

First Reading: Acts 5:12–20

¹²Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. ¹³None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. ¹⁴And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

¹⁷But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy ¹⁸they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. ¹⁹But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰"Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

Epistle: Revelation 1:4–18

⁴John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. ⁷Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

⁸"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

⁹I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet ¹¹saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

¹²Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and in the midst of the lampstands

one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

Holy Gospel: John 20:19–31

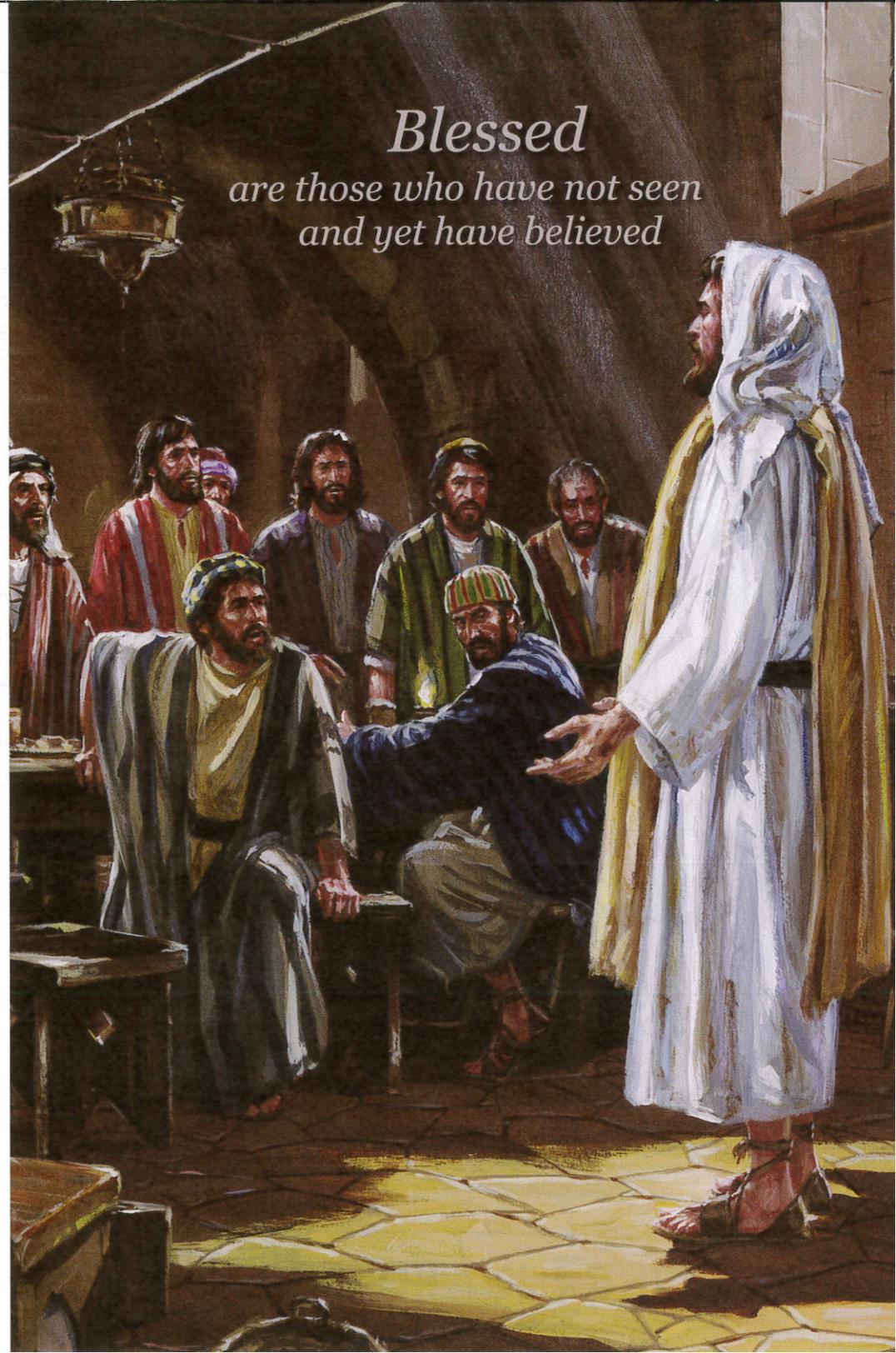
¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they 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.

