

Reflection: 7th Sunday of Easter

Today our readings show Jesus's closest disciples facing periods of uncertainty and waiting. In the Gospel, we hear the closing stages of Jesus's long discourse to the Twelve on the evening before he was crucified – just hours, or even minutes, before he was betrayed. It would have been clear to the disciples that events were coming to a climax, with many people thronging to see and hear Jesus as he taught and healed in Jerusalem in the build-up to Passover; but also the forces of opposition were becoming more intense. It must have been a very anxious time for Jesus's followers: would the forces of evil triumph and kill Jesus, or would God's Messiah triumph and restore God's Kingdom on Earth. Despite having had it explained to them many times, they didn't seem to understand that Jesus would triumph precisely by being put to death as a sinless sacrifice.

In the Gospel readings we have heard during the last few Sundays Jesus has made clear his closeness to his Heavenly Father, that everything he has done and said has come from the Father, and that he will be returning to the Father. And now the disciples (not just the Apostles) will share that closeness to God the Father, when they receive the Holy Spirit and eternal life – knowing the one true God. Even after Jesus had risen from death, the disciples had to wait for the promised Holy Spirit (the second period of waiting) but once it had come they immediately set about making God, and his love and mercy, known to the world.

We have also been waiting, to learn who will be our new incumbent. That wait should be over today, though we will still have to wait a few months for them to come and be licensed here. But we already have the Holy Spirit, and many links into our local community by which we can make God, and what he means to us and our everyday lives, know. So let us not 'coast' through this summer, but continue to be active in serving our neighbours and bringing glory to God.

Ian Totterdell, churchwarden



NEXT SUNDAY 24.05.26 Pentecost
10.30am in the Church



OT 1 Corinthians 12: 3b-13
NT Acts 2: 1-21
GOSPEL John 20: 19-23

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St Thomas, Exeter

17th May 2026

Seventh Sunday of Easter

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

191 *Hail the day that sees him rise*

277 *Jesus shall reign where're the sun*

309 *Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour*

81 *Christ triumphant, ever reigning*

6pm *Thy Kingdom Come* in the Cathedral

Wednesday 20th May

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 21st May

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny
Tuckett's house

Friday 22nd May

9.30am Morning Prayers

10am Staff Meeting



Collect

O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Acts 1: 6-14

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.' Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

1 Peter 4: 12-14, 5: 6-11

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though

something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

John 17: 1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. 'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are

yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Post Communion

Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom: confirm us in this mission, and help us to live the good news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Notices

Today we welcome **the Venerable Andrew Beane** who will preach and preside at our service.

A huge thank you to you all for your incredible generosity after my final service last Sunday. I was so touched and slightly overwhelmed by all my lovely cards and gifts. Rest assured, I shall add to my bookshelf and Seb and I look forward to a night out to the theatre very soon. With grateful thanks to you all. Rev Sarah

Ian, your Churchwarden, is taking part in the Hospiscare 100 Miles in May Challenge again this year. He will be walking from Bude to Minehead on the Southwest Coast Path. He can be sponsored via <https://justgiving.com/page/ian-totterdell-4> but he is also happy to receive cash donations at services.

We are intending to hold a number of **Summer Crafternoon**s over the next few months. Full details to follow or speak to Liz