

The Second Sunday of Easter *Quasimodogeniti*

April 11, 2021

My story of *Quasimodogeniti*

I remember my pastor mentioning *Quasimodogeniti* Sunday when I was young. He taught our congregation all the Latin names for the Sundays of the Church Year and I have to confess that I am fond of them. *Quasimodogeniti* is a somewhat startling and fun name to say but that is not why I like this Sunday so much. It's because of the message of 1 Peter 2:2, "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation."

My love of this Sunday began in 1978. I attended the Minnesota North District Convention. It was my first convention as a pastor and I eagerly looked forward to it. At the opening service, the First Vice-President of the District preached on 1 Peter 2:2. It was one of the most inspiring and memorable sermons that I have ever heard.

Upon reflection, I now realize it was so remarkable to me because this was the first sermon that I had heard in almost a year. As a new pastor, I preached every Sunday but on that day that I was able to sit and drink in the wonderful message of God's word proclaimed by someone else.

This experience drove home to me the importance of craving the pure spiritual milk of God's word and growing in the faith.

When we are absent from church (even when we are doing our own Bible study), we lack the full impact of the Word of God on our lives. When people claim that they can be Christians without going to church, they are deceiving themselves. It's like saying that you can be a baby without craving milk! Indeed, this is a true statement. However, a baby that doesn't crave milk will be a very weak baby.

An Easter Salutation

adapted from 2 Timothy 1:10 & Psalm 118

L Christ is risen! Alleluia!

C Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

L Christ has destroyed death. Alleluia!

C And has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Alleluia!

L The Lord is my strength and my song. Alleluia!

C He has become my salvation. Alleluia!

L I will not die, but live. Alleluia!

C I will proclaim what the Lord has done. Alleluia!

L Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

C as it was in the beginning is now and will be forever. Amen.

L I will not die, but live. Alleluia!

C I will proclaim what the Lord has done. Alleluia!

L Christ is risen! Alleluia!

C Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!



1 Je - sus Christ is ris'n to - day, Al - le - lu - ia!
 2 Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
 3 But the pains which He en - dured, Al - le - lu - ia!
 4 Sing we to our God a - bove, Al - le - lu - ia!



Our tri - um - phant ho - ly day, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Un - to Christ, our heav'n - ly king, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Our sal - va - tion have pro - cured; Al - le - lu - ia!
 Praise e - ter - nal as His love; Al - le - lu - ia!



Who did once up - on the cross, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Who en - dured the cross and grave, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Now a - bove the sky He's king, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Praise Him, all ye heav'n - ly host, Al - le - lu - ia!



Suf - fer to re - deem our loss. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Sin - ners to re - deem and save. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Where the an - gels ev - er sing. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Al - le - lu - ia!

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L In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

L Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 124:8*)

L Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

C Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. (*Psalm 19:12, 13*)

L If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand?

C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. (*Psalm 130:3–4*)

L Let us, confess before God that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and as His people let us take refuge in His infinite mercy seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, saying:

C God, be merciful to me, a sinner, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

(*Luke 18:13*)

- L** Almighty God, merciful Father, in Your holy Church, You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** Amen.

Introit Psalm 105:1–5, 8; antiphon 1 Peter 2:2–3

- L** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation—
if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
- C** Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!
- L** Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!
- C** Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!
- L** Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually!
- C** Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered.
- L** He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.
- C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
- L** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation—
if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Kyrie

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Christ, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |

Collect of the Day

- L** Let us pray: 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.
- C** Amen.

Acts 4:32–35

³²Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold ³⁵and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Gradual adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

- L** Christ has risen from the dead.
C **God the Father has crowned him with glory and honor,**
L He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;
C **He has put all things under his feet.**

Psalm 148

- L** ¹Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
C ²**Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!**
L ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!
C ⁴**Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**
L ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created.
C ⁶**And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.**
L ⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,
C ⁸**fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!**
L ⁹Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
C ¹⁰**Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!**
L ¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
C ¹²**Young men and maidens together, old men and children!**
L ¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.
C ¹⁴**He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints,**
for the people of Israel who are near to him.
Praise the LORD!

1 John 1:1—2:2

¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— ²the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— ³that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

^{2:1}My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ²He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 20:29b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia.

John 20:19–31

- L** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 20th chapter.
- C** Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁹On 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.” ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.”

²⁴Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, 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 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.”

²⁶Eight 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.” ²⁷Then 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.”

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 believed.”

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but 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.

- L** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** Praise to You, O Christ.

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father

Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.