*Blessed
are those who have not seen
and yet have believed*



About the Cover: Thomas and the other disciples saw, believed, and gave their eyewitness testimony concerning the resurrection of Christ. While we may feel at a disadvantage today in comparison to those first disciples who saw Jesus, nothing could be further from the truth. Jesus says that those who have not seen but believe are blessed. His Word, by the power of the Holy Spirit, has worked faith within us to trust in Christ as our Lord and Savior. As such, we receive all the benefits and promises of Christ!

St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)
8948 N 1900 Ave Geneseo, IL 61254
309-949-2516

April 24, 2022

Second Sunday of Easter

Office of Matins (Lutheran Service Book, pg. 219)

Hymn of Invocation 480 He's Risen, He's Risen

Opening Versicles (Common, p. 219)

Venite (p. 220)

Psalm 148

¹Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

²**Praise him, all his angels;**
praise him, all his hosts!

³Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴**Praise him, you highest heavens,**
and you waters above the heavens!

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD!
For he commanded and they were created.

⁶**And he established them forever and ever;**
he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
you great sea creatures and all deeps,

⁸**fire and hail, snow and mist,**
stormy wind fulfilling his word!

⁹Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!

¹⁰**Beasts and all livestock,**
creeping things and flying birds!

¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!

¹²**Young men and maidens together,**
old men and children!

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.

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!

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.

Office Hymn 470 O Sons and Daughters of the King

Readings (on back of bulletin)

Responsory (Easter, p. 222)

Sermon

***Te Deum* (p. 223)**

Prayer for Presenting the Offering

Kyrie (p. 227)

Collect of the Day

☐ 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.

Prayer of the Church

After each petition:

☐ let us pray to the Lord:

☑ Lord, have mercy.

Benediction (p. 228)

Closing Hymn 720 We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH-LCMS

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Website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
<https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo>

**HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**

Rev. Timothy Nerud **Pastor**
309-949-2516 (Office), 612-940-8138 (Cell), 309-949-2517 (Home)

Elder: Mike Dahl
Organist: Gail Tutt
Greeter: Janet Bertsons
Ushers: Dan Maeltzer Rollin Miller
Videographers: Joel Werling or Heidi Nerud

Today's Readings: First Reading: Acts 5:12-20
Epistle: Revelation 1:4-18
Gospel: John 20:19-31

WE PRAY: Lord Jesus, risen Lord, whose love suffers long and is kind, as You were once patient with Thomas, the doubter, be patient with us and show us the nail-holes again lest our humanness get in the way of our faith; who with the Father and the Holy Spirit are one God with dominion over us forever.

WELCOME TO ALL!

We are anxious to share with you the Christ-centered ministry at St. John's. Our Liturgy follows closely the pattern of Word and Lord's Supper handed down from the ancient Church. It is our hope that you will make the Church's life of prayer your own. If you have difficulty following our order of service, please ask someone sitting near you for assistance. We pray that you will receive rich spiritual blessings from your presence here. May the peace and power of our risen Christ be yours always.

IF YOU DESIRE, a visit or call from Pastor Nerud, please contact the church office (309-949-2516).

OFFICE HOURS

Terri's hours (Monday—Friday) 8 am—12 pm
Pastor's hours (Monday, Pastor's day off)
(Tuesday) 9 am—12 pm
(Thursday) 9 am—12 pm & 1 pm—4 pm
(Wednesday & Friday) please call ahead.

STREAM SERVICES <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/> and on the website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY

Sunday school—NA Adult Bible Class—NA Worship—80

OFFERING

Offering last Sunday \$4,619.99
Weekly 2022 Budget income needed \$4,084.71

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN'S

Today	8:45 am	SS/Adult & Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship
	11:00 am	Quarterly Voters' Assembly
Tuesday	7:00 pm	Adult Instruction class
Wednesday	5:00 pm	Confirmation
Next Sunday	8:45 am	SS/Adult & Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship/Communion

*I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."
Psalms 122:1*

JOHN 20:19 – “On 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.’ ” Fear is the opposite of faith. That is, the kind of cringing fear we have in the face of something that is hostile to us and more powerful than we are. Jesus spends a lot of His time telling the disciples to not be afraid. Our fears constantly hem us in and prevent us from following the Lord's will. But there is no need to fear. Jesus has conquered. No fear can keep us locked up. We have been set free by Jesus for lives that declare His marvelous deeds.

PLEASE CHECK the attendance sheet for you and your family members, marking each present in worship and attending communion as applicable. **There is a place for visitors to sign their names at the end of the list.** Thank you for your help.

