

Reflection for the Feast Day of St Thomas

What's in a name?

My own name 'Sarah' apparently means 'princess' although it was such a popular name at the time I was born, that it was hardly elite! Of course, we also see Abraham's wife Sarah in the Bible, so might learn from her example.

What about the name attached to our church; Thomas? It means 'twin' so not much help there! Maybe a deeper question asks: what does it mean to you to be part of a St Thomas Church? Some of us will have attended these special days for many years. How do the stories of St Thomas Apostle get under our skin? Perhaps we are quietly proud to be associated with someone who asks questions and demands proof. After that, Thomas is also the first to declare that Jesus is 'my master and my God!'

What about the insistence of previous generations that this church claimed St Thomas Martyr as its patron even before the disciple? What might we learn from his example; his insistence on resisting the influence of the crown over matters of the church? Can we identify with his courage and his obstinacy?! What might we learn from these people who gave this church its name?

Rev Sarah



God eternal-
three
in one

NEXT SUNDAY 12.07.26 Trinity 6
10.30am in the Church



OT Isaiah 55: 10-13
NT Romans 8: 1-11
GOSPEL Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

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St Thomas, Exeter

5th July 2026

St Thomas the Apostle

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

46 *At the name of Jesus*

570 *You are the King of glory*

148 *From heaven you came, helpless
babe*

186 *Great is thy faithfulness*

Wednesday 8th July

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 9th July

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

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

Friday 10th July

9.30am Morning Prayers

10am Staff Meeting

Saturday 11th July

9am St Thomas Breakfast in the Sawyers. All
welcome.



Collect

Almighty and eternal God, who, for the firmer foundation of our faith, allowed your holy apostle Thomas to doubt the resurrection of your Son till word and sight convinced him: grant to us, who have not seen, that we also may believe and so confess Christ as our Lord and our God; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Habakkuk 2: 1-4

I will stand at my watch-post, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint. Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

Psalms 31: 1-6

- 1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.
- 3 Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me,
for you are my rock and my stronghold;
guide me, and lead me for your name's sake.
- 4 Take me out of the net
that they have laid secretly for me,
for you are my strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.
- 6 I hate those who cling to worthless idols;
I put my trust in the Lord.

Ephesians 31: 1-6

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but

you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.

John 20: 24-29

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.' 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.'

Post Communion

Almighty God, who on the day of Pentecost sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame, filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel: by the power of the same Spirit strengthen us to witness to your truth and to draw everyone to the fire of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Notices

Today we welcome Rev Sarah Cumming to preach and preside at our patronal festival service.

Please pray for Rupert Cove Marchant who is being

baptised in our church this afternoon.

Rev Hannah Alderson, our new Rector, will be licensed to our parish at 7.30pm on **Monday 7th September**. Please continue to pray for Hannah and her family as they prepare to move into our community.

The staff team will be meeting **Hannah to plan her licensing service** on the morning of Friday 10th July. If anyone would like to be involved in that please speak to Ian.

Prayers for Venezuela after the earthquakes

Most of you will know that Venezuela, on the north coast of South America, was hit by two strong earthquakes on 24th June. It is feared the death toll could reach 10,000, and many buildings were destroyed meaning that many people have lost their homes and hospitals can't function normally. The Disasters Emergency Committee (www.dec.org.uk), a coalition of 15 charities including Christian Aid and British Red Cross, has launched an appeal for funds, but we can also help by praying for those affected.

Often we struggle to know what to pray for in such situations. The charity Tearfund has produced a guide for our prayers; the full guide can be found on their website (www.tearfund.org) but in summary we can pray:

- For those grieving the loss of loved ones (children who have lost parents, those waiting for news of the missing);
- For those dealing with extreme emotional distress (those who saw buildings collapse, those suffering aftershocks, those afraid to return to their homes);
- For healing for the injured, and the healthcare services treating them;
- For the provision of emergency aid and supplies (including the restoration of communication, for medical supplies, for food, shelter and cooking utensils, and for those co-ordinating the response locally and internationally);
- For local churches, that they may show Jesus's love for their communities, even while living through trauma themselves.