1 O sons and daugh - ters of the King, Whom heav'n - ly
 2 That Eas - ter morn, at break of day, The faith - ful
 3 An an - gel clad in white they see, Who sits and
 4 That night the a - pos - tles met in fear; A - mong them
 5 When Thom - as first the tid - ings heard That they had



hosts in glo - ry sing, To - day the grave has lost its sting!
 wom - en went their way To seek the tomb where Je - sus lay.
 speaks un - to the three, "Your Lord will go to Gal - i - lee."
 came their mas - ter dear And said, "My peace be with you here."
 seen the ris - en Lord, He doubt - ed the dis - ci - ples' word.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

6 "My piercèd side, O Thomas, see,
 And look upon My hands, My feet;
 Not faithless but believing be."
 Alleluia!

8 How blest are they who have not seen
 And yet whose faith has constant been,
 For they eternal life shall win.
 Alleluia!

7 No longer Thomas then denied;
 He saw the feet, the hands, the side;
 "You are my Lord and God!" he cried.
 Alleluia!

9 On this most holy day of days
 Be laud and jubilee and praise:
 To God your hearts and voices raise.
 Alleluia!

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Devotional thoughts:

As is so often the case, the Gospel lesson for this week is jam-packed with significant Bible teachings. Here is an incomplete list

Jesus' Resurrection
 Jesus' greeting of peace
 Jesus' crucifixion wounds remain in His resurrected body.
 The sending of the Apostles
 The institution of holy absolution and the Office of the Keys
 The doubting and faith of Thomas

The divinity of Jesus
Jesus blessing upon all believers
The purpose of the Gospel of John and the entire Bible: that you may believe that Jesus
is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in His name!

Each of these is worthy of a lengthy dissertation. Today, let's consider Thomas.

The tension between doubting and faith is something that confronts every Christian. Sometimes we are vocal about it. Other times we are silent. Sometimes we exhibit a false boldness of faith. Other times we weep at our faithlessness.

As we contemplate Thomas, let us first remember Doubting Peter. No, Peter didn't start by doubting. He began with a boastful faith. On Maundy Thursday, immediately following the Last Supper, on the Mount of Olives, Jesus said, "You will all fall away because of me this night." To this, Peter responded, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away" (Matthew 26:31-33).

Today, Christians are often applauded for testimonies of faith such as Peter's. But Jesus knows the human heart better than we do. To help Peter see the folly of his false confidence, Jesus foretold his threefold denial and the crowing rooster.

Both Thomas and Peter demonstrate the struggle between faith and doubting that confronts us all. On one hand, we may stand up before the greatest challenges of life and declare with Martin Luther, "Take they our life Goods, fame, child, and wife, Though these all be gone, Our vict'ry has been won; The Kingdom ours remaineth." Other times, we deny our faith when confronted by a servant girl (Matthew 26:69).

Sometimes doubting is obvious. Hurting Christians question the goodness of God when calamity strikes. We doubt when fervent prayer is not answered according to our own demands. We leave faith behind when success or fiscal responsibility demands it.

Other times our doubting may not be so apparent. We pray in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done." Yet every time we sin, we are saying, "Lord, I don't believe that Your holy will is best for me. In this case, it is my will that will be done."

On the first Easter evening, Thomas was vocal in his doubting. He demanded physical proof of Jesus' resurrection. The testimony of his fellow disciples would not suffice.

I've seen doubting like this. I'm sure you have, too. We become frustrated and concerned when friends and loved ones lack saving faith. However, we must remember that God has not finished His activities in the lives of the people around us.

Like Thomas, none of us can force ourselves to believe. God must take action to bring us to faith. On the Sunday after the first Easter, the disciples were again gathered in a locked room. This time, Thomas was with them when Jesus came and stood among them. He repeated His greeting of peace. But on this occasion, He came for just one reason. He came to bring Thomas to faith. Can you imagine the joy in Thomas' heart when he heard Jesus say, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe"?

Thomas' confession of faith is one that we all share. Jesus is "my Lord and my God."

But none of us can take credit for this faith. It is a gift of God lest we boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Jesus graciously intervened in Thomas' life so that he would believe and receive eternal life. He does the same for each of us when He sends the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts through word and sacrament. For this reason, we confess with Martin Luther, "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith." (Luther's Small Catechism, The Explanation of the Third Article.)