DOING SPRING CLEANING? Concordia, Geneseo is gathering gently used shoes—baby sized up to grandma/grandpa shoes as a fund raiser for their newly created Concordia Lutheran Academy, beginning this fall with kindergarten. Place your donations in the box found next to the office door. Concordia will pick up shoes as the box is filled with **final day of pick-up Saturday, June 11.**

ENCHILADA SALE—Cristo Rey members are selling their fabulous enchiladas in either chicken or beef. Cost is \$15/dozen. Orders are picked up on Saturday, May 7th from 1-2 pm at Cristo Rey Lutheran Church. To place an order, call Jose Nunez (309) 373-1788. Proceeds go to Lutheran Women Missionary League.

WILL YOU HELP? The Elders' are looking for someone to be the 'Head Usher'. This person would secure ushers for each month (four ushers would serve a

month at a time). We sincerely miss the work of Jim Dahl who served in this position for many, many years.

We also need several people who would be willing to use their singing abilities during the serving of Holy Communion.

Please contact the Office for more information on either job.

CALL DAY—Anticipation is building for Call Day 2022! Join us for two special services Tuesday, April 26, when second-year students receive their vicarage or deaconess internship assignments at 3 pm (CDT) and concluding students receive their pastoral and diaconal calls at 7 pm (CDT) in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus. Join us on campus or online at csl.edu/callday.

SAVE the DATE for TRIVIA NIGHT at Immanuel Lutheran Church (To Benefit the Immanuel Youth), Saturday, May 14th beginning at 7 pm. (doors open @ 6 pm). This will be a night of fun with trivia and a silent auction. Tables are \$80 each (8 seats per table). More details to come! Questions can be directed to Helen Vogel @ 309-781-9627.

COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED—We still need someone willing to serve the three year term as a Trustee and also need someone to fill the Board of Ed head position for the remaining of this year.

ALTAR FLOWERS—The 2022 Flower Chart is now on the bulletin board next to the restrooms. Cost for weekly flowers are \$30 for two arrangements. We greatly appreciate those who help with providing flowers for Sunday worship services. Please sign up for a Sunday.

PRAYER MINISTRY

Remember how God works to strengthen the faith of His people as you pray:
MISSION—Pray that family members would treat each other with kindness and patience, so that each member might be built up in the family of God.

ST JOHN'S—Ms. Elizabeth Hock—We offer before You our common request for the well-being of Your church throughout the world that it may be so guided and governed by Your good Spirit that all who profess themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit in the bond of peace, and the righteousness of life. Specifically, we pray for Elizabeth and ask Your blessings upon her.

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy to Your servants:

Linda Aper	Lois Esterlein	Jim Rahn
Elizabeth Bjork	Betty Firch	Drew Schillinger
Jim Dahl	Arlyn Helke	Carolyn Werner
	Lynne Johnson	Marilyn Woods

Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

Jodi Martin (daughter of Gary & Darla Johns)

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)

Marilyn Potts (wife of Cal Potts, former St. John Laborer for Christ)

Virginia Miller (mother of Jamie Werling)

Rev. Justin Kane (son of Sandra Kane)

Bill Erdman (brother of Bob Erdman)

MILITARY—We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy/Richard Davila (daughter/son-in-law of Linda Aper)

Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)

Ken Willeford (husband of Alicia Willeford)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Zachary/Tiffany Gardner (nephew/wife of Lois Esterlein)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

“Just as He did on the embryonic leg of your journey, the Lord is guiding you still. Just as He did when you cascaded down the fallopian tube, the Lord carries you still. You were created to listen to the words of the Lord. Listen to the One who knows you, who knows your entire journey.” *Rev. Gary Blobaum, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oregon, Illinois – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

Second Sunday of Easter

April 24, 2022

Text: Acts 5:12-32ⁱ (First Reading)

Other Texts: Revelation 1:4-18 (Epistle); John 20:19-31 (Gospel)

“The Apostles, the Words of This Life, and Us”

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father be yours through faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Like the Gospels, the book of Acts is a historical text, recording events from after Jesus' resurrection in 33 AD to Paul's first Roman imprisonment c. 59 AD. While commonly referred to as the Acts of the Apostles, this designation is a misnomer for two reasons. First of all, as far as what is recorded, while the apostles are mentioned as a group a few times, today's reading being an example, really only two of them are singled out, Peter and, to a lesser extent, John who is often with Peter, and Paul and his missionary journeys. Second, and more important as it is theological, the book is really about *the ongoing work of Jesus*.

