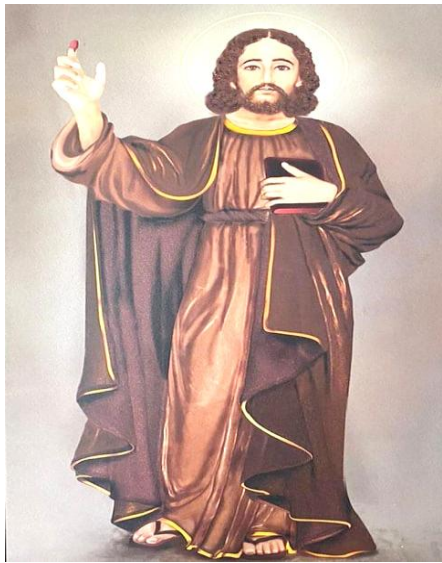


~ Saint Thomas ~



Thomas the Apostle also known as Didymus was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus according to the New Testament. Thomas is commonly known as "doubting Thomas" because he initially doubted the resurrection of Jesus when he was told of it; he later confessed his faith ("The lord of me and the God of me") on seeing the places where the wounds appeared still fresh on the holy body of Jesus after the Crucifixion of Jesus.

Thomas first speaks in the Gospel of John.

In John 11:16, when Lazarus has recently died, and the apostles do not wish to go back to Judea, Thomas says: "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Thomas speaks again in John 14:5. There, Jesus had just explained that he was going away to prepare a heavenly home for his followers, and that one day they would join him there. Thomas reacted by saying, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"

John 20:24–29 tells how doubting Thomas was skeptical at first when he heard that Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to the other apostles, saying, "Except I shall see on 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."

But when Jesus appeared later and invited Thomas to touch his wounds and behold him, Thomas showed his belief by saying, "My Lord and my God". Jesus then said, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

When the feast of Saint Thomas was inserted in the Roman calendar in the 9th century, it was assigned to December 21st. The *Martyrology of St. Jerome* mentioned the apostle on July 3rd, the date to which the Roman celebration was transferred in 1969, so that it would no longer interfere with the major ferial days of Advent.

According to Syrian Christian tradition, Thomas was killed with a spear at St. Thomas Mount in Chennai on July 3, 72, and his body was interred in Mylapore.

Latin Church tradition holds December 21st as his date of death. Ephrem, the Syrian, states that the Apostle was killed in India, and that his relics were then taken to Edessa. This is the earliest known record of his death.

The records of Barbosa from the early 16th century record that the tomb was then maintained and a lamp is burning there. The St. Thomas Cathedral Basilica, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, presently located at the tomb, was first built in the 16th century by the Portuguese, and rebuilt in the 19th century by the British. St. Thomas Mount has been a site revered by Christians since at least the 16th century.

The purported finger bones of Saint Thomas were discovered during restoration work at the Church of Saint Thomas in Mosul, Iraq in 1964, and were housed there until the Fall of Mosul, after which the relics were transferred to the Monastery of Saint Matthew on June 17, 2014.



San Thome Church in Chennai, India



The tomb of Saint Thomas