

Reflection for St Thomas Patronal Festival

David asked the question last week: Who do you think you are? His suggestion was to write a letter, as if from St Paul, with teaching and advice to the Church of St Thomas, Exeter. How do we see ourselves and our church in relation to God?

I'm going to continue with that question. What imagery might we use to describe ourselves and our faith in God? Habakkuk describes himself as a watchman on the ramparts – stationed on a walkway at the top of a defensive wall, in order to scan his surroundings. He notices the social and political turmoil and holds it all before God. The writer to the Ephesians speaks as a member of the household of God, with its foundation of apostles and prophets, and Christ as the cornerstone: part of a community which is growing together into a holy temple, a dwelling place for the Lord. The psalmist declares his faith in God: his rock, fortress and stronghold.

What do these images tell us about ourselves and our understanding of God? They seem to speak of solidity in the sense of something enduring and not easily dismantled or overcome. They invite confidence and trust. Yet the wounded hands, feet and side also demonstrate the nature of God and his limitless love for us. For it is in these wounds which St Thomas recognises Jesus as 'My Lord and my God!'

Rev Sarah



(image: Pixabay)

Codes for the Zoom worship at 10.30

These are codes for Sundays from 04.07.21 until the end of August

Meeting ID: 859 7288 7300

Passcode: 605760

Telephone numbers 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

NEXT SUNDAY 11.07.2021 Trinity 6

SERVICES 10.30am by Zoom, 12 noon in Church

READINGS OT Amos 7: 7-15
NT Ephesians 1: 3-14
GOSPEL Mark 6: 14-29



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St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 4th July 2021

St Thomas the Apostle

10.30am by Zoom (phone-in available)

12 noon Mass in Church

Please note from this Sunday **new Zoom codes** for log in, and one of the phone numbers has been dropped. These will apply until the end of August, but we expect some new arrangements to be in place by then.

This Sunday we're marking the **Patronal Festival** of St Thomas the Apostle at both our services (moved from 3 July). For those whose idea of 4 July runs more along the lines baseball and independence, here is prayer for this day from the **USA**:

Father of the human family,
open our hearts to greater love of your Son.
Let national boundaries not set limits to our concern.
Ward off the pride that comes with worldly wealth and power.
Give us courage to open ourselves in love
to the service of your people;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord ... Amen

Fr David



Collect

Almighty and eternal God, who, for the firmer foundation of our faith, allowed your holy apostle Thomas to doubt the resurrection of your Son till word and sight convinced him: grant to us, who have not seen, that we also may believe and so confess Christ as our Lord and our God; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Habukkuk 2: 1-4

I will stand at my watch-post, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint. Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

Psalms 31: 1-6

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me.

Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me, for you are my rock and my stronghold; guide me, and lead me for your name's sake.

Take me out of the net that they have laid secretly for me, for you are my strength.

Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

I hate those who cling to worthless idols; I put my trust in the Lord.

Ephesians 2: 19-22

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.

John 20: 24-29

Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 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.' 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.' 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.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' 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.'

Post Communion

Almighty God, who on the day of Pentecost sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame, filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel: by the power of the same Spirit strengthen us to witness to your truth and to draw everyone to the fire of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NOTICES

House Group. Tuesday evenings. Please contact Ian Totterdell for Zoom details.

Community Larder The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays only** from 10am-12noon. The collecting point is in the Choir Vestry via the Tower door. Please continue to be generous.

Knit and Natter Update for June 2021

We shall continue meeting either in person at 10.30am at 19 Maple Road or via Zoom at 11.15am on Thursdays up to 19th July. All details from Jenny on 01392 498715.

200 Club If you would like to join the 200 Club please see Andrew Withers.

Ladies Lunch 24th July at 12.30pm at the Royal Oak. Contact Pat Metford.

Young at Hearts has been cancelled. It is hoped to start again on 25th August.