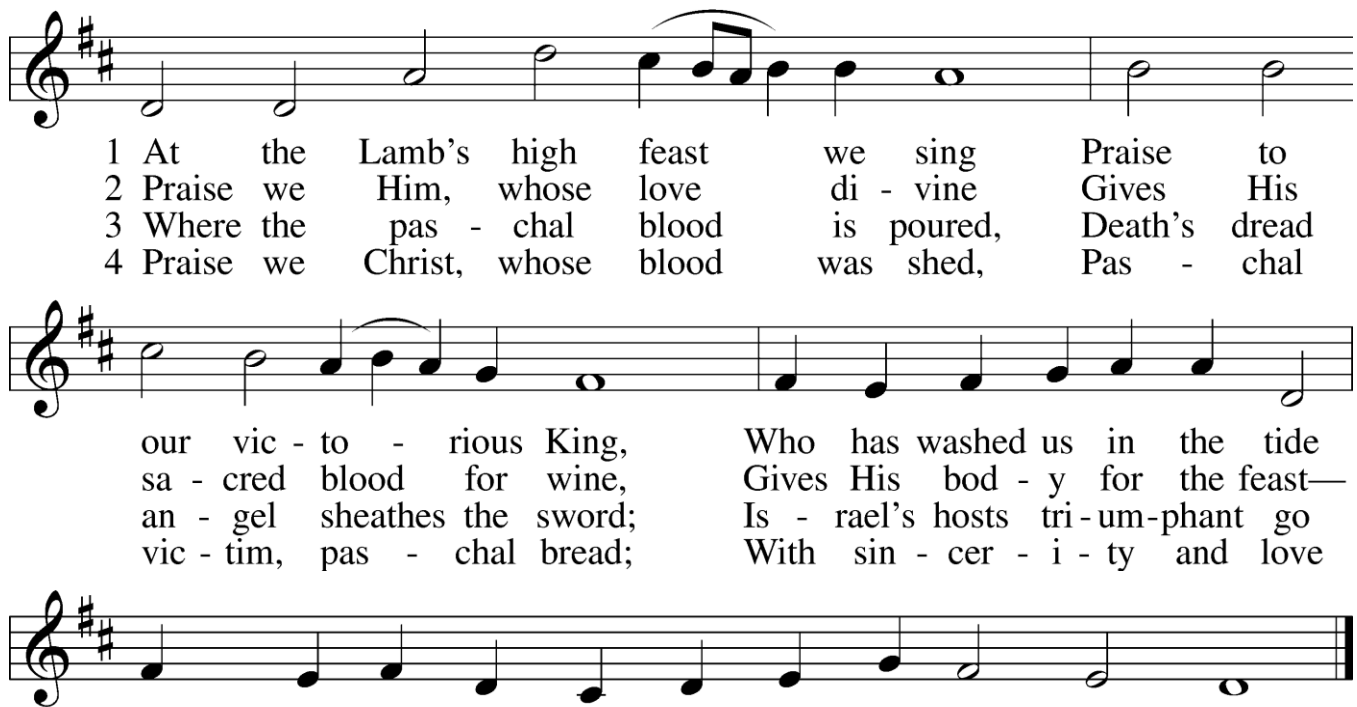
Doubting will always perplex us in this life. All doubting will finally be removed when we join in praising God with the saints in heaven. Until then, this is our prayer, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24 NKJV) as we remember 2 Timothy 2:13, "If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself."

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with

thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:4-7).

God’s richest blessings to you in Christ.

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing Lutheran Service Book 633, Lutheran Worship 126, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a
Stanzas 1-4



1 At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to
2 Praise we Him, whose love di - vine Gives His
3 Where the pas - chal blood is poured, Death's dread
4 Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Pas - chal

our vic - to - rious King, Who has washed us in the tide
sa - cred blood for wine, Gives His bod - y for the feast—
an - gel sheathes the sword; Is - rael's hosts tri - um - phant go
vic - tim, pas - chal bread; With sin - cer - i - ty and love

Flow - ing from His pierc - ed side. Al - le - lu - ia!
Christ the vic - tim, Christ the priest. Al - le - lu - ia!
Through the wave that drowns the foe. Al - le - lu - ia!
Eat we man - na from a - bove. Al - le - lu - ia!

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L Heavenly Father, You grant us adoption by the resurrection of Your Son. Receive us as Your newborn children and nourish our faith by the pure spiritual milk of Your Word, that we may dwell in Your presence forever, through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

C Amen.

L God of mercy, keep us from the doubts and fears that cripple us and prevent us from knowing the fullness of Your saving peace and gracious presence. Teach us to trust in Your Word and to believe with all our hearts, minds, bodies and strength in Jesus Christ, crucified for our sins and raised for our justification through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

L Guide us so that in our neighborhoods and communities we may manifest the love of Christ as well as His strength. Deliver us from all that would threaten our homes and families,

C Amen.

L Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. Protect all who attend to our needs during this time of national emergency and pandemic. We ask that you would quickly grant relief according to Your will.

C Amen.

