



VOICE OF THE EMMANUEL



(HAVING THE MIND OF JESUS)

2023

VOL : 5

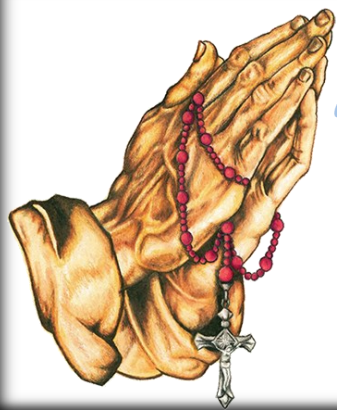
FROM GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

VOICE : 07



HEAR MY VOICE...

COME CLOSER...



"Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

- St. John 20:27

Suffering is an integral part of Spirituality - Our father



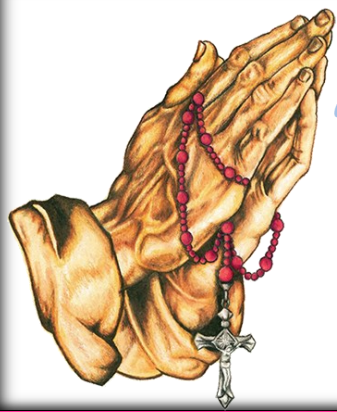
St. Thomas was born a Jew and was called to be one of the twelve Apostles. His birth and death dates are unknown, but his feast day is celebrated on July 3. He lived before the formal establishment of the Catholic Church but is recognized as the patron saint of architects. He was a dedicated but impetuous follower of Christ. When Jesus said He was returning to Judea to visit His sick friend Lazarus, Thomas immediately exhorted the other Apostles to accompany Him on the trip which involved certain danger & possible death because of the mounting hostility of the authorities.

At the Last Supper, when Christ told His disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them to which they also might come because they knew both the place and the way, Thomas pleaded that they did not understand and received the beautiful assurance that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. St. Thomas is best known for his role in verifying the

Resurrection of his Master. Thomas' unwillingness to believe that the other Apostles had seen their risen Lord on the first Easter Sunday earned him the title of "doubting Thomas."

Eight days later, on Christ's second apparition, Thomas was gently rebuked for his skepticism and furnished with the evidence he had demanded - seeing in Christ's hands the point of the nails. Thomas even put his fingers in the nail holes and his hand into Christ's side. After verifying the wounds were true, St. Thomas became convinced of the reality of the Resurrection and exclaimed, "My Lord and My God," thus making a public Profession of Faith in the Divinity of Jesus.

