

did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> But 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.

### Reflection

The Risen Jesus meets his closest friends for the first time after they had all abandoned him in his hour of need. It must have been a moment they were all dreading. Yet his first words, twice over, were, 'Peace be with you'. No rebuke, no reproach, just 'Peace!' And then he showed them his wounds, the unmistakable signs that it was him. Then, while they were feeling like abysmal failures as disciples, he entrusted them with the same mission he had received from the Father: As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' This is the same mission we have, and although we may not feel up to it, like the first disciples, we too can carry this out in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Then we come to Thomas, an ordinary person, knotted up in his own fears and doubts. Perhaps we all carry something of his DNA? Here we are shown the transforming impact which his personal encounter with Jesus has on him. As I mentioned in my letter, this is a time of renewed personal encounter with Jesus, or at least an openness to letting him encounter you.

Verse 31 of this text underlines the purpose of the Gospel in general and of the Resurrection narrative in particular: that through faith in Jesus as the Messiah we may have life in His name. How do you test that Faith in yourself? What strengthens that Faith? What tends to undermine that Faith? What remedy do you have to counter this? I pray you sit with these questions as you allow God to speak to you intimately. The Lord be with you.



### Prayer Requests

- Peter, Summer, Helen, Lorna, Debbie, Kaye, the vulnerable in our parish, and their families.
- Fr Martin Nadarajan, who began full time ministry April 1st.
- Those affected by COVID 19, especially the sick and dying
- Local Healthcare workers and Businesses.



## *Anglican Parish of the Otways Newsletter*

### **The Season of Easter**

19th April, 2020

**Priest in Charge — Rev'd Jenny Brandon**

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**Anglican Parish of the  
Otways**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! Alleluia! (I never get tired of saying that!!!)

I trust you had a meaningful celebration of Easter, and that you could share the joy of Easter with at least one other person, even if it was at a distance.

During this time of isolation, Richard are saying mass each week on behalf of you all. If you have something in particular you would like us to hold in prayer at the mass, please let me know. Also, if you would like a prayer request circulated for more corporate prayer, please indicate this. Unless you specifically tell me you want a request put on the Parish Prayer List, I will keep it confidential. You will see the beginning of that list in this news letter.

We have, at this time, an unprecedented opportunity to grow in our faith, as so much of the worldly distractions we face have ground to a halt. So I would like to encourage you to grow in three specific ways.

Firstly, we have opportunity to grow in our prayer life. We have the time to pray for each other, our families, our community, and our world like we have never had before. Time has come to renew our spiritual disciplines of prayer and biblical reflection.

Secondly, and I've said this before, we have opportunity to be that non-anxious presence to our community, friends and family. Its an opportunity to share the trust we have in God during this difficult time.

Thirdly, we can grow deeper in our relationship with God by recognising where he was in our day. There is a story about some monks who were so busy in their day doing what they had to do that they complained to their Prior that they had little time for structured prayer. Their Prior's response was, don't worry if you cannot say the office, don't worry if you cannot go to Mass, What's important is that your spend time at the end of your day, reflecting on "Where God was in your day". It's a good discipline in to develop as the more you do it, the more easily you recognise God in your day, and grow closer to him.

I trust this will help you grow during this time.

Blessings, Jenny.

## The Lighter Side of Life

A woman had been trying to make up her mind for an hour between a green dress and a red one. The young salesgirl was getting exasperated. "Madam, what colours does your husband usually wear?" The woman, whose husband was the Archbishop of Canterbury, said he usually wore a purple gown. "Oh, you've got one of them kinky ones, have you?"



## Prayer of the Week

Almighty God,  
whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life  
of all who put their trust in him:  
raise us, we pray, from the death of sin  
to the life of righteousness;  
that we may ever seek the things which are above,  
where he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## Reading.

## John 20:19-31

<sup>19</sup> When 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.' <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.' <sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So 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.' <sup>26</sup> A 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.' <sup>27</sup> Then 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.' <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' <sup>30</sup> Now Jesus