



SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

FIRST READING: Acts 4:32-35

A reading from Acts.

³²Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.

³³With great power the apostles gave 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 owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold.

³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

The word of the Lord. *or* Word of God, word of life.

PSALMODY: Psalm 133

SECOND READING: 1 John 1:1—2:2

A reading from First John.

¹We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—

³we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us;

FIRST READING

This simple little description of what life was like in the early church is an overwhelming testimony to the power of the resurrection. Help the hearer feel the joy and wonder that the early church experienced in the wake of the resurrection. It is a reading that requires the sound of amazement.

SECOND READING

Walking in the light is a good description of the Easter life. The power to change the way in which we live (remember how in the first reading everyone was sharing everything with everyone!) is anchored in Jesus, the Son of the Father, and his willingness to forgive our sinfulness. This is where the resurrected life (new life) begins for the children of God. Bring the sound of encouragement to this reading.

and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

⁴We 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 there is no darkness at all.

⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness,
we lie and do not do what is true;

⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself 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 that we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.

⁹If we confess our sins,
he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

¹⁰If we say that 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;

²and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins,
and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

The word of the Lord.

or

Word of God, word of life.

GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

The holy gospel according to John.

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. ▶

GOSPEL

Caution: Rushing this story will diminish its impact. The story stretches over a full week. Help the hearer feel the passage of time. Provide significant pauses between Jesus' word of peace, his breathing on them (verse 22), and his invitation to Thomas (verse 27). The summary paragraph (verses 30-31) will also be helpfully separated from the narrative by a healthy pause.

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.

The gospel of the Lord.