St. Luke begins the book of Acts writing, “In the first book... I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up.”ⁱⁱ Did you hear that? Luke's first book, his Gospel, dealt with all that Jesus *began* to do and teach. The Gospel account, which ends with Jesus' ascension into heaven, is *not* the end of Jesus' working and teaching. On the contrary, Jesus had promised, “I am with you always, to the end of the age.”ⁱⁱⁱ And so the book of Acts records the ongoing work of the Father's Son, the risen and ascended Lord Jesus, especially through the apostles as His chosen instruments, to whom the Father and the Son have given the Holy Spirit. Truly, the better name would be “The Acts of the Triune God!” And today's text from the book of Acts is loaded with His ongoing work especially through the apostles.

His most visible work is the miracles of healing and exorcism that were happening regularly by the hands of the apostles. In fact, God was working such an abundance of miracles that people, even from the surrounding towns, came and laid the sick out in the streets so that as Peter passed by his shadow might fall on them. And this was not mere superstition. For God brought healing through Peter's shadow, similar to when people were healed by simply touching the fringe of Jesus' garment^{iv} and, perhaps the most amazing, when Paul was in Ephesus and the aprons and handkerchiefs that simply touched his skin were then carried to the sick and the demon oppressed and their diseases were healed and the demons were driven from them!^v

When we hear this we probably have two thoughts hit us. First, though we know we shouldn't feel this, we might feel a bit of doubt. After all, as this is not happening today it seems so easy that it could just have been written sometime in the past to strengthen the “Jesus movement.” That is, after all, what the skeptics claim. Which, sadly, shows that the same unbelieving nature in the skeptics is to be found in us as well. The second thought we likely get is that we wish miracles like this were still happening today as they did back then. Actually, while they are rather different, we can address both of these thoughts together.

First of all, the manuscript evidence goes back early enough to show that this was not some late date writing or addition, but was written early on as the text indicates. It could have been refuted early on if it was false, but it wasn't. Why? Because it accurately recorded what occurred. But it should also be noted how unexpected and totally uncommon these miracles were! Just as with Jesus during His earthly ministry, the people were amazed at the abundance of the miracles that were happening. These weren't prescientific bumpkins who couldn't tell the difference between somebody getting over an illness via their immune system and medical treatment and a miraculous healing! They *could* tell the difference because, like us, they were used to the first healing (remember St. Luke was himself a physician) and now they were witnessing, even receiving the second. The crowds were as amazed as everyone at the mighty acts of God which were suddenly occurring in such a visible and copious manner.

Second though, as amazing as it was, this time was to come to an end since such miracles were primarily part of the apostolic ministry. As St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians concerning himself, "The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works."^{vi} And the fact that Corinth was a congregation in which there were miraculous gifts present amongst believers makes Paul's words indicating that these were primarily marks of the apostleship even stronger. And this was God's plan as the conclusion of St. Mark's Gospel shows, "And [the apostles] went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs."^{vii}

Consequently, this "time of miracles" was both amazing and temporary. It was to confirm the message that the apostles preached, the message that the angel who released them from prison commanded them to proclaim, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."^{viii} For it was through these "words of this Life" that God worked the great miracle: the new life given in the Holy Spirit, the Life that conquers Death as it continues forever in the glorious world to come. The Life that His Son won for them by His suffering and death for their sins, and His triumphant resurrection to life on the third day. The full healing and release from Satan that this Life ultimately gives being revealed in a limited way by the amazing, yet temporary miracles of physical and spiritual healing that the apostles worked.

And so the invisible miracle is what St. Luke reveals with these few short words, "And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women."^{ix} For it is that *faith* in the crucified and risen Savior and the salvation He purchased by the forgiveness of sins, the faith created by the Holy Spirit through the words of this Life, the Gospel, that is the most critical, for that is the faith that trusts in Christ Jesus as God and Lord and so receives the blessings of the Father that Jesus won in this life and the next.

Christ Jesus made sure that His apostles saw Him risen and alive after His death since it was absolutely essential so that they would be certain of His resurrection and so enabled to proclaim the message boldly. Thus a week later, when Thomas was now present with the other ten apostles, Jesus came and showed Thomas that He was alive.^x Thus when they were choosing Judas' replacement, it was mandatory that the new apostle was one who was with them from the baptism of John until Jesus ascended, so that he could be a witness of Jesus' resurrection, and so the lot fell on Matthias.^{xi} Thus Paul had to see the Lord whose people he had persecuted, receiving numerous visions of the risen, ascended, and glorified Jesus.^{xii} And thus seeing the

risen Lord, the apostles were made bold to preach repentance and God's salvation in Christ Jesus even when it brought suffering, persecution, and martyrdom, often in the most horrific ways.

