

A Reading from a homily of Gregory the Great

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.' Thomas was the only disciple missing. When he returned and heard what had happened, he refused to believe what he heard. The Lord came again and offered his side to his skeptical disciple to touch. He showed his hands; and by showing the scars of his wounds he healed the wound of Thomas' unbelief.

What conclusion, dear sisters and brothers, do you draw from this? Do you think it was by chance that this chosen disciple was absent? Or that on his return he heard, that hearing he doubted, that doubting he touched, and touching he believed? This did not happen by chance, but by the providence of God. Divine mercy brought it about most wonderfully, so that when that doubting disciple touched his master's wounded flesh he healed the wound of our unbelief as well as his own. Thomas' skepticism was more advantageous to us than was the faith of the other disciples who believed. When he was led to faith by actually touching Jesus, our hearts were relieved of all doubt, for our faith is made whole.

After his resurrection Jesus allowed this disciple to doubt, and he did not desert him in his doubt. He became a witness to the reality of the resurrection. Thomas touched him and cried out: 'My Lord and my God.' Jesus said to him: 'Because you have seen me, Thomas, you have believed.' When the apostle Paul says that 'faith is the guarantee of the blessings that we hope for, the proof of the realities that are unseen,' it is clear that faith provides the proof of those things that are not evident; visible things do not require faith, they command recognition. Why, when Thomas saw and touched him, did Jesus say: 'Because you have seen me, you have believed'? What Thomas saw was one thing; what he believed, was another. A mortal could not have seen God. Thomas saw a human being, but by his cords, 'My Lord and my God', he acknowledged his divinity. It was by seeing that he believed. He recognized the reality of the man and testified that he was the invisible God.

Let us rejoice at what follows: 'Blessed are they who have not seen and have believed.' This expression makes special reference to us for we have not seen him in the flesh but know him in the mind. The reference is for us, but only if we follow up our faith with good works. Those who give expression to their faith are the genuine believers. *[Source: Celebrating the Seasons]*

SAINTS:

William Law, Priest, 10 April. Born at Kings Cliffe in Northamptonshire in 1686, William Law was educated at Emmanuel College Cambridge and, after ordination as a deacon, became a fellow of the College in 1711. When George I came to the throne in 1714, William declined to take the Oath of Allegiance, being a member of the Non-Juror party who believed the anointed but deposed monarch James II and his heirs should occupy the throne. He lost his fellowship but in 1728 he was made a priest and in the same year published *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, which much influenced such people as Samuel Johnson and John and Charles Wesley. In it he stresses the moral virtues, a personal prayer life and asceticism. He returned to Kings Cliffe in 1740, where he led a life of devotion and simplicity and caring for the poor. He remained there the rest of his life and died on this day in the year 1761.

George Augustus Selwyn, Bishop of New Zealand, 11 April. George Augustus Selwyn was born in 1809, educated at Cambridge and ordained as curate of Windsor. In 1841 he was made the first Bishop of New Zealand and remained there for twenty-seven years, during the first years travelling when few roads or bridges existed. In the wars between colonists and Maoris he stood out heroically for Maori rights, at the cost of fierce attacks from both sides and grave personal danger in his efforts to part the warriors, until later he was revered as one of the founders of New Zealand as well as of its Church. He taught himself to navigate and gathered congregations in the Melanesian Islands. His Constitution for the New Zealand Church influenced the churches of the Anglican Communion and he was a chief founder of the Lambeth Conferences of bishops. In 1868 he was persuaded to become the Bishop of Lichfield in England and died there on this day in 1878.

APRIL:

- ♦ April 9-10. NON-WORKING holiday
- ♦ April 14, Sunday, 3:00p.m., Wedding
- ♦ April 16, Tuesday, 11:00a.m., Memorial service for Heather Smith
- ♦ April 18, Thursday, 1:00p.m., Wedding
- ♦ April 21, Sunday, 11:30a.m., Vestry meeting
- ♦ April 25, Thursday, 3:00p.m. Healing Mass
- ♦ April 27, Saturday, 3:00p.m., Wedding
- ♦ April 28, Sunday, 3:00 p.m. French Service

MAY:

- ♦ May 1. Labor Day. NON-WORKING holiday
- ♦ May 12, Sunday, 3:00p.m., Wedding
- ♦ May 18, Saturday, 12noon-5:00p.m., Norway Day
- ♦ May 19, PENTECOST SUNDAY
- ♦ May 25, Saturday, 2:00p.m., Wedding
- ♦ May 26, TRINITY SUNDAY
- ♦ May 26, 2:00p.m., Wedding