enter them and give thanks | to the Lord.**  
 20“This is the gate | of the Lord;  
  here the righ- | teous may enter.”  
 21**I give thanks to you, for you have | answered me**  
  **and you have become | my salvation. R**  
 22The stone that the build- | ers rejected  
  has become the chief | cornerstone.  
 23**By the Lord has | this been done;**  
  **it is marvelous | in our eyes.**  
 24This is the day that the | Lord has made;  
  let us rejoice and be | glad in it.  
 25**Hosanna! | O Lord, save us!**  
  **We pray to you, Lord, pros- | per our days! R**  
 26Blessed is the one who comes in the name | of the Lord;  
  we bless you from the house | of the Lord.  
 27**The Lord is God and has giv- | en us light.**  
  **Form a procession with branches up to the corners | of the altar.**  
 28You are my God, and | I will thank you;  
  you are my God, and I | will exalt you.  
 29**Give thanks to the Lord, for the | Lord is good;**  
  **God’s mercy en- | dures forever. R**

### Second Reading: Revelation 1:4-8

The book of Revelation recounts a mystical vision of the risen Christ, experienced by a Christian prophet named John. Here he describes Christ as a timeless redeemer, the beginning, present, and end of all time.

4John to the seven churches that are in Asia:   
  Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 5and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.   
  To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, 6and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.  
 7Look! He is coming with the clouds;  
  every eye will see him,  
 even those who pierced him;  
  and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.  
So it is to be. Amen.  
  8“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

### Gospel: John 20:19-31

The unprecedented events of the day of resurrection continue as the risen Jesus appears to his fearful disciples. A week later, after Thomas worships Jesus, Jesus pronounces that the blessings of the resurrection are also for those who “have not seen and yet believe.”

19When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” 20After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” 22When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”  
  
  24But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”  
  26A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” 27Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” 28Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” 29Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”  
  
  30Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. 31But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

### Prayers of Intercession

*The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.*

Trusting God’s promise of new life, we pray for the renewal of the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

Strengthen the witness of your church in all corners of the world. Make us visible signs of your grace so others see your goodness and come to believe. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Breathe life and peace into your creation. Protect homes, fields, and communities from damaging winds. Bless environmentalists, engineers, and legislators who work to curb pollution and to ensure clean air for us and for future generations. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Give to all government leaders a renewed spirit of humility and servanthood, following the example of Christ, our leader, savior, and ruler. Uphold cease-fires, treaties, and all agreements and agencies that further the cause of peace on earth (especially). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

By the resurrection of the wounded Christ, draw near to those wounded in body or spirit. Liberate all who are bound by grief, abuse, addiction, or pain. Restore faith to the despairing and hope to the suffering (especially). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Protect and provide for all whom you send out in mission across the world. Empower global mission organizations and partners who provide for the physical and spiritual needs of our neighbors. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We give you thanks for all the saints who believed in you and who now enjoy eternal life in your name (especially). Sustain us with your everlasting presence, for you are Alpha and Omega, our beginning and our end. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God. Come near to us with your saving help, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

**Amen.**