

Saint Thomas and Saint Thomas of the Air Church
 First Sunday after Easter
 April 12, 2026
 rmceely+

*as my Father hath sent Me,
 even so
 send I
 You.*

In his first person account, St John returns us to Jerusalem
 To a closed room,
 In which the 10 Apostles huddle.
 Thomas was not with them that night
 And Judas had hanged himself in regret.

It was Sunday evening.
 Their friend had been brutally murdered on Friday.
 All but John had fled and deserted Him.
 Even Peter had denied Him at His trial.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had begged Pilate for His
 body.
 He had been buried in the tomb
 and sealed behind a great stone.
 All had seemed lost.

But the Holy Women had been to the sepulcher
 And the body of Jesus was no longer there.
 Peter and John had gone there and confirmed it.
 But what of the Angels?
 Then Mary of Magdela reported that she had seen Him that
 morning.
 Had even spoken to Him.
 All was not as it seemed.

They had murdered Jesus,
 They had identified Peter.

Were the Jews and the Romans coming for them next?
And so, they gathered in the protection of that closed room.

Suddenly,
Without warning or fanfare
He was there
Jesus, standing among them.

Given what they had done,
They might have anticipated a less friendly greeting
But He said: “peace be unto you”.

We cannot imagine their elation.
All that He had told them was true.
Everything happened as He had said.
Their joy and Hope soared .

Then two things happened that would change their lives.
Just as God had breathed life into Adam at Creation;
He breathed new life unto them,
they received the Holy Ghost
And He gave them two admonitions:
As my Father hath sent me, even so, send I you.
Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them
And whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.

The reformers end today’s Gospel here.
But let’s go further into St John’s account.
John tells us that our own St Thomas
Was inexplicably absent that night.
When he was informed, he could not believe
And famously declared that he would only believe
if he placed his fingers in the crucifixion wounds.
Well that opportunity arrived the following week.
As John tells us,
They were again in a closed room
Jesus appeared as He had previously

He offered his wounds to Thomas.
 But rather than thrust his hands into the wounds
 Thomas fell to his knees, and said:
 “My Lord and my God”.
 (something some say even today at the elevation of the Body
 and Blood of Christ in the Communion service).
 Thomas doubted no more.

Let us look more closely at what had just happened on those two
 occasions in that closed room in Jerusalem;
 Because it would change the World.

11 men. Ordinary men.
 All called by Jesus.
 By the breath of the Son of God,
 They were instilled with the Holy Ghost.
 The spirit, the third Godhead.
 They were reborn.
 With new power of God.
 New drive
 New energy (we might say today) to accomplish the Mission.
 They were newly formed, newly re-ordered,
 Or “ordained” to the will of God
 With a mighty task to fulfill.

Jesus gave them their orders:
 As my Father hath sent me so send I you.
 Then He gave them authority to remit sins through Him.
 They were the new priests of what would later be called
 Christianity.

They went to work. O did they go to work.

The Resurrection had taken place at the Passover
 When a large number of people
 Historians estimate a million or more were in Jerusalem.
 And when they returned to their homes,
 They took with them the story of Jesus and the Resurrection.
 The Gospel grew and exploded across the Holy Land.
 The Apostles split up and planted Christianity
 Throughout Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Ethiopia
 Throughout Asia Minor, Greece, Rome
 To Persia and India
 To Europe
 And later others would take it to the new world,
 Australia, New Zealand.
 The South Pacific. Asia

It would later be known as the Easter Effect.
 It spread across the Globe.
 As the yeast nourishes the bread dough,
 The Easter Effect
 With the message and the Love of God,
 Transformed societies throughout the world.
 Even here in this secular desert of San Francisco
 The Easter Effect has taken hold.
 This little miracle Church of God's Love.

*As my Father hath sent me
 Even so send I you.*

Words spoken directly to His Apostles.
 But did Jesus speak to us as well?
 All those centuries and thousands of miles ago?

Against all odds

Against the dire predictions of our detractors
 Against the forces and principalities in high places
 Against the evil of our world.

Here we are:

40 years since our formation of a congregation
 and 29 years in this little miracle church

Here we are:

Gathered, not in a closed room,
 But in the House of God,
 Blessed with this building
 And blessed with some of God's best creations,
 You.

Without legal impediment.

In this city named for one of His Saints

In a church named for none other than St Thomas,
 On a street named for His Sacraments.

What is our charge?

As His Father sent Him
 So sends He
 us.

Are we to continue to worship Him each week?

Each day?
 We have the sacraments, the liturgy and the Spirit.
 We have a prayer life.

What are we doing with them?

Within these walls

You are well formed and perfect Christians.
 Does it survive as you walk through these doors
 Where it becomes much more difficult?

Many believe that it was St Francis of Assisi who counseled
 “Preach the Gospel always
 and when necessary
 use words”

Francis lived his faith
 In a way that was a beacon for others.
 We too, can be that beacon.

Thomas Cranmer wrote today’s Collect almost 500 years ago
 Yet it speaks across the centuries.
 The petition in the prayer asks
 “that we may always serve Thee in pureness of living”.
 Pureness of living:
 An example of Christian life for all to see.

Each decision we make
 Each step we take
 That is consistent with our Christian beliefs
 Is a shining example to those who know us
 A demonstration in physical form
 Of the moral character of Christianity.

At the same time, each decision we make and each step we take
 That is **inconsistent** with Christianity
 Is a glaring skyrocket of hypocrisy.
 Nothing is more off-putting than a hypocritical self-righteous
 Self professed Christian.

However, quietly living our lives in conformity with Christ
 Is not the entire answer to our calling.
 Certainly it is part of our calling
 And the words attributed to Francis are a warm comfort
 To those who shy away from speaking out.
 But speak we must.

When the opportunity presents itself

We are called to speak the Gospel.

Defend the truth of the Gospel.

It is not always easy and on rare occasions it can be uncomfortable.

It is the other side of the coin that Francis presents.

When necessary, use words.

As my Father hath sent me

Even so

Send I

You.

