

"My Lord and My God"

Gospel: John 20:19-31 AV. *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

This was the shout of the disciple who saw the resurrection of Christ. Today, Christ appears for the sixth

time after his resurrection. He appeared before to Peter, to the disciples on the Road to Emmaus, to Mary, to the other Marys, and to the ten disciples.

This Sunday is named the New, as we also called the whole past week, Bright Week. Why do we call this Sunday, the New Sunday? By His appearance today, Jesus explains this by the movement that He made: He entered, breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." By this last movement, Christ aimed at making man a new creation, as when He formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life and man became a living soul. The Holy Spirit has appeared in the world in many ways, such as a dove and as a tongue of fire. But this breath points to His role in creation. Jesus then means by this movement that there is now a new creation.

This is the event of the Resurrection. It is a new creation and a new forming of man. The Resurrection occurred in order to re mold us. Whoever observes the Resurrection of Christ immediately becomes a new creation. The Resurrection is an event that turns a person and changes him or her. When Peter saw the Resurrection of Christ, he turned from being a runaway and a denier to being a pastor, answering the question of Christ, "Peter do you love me? Tend my sheep." Mary Magdelaine saw the resurrected Christ and became a preacher of the Word, and the two disciples in Emmaus saw Him when He broke bread.

In this Gospel passage, we see the moment in which Thomas was changed. Christ is risen, but Thomas did not see that. Today, after eight days, the Resurrection of Christ is effective in Thomas, after he saw Christ. Here the change is clear between the new and old

creation. The shout of Thomas, My Lord and my God, makes clear the effect of the Resurrection and the quick change and the renewal which happen. This shout has two characteristics.

My Lord and My God means that we take a decision, making Jesus the Lord of our lives, after seeing His Resurrection. This Lord is clear and honest. He told us that we cannot worship other gods at the same time as Him... That's why we repeat during Pascha this prayer, "Now that we have see the resurrection of Christ, let us bow down to the Lord Jesus the Holy One... For you are our God and we know none other than you , and by your name we are called." The Resurrection is an event that makes the mighty and strong, the desires and the glories and other things fall down so that we may worship only the Lord Jesus.

The second characteristic of this new creation that the shout of Saint Thomas reveals is the personal relationship to the Lord. Thomas did not utter, "O Lord and God," but he shouted, "My Lord and My God." Christ is the living truth of my life. The grace of His resurrection has a personal effect on me, that is, His resurrection, His life, is my resurrection and life as well. In a word, the shout of the apostle Thomas is "My Lord and My Life!"

This is how the Gospel of St. John ends, by this shout, so that we know that the Lord's Resurrection and everything that happened and was recorded so that we may have life in His name.

Amen.