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing Lutheran Service Book 633, Lutheran Worship 126, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a
Stanzas 5-8

5 Mighty Victim from the sky,
Hell's fierce pow'rs beneath You lie;
You have conquered in the fight,
You have brought us life and light.
Alleluia!

6 Now no more can death appall,
Now no more the grave enthrall;
You have opened paradise,
And Your saints in You shall rise.
Alleluia!

7 Easter triumph, Easter joy!
This alone can sin destroy;
From sin's pow'r, Lord, set us free,
Newborn souls in You to be.
Alleluia!

8 Father, who the crown shall give,
Savior, by whose death we live,
Spirit, guide through all our days:
Three in One, Your name we praise.
Alleluia!

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Service Notes:

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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Enhancing Your Worship

Meditating on God's Word and Works

I will meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119:27
My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:148 NKJV

The Second Sunday of Easter

Quasimodogeniti

April 12 – April 17, 2021

Introduction

Most modern forms of mediation turn a person inward. Biblical meditation turns a person outward toward what God has said and done especially what He has said and done through Jesus for our salvation.

Each Sunday has its own special theme directing us to meditate on God's word and actions. This theme is found in the Propers of the Day (the parts of the service that change week to week). From Advent through the Easter season these themes focus our attention on the life of Jesus from His birth to His death and resurrection. There is always much more in the propers than can be covered in any Sunday service. God willing, I will use the propers for Sunday to provide you with a devotion each day to help you meditate on what God has done for you.

Monday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
G Amen.

Introit Psalm 105:1–5, 8; antiphon 1 Peter 2:2–3

- L** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation—
if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
- G** Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!
- L** Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!
- G** Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!
- L** Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually!
- G** Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered.
- L** He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.
- G** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
- L** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation—
if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Kyrie

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|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------------|
| L | O Lord, | C | Have Mercy on us. |
| L | O Christ, | C | Have Mercy on us. |
| L | O Lord, | C | Have Mercy on us. |

The Sunday after Easter is called The Second Sunday of Easter. It was previously known as *Quasimodogeniti*. However, an Anglican priest friend of mine informed me that this Sunday is also known as “Low Sunday.” The obvious reason for this name is the historically low attendance on the Sunday after Easter.

I often hear people complain about Christmas and Easter Christians. I never do. I am so happy to have people come and hear the wonderful message of salvation. I always hope that they will come every Sunday. But I am happy if they come on Christmas and Easter, the most wonderful Sundays of the year.

I don’t believe that most of the increase in attendance on Easter is from Christmas and Easter Christians. Yes, there are a few. But from my observation, the increase in attendance comes from families gathering from far away on those special days. It comes from church members who attend every other week, every third week, every fourth week, etc.

What is special about the Sunday after Easter is you can be sure that it is mostly attended by the every-Sunday worshipers. These are the Christians in the family of God who are with you through thick and through thin. These are the ones who, like babies, have a constant desire for the sincere and pure milk of the word of God.

These are the believers who understand the love and forgiveness that is theirs in Christ. These are the ones who cherish the Word of God.

May we always be counted among those who desire the sincere milk of the Gospel that we may grow up to salvation!

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| L | Let us pray. Lord, thank You for the gift of the Bible. Grant that we may always be filled with a desire to learn more about You and Your love for us through the preaching and teaching of Your holy word. |
| C | Amen |

Tuesday

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| L | In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. |
| C | Amen. |

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 20:29b

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| L | Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia. |
| C | Alleluia, Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia. |

Kyrie

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------------|
| L | O Lord, | C | Have Mercy on us. |
| L | O Christ, | C | Have Mercy on us. |
| L | O Lord, | C | Have Mercy on us. |

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|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| L | Let us pray: 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. |
| C | Amen. |

Who is Jesus? There are many answers to that question. Liberal theologians of the 19th Century and early 20th Century would often declare that He was a myth. Since then, archeological discoveries and historical research makes that position untenable today. Even thinking unbelievers today must admit that Jesus as a man really existed in history.

However, the most that they are willing to acknowledge is that He was a man who became famous for His teachings. A well known liberal theologian from the last century was asked if he believed that Jesus rose bodily from the grave. He answered that he was a theologian, not a biologist. Note, although he wasn't a believer, he could not claim that Jesus had never existed.

Who is Jesus? Thomas answered that question for all believers. He is "my Lord and my God." He is not merely a good man. He is not just God's favorite creature. He is fully and completely God. The Bible makes that abundantly clear. But He is also fully and completely a man. Jesus as God and man is one person, the only-begotten Son of God who offered Himself for us on the cross and rose again from the dead.

