

RECONCILIATION, TRUTH-TELLING & PEACE

2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER – 24 APRIL 2022



Doubting Thomas by Guercino, early 17th century | public domain

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS IN ROME

In preparing the Stations of the Cross this year in Rome, a number of people were invited to add their contributions.

One of the stations received international media attention.

Two women, a Ukrainian and a Russian wished to pray for reconciliation between the two nations.

The strong feedback from Ukraine was that Ukraine were still being invaded by Russia, and prayer should be for peace now, not reconciliation.

The wording for the station of the cross was adapted to pray for peace.

This episode raises the question about *what are the stages of reconciliation*, and *who is involved in the process*.

[The Stations of the Cross in full at <https://youtu.be/G8zsdri-Cxw>
The two women are at <https://youtu.be/G8zsdri-Cxw?t=4410>]



Vatican News - The Stations of the Cross, 2022

ANZAC DAY

This Monday is Anzac Day.

Again we can reflect on *what steps are involved in true reconciliation* and *how do we achieve genuine peace in our world*.

This weekend and next weekend as we reflect on the Gospel passages, we open ourselves to questions about reconciliation processes.

Among those included in such reconciliation processes are God and humanity.

Humanity in a reconciliation process could involve

- those who have died
- the victims and survivors, their stories and trauma and sense of loss

- the perpetrators of injustice and evil
- those who are both victims and perpetrators
- the onlookers or bystanders who could be guilty of silent approval of what happened
- those who benefit from the injustice in other ways
- the neighbouring countries or areas – did they side with either group?
- the media
- religious communities
- non-governments organisations, the UN and other agencies
- the world community
- healing ministries
- the generations to come

One of the stages in reconciliation is called Truth-telling.

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus having risen from the dead, appeared to his disciples.

GOSPEL OF JOHN 20:19-31

'When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.'

Some of the disciples had deserted Jesus when he was falsely accused and tried.

They did not advocate for him. They did not defend Jesus.

And they did not accompany him on the road to Calvary.

Yet now, Jesus, risen from the dead, appears in their midst.

He offers the gift of peace.

But before they can receive peace, there is truth-telling.

"After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side."

This is the visible truth-telling with his hands and side for all to see.

The disciples need to acknowledge what happened to Jesus.

They need to confirm the suffering and death of Jesus.

Jesus shows them his wounds as the proof of what had happened to him.

Whether it was in Timor Leste or South Africa,

Cambodia or Chile or Germany or Argentina or eastern Europe,

or in Australia or in so many other nations,

truth-telling has been an essential step towards reconciliation.

It provides the proof, it overcomes the lies and deception of deceitful perpetrators.

It takes courage to speak up and persevere.

Jesus shows us the way forward. Jesus enables truth-telling.

But what about some who miss the initial time of truth-telling.

Today's Gospel continues:

"But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came."

*So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.'
But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands,
and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side,
I will not believe.' "*

So many people will not believe unless they see for themselves.

*"A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them.
Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them
and said, '**Peace be with you.**'
Then he said to Thomas, '**Put your finger here and see my hands.
Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.**'
Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!
Jesus said to him, '**Have you believed because you have seen me?
Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.**' "*

Thomas represents all who have not yet acknowledged the truth about injustice. It was the weekend after Easter when Thomas met the Risen Christ. This weekend is the weekend after Easter. In our parish community, we are called to recognize the Risen Christ among us.

A FUTURE TRUTH-TELLING SESSION IN OUR PARISH

On the evening of June 6th, our parish will sponsor a truth-telling session on the experience of Aboriginal peoples in Australia.

From the Gospels, we learn from Jesus, in reconciliation about the importance of:

- Confession
- Courage
- Equality and human dignity
- Forgiveness
- Healing
- Hope
- Justice in its different forms
- Love
- Mercy and compassion
- Peace
- Perseverance and patience
- Reparation and restitution
- Repentance
- Solidarity with the oppressed
- The search for Truth
- Vulnerability

LEARNING FROM THE PARABLES | CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS & GENDER

From the parable of the *Good Samaritan* we learn about *cultural and religious elements* in being reconciled.

To these differences we also add *gender* in the story of Jesus and the *Woman at the Well*.

THE PEACE OF JESUS LEADS TO FORGIVENESS & FULLNESS OF LIFE

In today's Gospel we also discern the commissioning to forgive.

The peace of Jesus leads to forgiveness and fullness of life.

“Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them,

‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them;

if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’ “

PRAYING FOR THE CHILDREN

Yesterday and today are the children's Confirmation workshops

as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation in the coming weeks.

And then they will begin their preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

We pray for them as they invite the Holy Spirit more fully into their lives.

Let us pray. Alleluia, Alleluia.'

Father Gerry

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/042422.cfm>