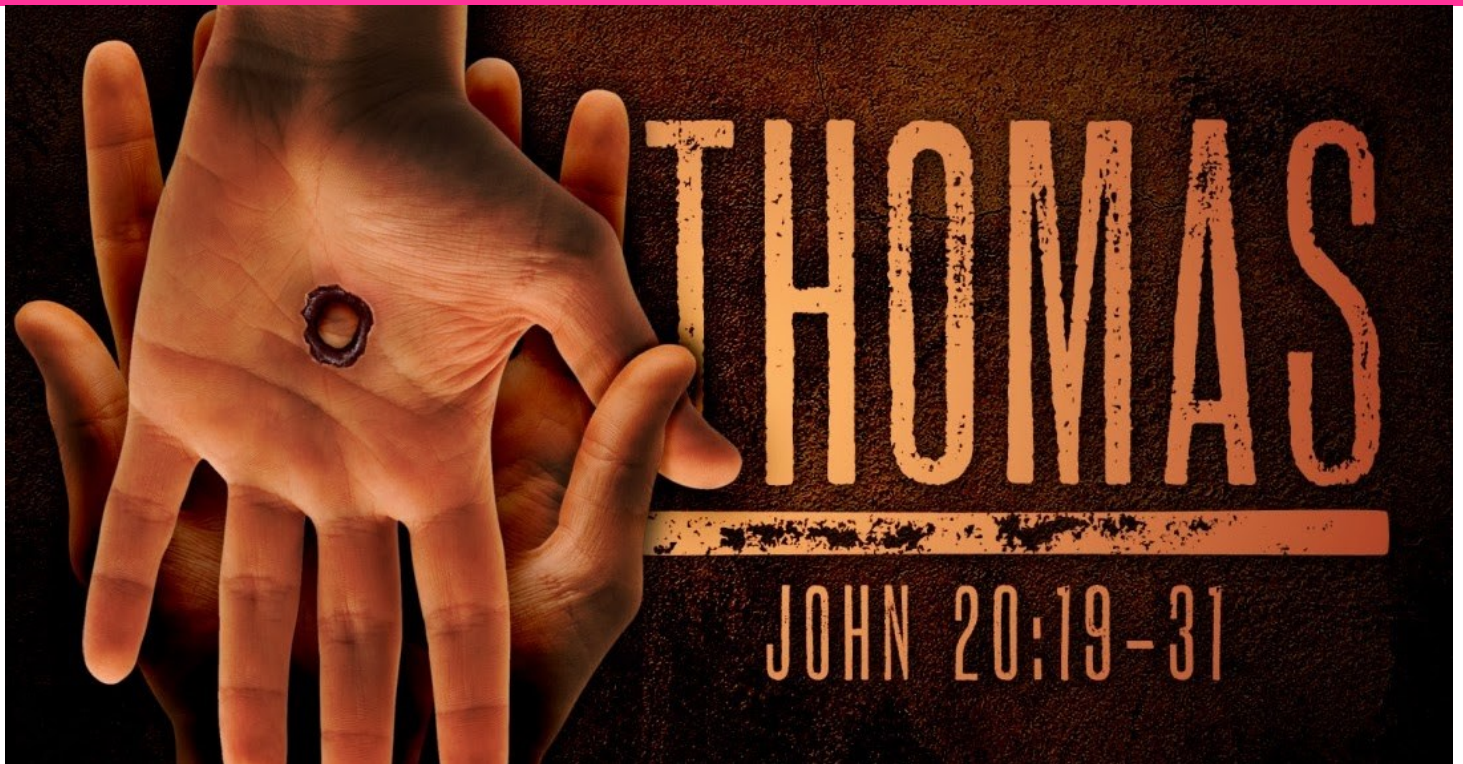
St. Thomas is also mentioned as being present at another Resurrection appearance of Jesus - at Lake Tiberius when a miraculous catch of fish occurred. This is all that we know about St. Thomas from the New Testament. Tradition says that at the dispersal of the Apostles after Pentecost this saint was sent to evangelize to the Parthians, Medes, and Persians. He ultimately reached India, carrying the Faith to the Malabar coast, which still boasts a large native population calling themselves "Christians of St. Thomas."



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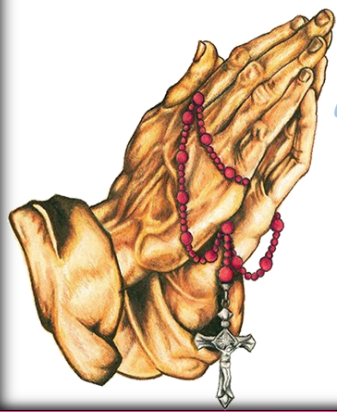
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According to Syrian Christian tradition, Thomas was killed with a spear at St. Thomas Mount in Chennai on 3 July in AD 72, and his body was interred in Mylapore. Latin Church tradition holds 21 December as his date of death. Ephrem the Syrian states that the Apostle was killed in India, and that his relics were taken then to Edessa. This is the earliest known record of his death.

St. Thomas's response in his beautiful encounter with the Risen Lord, "My Lord and My God" reveals the heart of prayer. It also speaks to the essence of faith. His proclamation is a call to adoration and living communion with God. His response has become the exclamation for millions. Thomas was not a doubter, rather he was a believer. And he is a model for all of us at every Eucharist which is always the Feast of Mercy. Pope St Gregory the Great who occupied the Chair of Peter between 590 and 604 preached a marvellous homily on this encounter between Thomas and the Risen Lord. In it, he asked: "What conclusion, dear brethren, do you come to? Surely it was not by chance that this chosen disciple, was missing in the first place? Or that on his return he heard, that hearing he doubted, that doubting he touched, and that touching he believed? It was by divine dispensation and not by chance that things so fell out.