And that is why you and I can gather here this morning and still hear the words of this Life. We can hear it because the apostles proclaimed it and they or their chosen assistants recorded it. And so as God worked miracles of healing and exorcism through His apostles, so He worked the miracle of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures through them as well, making sure that every word is nothing less than God's Word to us. And as He healed the sick, cast out demons, and gave us His Word in the Bible, also by His grace and the working of His providence He preserved that Word down to us today that we may hear the words of this Life and hearing, receive the Holy Spirit and have our faith in Christ strengthened to face the challenges and bear the crosses to which we are called and, finally, finish our race and enter our eternal home.

The apostles had great courage because they had seen the risen Christ. They upheld the Fourth Commandment, teaching Christians to honor the earthly authorities as God's representatives, trusting in God's sovereign rule even when the rulers are wicked. But they also taught that earthly authorities are limited to that which God has given them, bound to what He has spoken. Should they go against such, then they knew that "We must obey God rather than men."^{xiii} And so it is for us who have been given courage by the Holy Spirit who empowers us to follow the holy example of the apostles even if it brings us suffering.

When evil is commanded, when breaking God's moral Law is forced upon us, the government has gone beyond its boundaries and in such cases it must be disobeyed, for it is in disobedience to, yes, rebellion against the Creator. Yet even more critical, as was the case with the apostles, should the government tell us we can no longer speak about Christ Jesus, no longer proclaim the words of this Life, then it is in the greatest rebellion against the Divine Majesty.

In such cases, like the apostles we too can and should use legal means within the system to try and change such wrongs as that both honors God and the earthly authority.^{xiv} But should such fail, like the apostles we too are called to passive resistance, not violence. It is true that tears and blood have always followed the words of this Life, for this world, under Satan its prince, opposes Christ, His Gospel, and His Church. Yet we are not to take justice into our own hands, instead trusting in He who is just. Having faith in Him to act, to judge, to avenge, to rescue. Trusting that such *will* happen, even as we understand that it will not be fully manifested until heaven and so are called to bear our cross with patience. *That* is walking by faith and not sight.^{xv}

The apostles were Christ's chosen ones, those whom He called to be the foundation of the Church. And they are, for they were His inspired teachers, their teaching recorded in the Holy Scriptures for the Church of all time. So Having God's true Word and the apostles' certain testimony of the risen Christ, we too can follow them, sharing the words of this Life, the Gospel of Christ Jesus crucified for our sins and risen for our justification. We too can follow them in the face of suffering as we obey God rather than men, confident that the risen Christ will use that witness to challenge the world and its ruler, to shame them, and ultimately to condemn them.

For Christ is risen! Thus we, with the apostles, shall rise as well to be with Him in the wonders of the world to come. A promise to all who believe. But for those who do not it is a promise

despised, a Savior rejected and so, instead salvation, it is a well-earned damnation when God avenges His faithful people.

May God give us a faith like the apostles in the face of Satan and his two beasts, that we would not despair in trial or under the cross, but by faith in the Son of God overcome the world and receive the eternal victory.^{xvi} The victory that is already ours, for we have been united to Christ Jesus' death and resurrection in our Baptism.^{xvii}

Dear Christians, *Christ is risen!* Alleluia! Amen!

ⁱ Verses 21-32 are an optional extended reading which we read.

ⁱⁱ Acts 1:1-2a. All quotes are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV)* unless otherwise noted.

ⁱⁱⁱ Matthew 28:20b.

^{iv} Mark 6:56. See, for example, the woman with the 12-year discharge of blood in Mark 5:25-34.

^v Acts 19:11-12.

^{vi} 2 Corinthians 12:12.

^{vii} Mark 16:20.

^{viii} Acts 5:20.

^{ix} Acts 5:14.

^x Today's Gospel reading.

^{xi} Acts 1:21-22.

^{xii} Acts 9:1-9; 18:9-10; 2 Corinthians 12:1-7; Galatians 1:11-12.

^{xiii} Acts 5:29.

^{xiv} We consider, for example, how Paul used his Roman citizenship, not to his advantage, but for the advantage of the Gospel ministry entrusted to him.

^{xv} 2 Corinthians 5:7.

^{xvi} 1 John 5:4-5.

^{xvii} Romans 6:3ff.