

I HAVE SEEN THE LORD

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.' But 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.' Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. 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. [© NRSV]

Easter Season Blessing

May almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing. *AMEN.*

May God, who through the water of baptism has raised us from sin into newness of life, make you holy and worthy to be united with Christ for ever. *AMEN.*

May God, who has brought us out of bondage to sin into true and lasting freedom in the Redeemer, bring you to your eternal inheritance. *AMEN.*

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *AMEN.*

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Jesus Appearing to the Magdalene
Noli me Tangere, 1440–41)
Fra Angelico (c. 1400–1455), fresco, 180 x 146 cm;
Cell 1, Convent of San Marco, Florence, Italy

Please prepare St. Luke 24:36b-48 for next Sunday.

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Commentary: *Welcome to (either) Quasi modo, (or) Dominica in albis depositis, (or) Low Sunday*

No, not *that* Quasimodo, the bell ringer at Notre Dame, but rather one of the three or more titles for this Sunday. *Quasi modo* were the first words of an Introit hymn formerly sung on this day, "Like (*quasi modo*) newborn babes...", (from I Peter 2:2) a reference to the Christian understanding what happens to us in Baptism: In Baptismal waters we are *born from above*¹ by the direct action of the Holy Trinity. We are adopted as God's children with all the same rights to eternal life as Jesus, the natural Son of God, excepting that we lack his Divinity. I Peter 2:2 says, "Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation." [© NRSV]

In ancient times it was after Mass on this day, *Dominica in albis depositis*, (*Sunday of taking off the albs*), that those who had been Baptized at the Easter Vigil (and had dressed in all white Baptismal clothes, *albi*, for a week), took off their Baptismal albs and resumed their normal garb. In the same vein, yesterday used to be referred to as *Sabbatum in albis*, (Saturday in albs).

Today is also called *Low Sunday*, not, as is often thought, a wry comment upon spotty after Easter church attendance, but rather, in an older form of English, it meant the Sunday **below** (that is, *after*) Easter.

Today's Gospel Saint John 20:11-31

Please note that the Gospel lesson includes an additional passage (St. John 20:11-18) that was not read on Easter Day². **Boldfaced** material in the Gospel seems to have a connection to the following lines from Exodus 25.

¹ The term *born from above* is from the third chapter of St. John. It has long been mistranslated as "born again" and often unfortunately misconstrued as something we do, rather than something *God* does. The Bible most Episcopalians read in Church, the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV], makes the correction.

² The passage is appointed yearly for Tuesday in Easter Week.

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They shall make an ark of acacia wood; it shall be two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high.... You shall make two cherubim of gold; ... The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, over-shadowing the mercy seat with their wings. ... **There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the covenant, I will deliver to you all my commands for the Israelites.** [© NSRV]

The term '**Rabbouni**' has an even richer interpretation than the given translation of *teacher*. The word in Jesus' time meant *Teacher most beloved* and was almost without exception **used as a synonym for God**. Mary believes Jesus is God/man.

✠ MARY MAGDALENE STOOD WEeping OUT- side the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and **she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?'** She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, '**Rabbouni!**' (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. **But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."**' **Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord';** and she told them that he had said these things to her. 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.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'