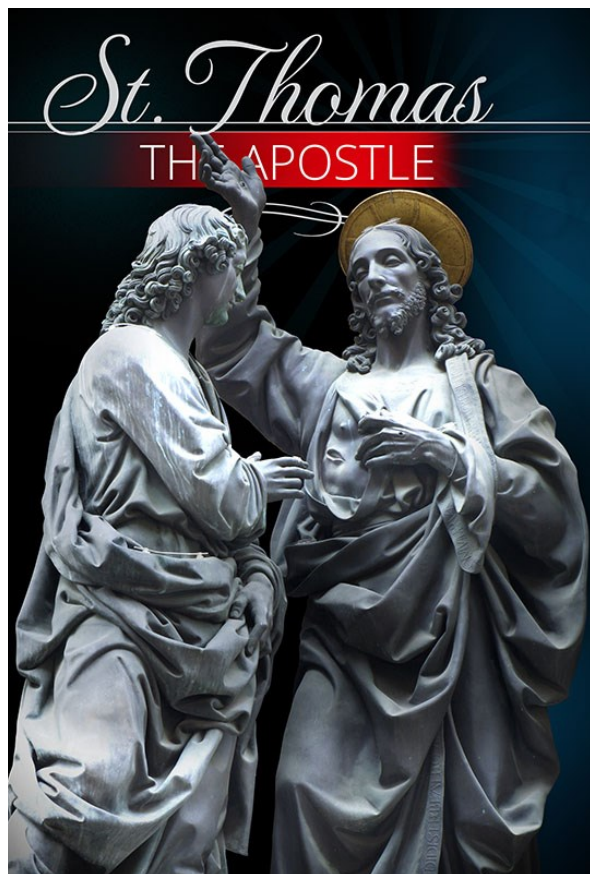
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God's Mercy worked wonderfully, for when that doubting disciple touched his Master's wounded flesh he cured the wound of our disbelief. So this doubting disciple, who actually touched, became a witness to the reality of the resurrection" We are invited to become living witnesses in our own day to the reality of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Thomas touched the wounded side of our beloved Savior to heal the wounds of our own disbelief. We were invited to approach the throne of Mercy and cry out with St. Thomas: "My Lord and My God" (Jn 20:28). Those who do so are forever changed. Peter became a messenger of mercy through his encounter with the Risen Lord. He was so filled with the Spirit of the Risen Lord that the Lord could continue His redemptive mission through him, accomplishing miraculous deeds.



Dear friends in Christ, doubt is important because it helps us to challenge the status quo, face and overcome our fears, redefine the situation we once believed in order to believe more, reflect on previous stories we've told ourselves, and search for the silver lining, to ask new questions, and to search for new answers. Likewise, Thomas' answer to his doubt was a result of his disposition to contemplate the open side and the Heart of Jesus, resulting in his profound expression of faith: **“My Lord and my God!”** May this very contemplation of the most expressive sign of our Saviour's love lead us to a clear, determined, strong, and apostolic faith. Above all, Thomas doubted, but he decided to move from doubt to faith, from scepticism to trust, and from fear to the courage of giving up his life in martyrdom for what he had come to believe.



POINTS TO PONDER OVER

1. Are you able to believe in things that you cannot see?
2. Why does Jesus bless those who believe without seeing?
3. Under what circumstances are you liable to exclaim, "My Lord and my God!" along with St. Thomas?
4. Have you ever experienced doubt or had a faith crisis in your Christian journey? If so, what was that like for you? What helped you to get through that difficult time?



***MY SHEEP LISTEN TO MY VOICE; I KNOW THEM,
AND THEY FOLLOW ME.***

- JOHN 10:27