Who is Jesus? He is our life and salvation. The Bible was written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing have life in His name.

Let us pray: 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.

Wednesday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 20:29b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia.

Psalm 148

- L** ¹Praise the LORD!
- C** Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
- L** ²**Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!**
- C** ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!
- L** ⁴**Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**
- C** ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created.
- L** ⁶**And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.**
- C** ⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,
- L** ⁸**fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!**
- C** ⁹Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
- L** ¹⁰**Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!**
- C** ¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
- L** ¹²**Young men and maidens together, old men and children!**
- C** ¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.
- L** ¹⁴**He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him.**
- C** **Praise the LORD!**

Kyrie

L	O Lord,	C	Have Mercy on us.
L	O Christ,	C	Have Mercy on us.
L	O Lord,	C	Have Mercy on us.

One of my most anticipated joys of attending church on Easter is again singing Alleluia (as transliterated from Greek or halleluiaah as transliterated from Hebrew.) Psalm 148 is filled with Halleluiahs and Hallelus! As you may recall, halleluiaah means “Praise the Lord!”

All of creation praises the Lord. He has done wonderful and marvelous things. The most wonderful and marvelous thing He has done is sent Jesus to be our savior and raised Him from the dead. Praise the Lord because of Jesus’ resurrection, we, too, will rise from the dead and live with Him for all eternity. Praise the Lord. Halleluiaah!

Prayer: O Lord, The glorious company of the Apostles : praise Thee.
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets : praise Thee.
The noble army of Martyrs : praise Thee.
The holy Church throughout all the world : doth acknowledge Thee,
May we always join our praises with theirs for the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Thursday

L	In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C	Amen.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 20:29b

L	Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.
C	Alleluia, Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L	O Lord,	C	Have Mercy on us.
L	O Christ,	C	Have Mercy on us.
L	O Lord,	C	Have Mercy on us.

Acts 4:32–35

³²Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold ³⁵and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Throughout the Easter season, our first lesson each week is from the Acts of the Apostles (the full name of the Book of Acts). This book recounts how Jesus’ resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit caused the message of salvation to go out into the world and change the hearts of people.

The very first Christians were communists! They weren’t atheistic communists as communism is known in our century. They were not coerced into giving up everything and sharing it with other believers. They were motivated by love.

Unfortunately, this idealistic form of the church soon met the reality of sin. Before the end of the New

Testament times, the idealism of these first days following the resurrection came to an end. These early Christians soon discovered that hypocrites were among them and took advantage of their generosity. The Apostle Paul found it necessary to write to the Thessalonians, “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10).

Nevertheless, we are called to love our neighbor and care for those in need. We came to Jesus with nothing. We were spiritually bankrupt. But God in His rich generosity gave us the gift of forgiveness and eternal life which was paid for by Jesus on the cross.

May our lives also be filled with grace to care for those in need.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the gift of salvation and all that we have. Grant us generous hearts to share with those in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Friday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 20:29b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

1 John 1:1—2:2

¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— ²the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— ³that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

^{2:1}My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ²He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

In the Gospel, for this week Thomas declares, “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.” The next week, Jesus appeared and 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.”

Jesus gave Thomas the opportunity to touch His wounds but as far as we know, Thomas did not avail himself of the opportunity. He simply declared, “My Lord and My God.”

It is possible that at some time he did touch Jesus. It is just not recorded in the text. John writes in the epistle for this week that the apostles not only heard and saw Jesus but they also touched him with their hands! This sustained them on their mission to proclaim eternal life. Through their word, the Holy Spirit has brought us to faith and kept us in the faith.

Yet we still stumble and fall. John writes, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Thanks be to God! Let this be a constant reminder of the grace that is ours in Jesus Christ, our righteousness who paid for the sins of the whole world.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the message of salvation we have received from those who were eyewitnesses of Your resurrection. Thank You, that You have brought us to faith through their word. Grant that we, too, may be Your instruments of sharing the message of salvation with those around us. Amen.

Saturday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Gradual adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

L Christ has risen from the dead.

C God the Father has crowned him with glory and honor,

L He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;

C He has put all things under his feet.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 20:29b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

The words of the Gradual and Verse of the Day summarize the essence of the Christian faith. Jesus has risen from the dead! He will never die again! He grants this victory over death to all who believe. To this we sing, Alleluia, Alleluia!

When we are trapped by the mundane, when the everyday grind of life seems oppressive, remember that you are destined for eternity in Paradise because of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Thanks be to God! Praise the Lord!

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for Jesus and His cross of salvation. Grant that we would never become discouraged by failing to find worldly success. Rather, grant us the joy of boasting in the Lord, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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