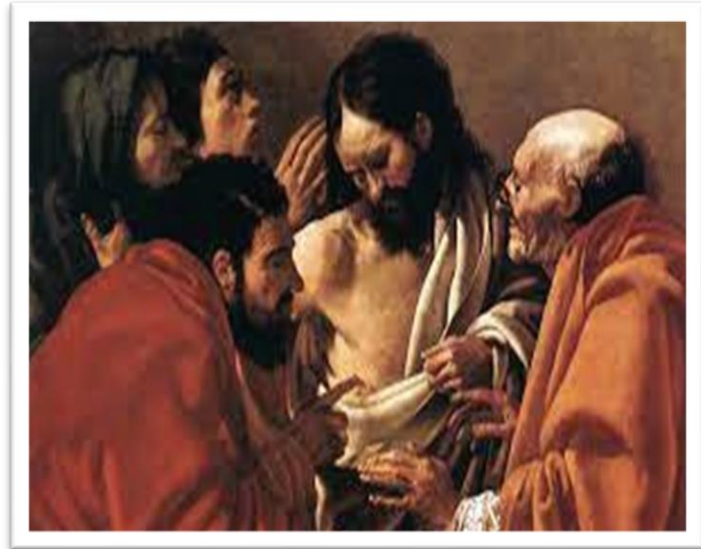


## **The Second Love Feast (Agape). Thomas Puts His Hand Into the Marks of Jesus' Wounds**

After the close of the Sabbath, the Apostles having laid aside their robes of ceremony, I saw a great meal spread in the outer hall. It was a love feast, such as had taken place on the preceding Sunday. Thomas must have celebrated

the Sabbath somewhere in the neighborhood, for I did not see him come in till after the meal, when they had again returned to the Supper Room. It was still early in the evening; the lamps were not yet lighted. Several of the Apostles and disciples were in the hall, and I saw others entering. They robed themselves again in long white garments, and prepared for prayer as on the preceding occasion. Peter, John, and James again put on the vestments that distinguished them as priests.

While these preparations were being made, I saw Thomas entering the Supper Room. He passed through the Apostles who were already robed, and put on his own long white garment. As he went along, I saw the Apostles accosting him. Some caught him by the sleeve, others gesticulated with the right hand as they spoke, as if emphatically protesting against him. But he behaved like one in a hurry to vest and as if he could not credit the account given him of the wonderful things which had happened in that place. While all this was going on, a man entered the hall. He appeared to be a servant. He wore an apron and had in one hand a little lighted lamp, in the other a rod terminating in a hook. With the latter he drew down the lamp that was suspended from the center of the ceiling, lighted it, and again pushed it up. Then he left the hall! And now I saw the Blessed Virgin, Magdalen, and another woman come into the house. The Blessed Virgin and Magdalen entered the hall, Peter and John going to meet them. The third woman remained in the antechamber. The entrance hall was opened into the Supper Room, also some of the side halls. The exterior doors leading into the courtyard, as well as those of the court itself, were shut. A great many disciples were gathered in the side halls.



As soon as Mary and Magdalen entered, the doors were closed and all ranged for prayer. The holy women remained reverently standing on either side of the door, their arms crossed upon their breast. The Apostles kneeling before the Holy of Holies, prayed again as before; then standing under the lamp, they sang Psalms, choir and choir. Peter stood before the lamp, his face toward the Holy of Holies, John and James the Less at his side. Right and left of the lamp were the other Apostles. The side toward the Holy of Holies was left free. Peter stood between the two, his back to the door, so that the two holy women were standing behind him at some distance.

After some time there was a pause in the assembly, an intermission of prayer, or as if prayer was at an end, and they began to speak of going to the Sea of Tiberias and of how they would disperse. But soon they assumed an expression of rapt attention, called up by the approach of the Lord. At the same moment, I saw Jesus in the courtyard. He was resplendent with light, clothed in white garments and a white girdle. He directed His steps to the door of the outer hall, which opened of itself before Him and closed behind Him. The disciples in the outer hall saw the door opening of itself, and fell back on both sides to make room. But Jesus walked quickly through the hall into the Supper Room and stepped between Peter and John who, like all the other Apostles, fell back on either side.

Jesus did not enter walking properly so called, that is, in the usual way of mortals, and yet it was not a floating along, or hovering, as I have seen spirits doing. It reminded me, as I saw them all falling back, of a priest in his alb passing through a crowded congregation. Everything in the hall appeared to become suddenly large and bright. Jesus was environed with light. The Apostles had fallen back from the radiant circle, otherwise they would not have been able to see Him.

Jesus' first words were: "Peace be to you!" Then He spoke with Peter and John, and rebuked them for something. They had departed a little from His directions, in order to follow their own ideas about something, and consequently they had not met with success. It related to some of the cures they had sought to effect on their return from Sichar and Thanath-Silo. They had not followed Jesus' directions to the letter, and therefore had not been entirely successful. They had done something according to their own ideas. Jesus told them that if it happened again, they should act otherwise. Jesus now stepped under the lamp, and the Apostles closed around Him. Thomas, very much frightened at the sight of the Lord, timidly drew back. But Jesus, grasping his right hand in His own right hand, took the forefinger and laid the tip of it in the wound of His left hand; then taking the left hand in His own left, he placed the forefinger in the wound of His right hand; lastly, taking

again Thomas' right hand in His own right, He put it, without uncovering His breast, under His garment, and laid the fore and middle fingers in the wound of His right side. He spoke some words as He did this. With the exclamation: "My Lord, and my God!" Thomas sank down like one unconscious, Jesus still holding his hand. The nearest of the Apostles supported him, and Jesus raised him up by the hand. That sinking down and rising up had some peculiar signification.

When Jesus grasped Thomas' hand, I saw that His wounds were not like bloody marks, but like little radiant suns. The other disciples were very greatly touched by this scene. They leaned forward, without, however, crowding, to see what the Lord was allowing Thomas to feel. I saw the Blessed Virgin during the whole time of Jesus' stay, perfectly motionless, as if absorbed in calm, deep interior recollection. Magdalen appeared more agitated, yet manifesting far less emotion than did the disciples.

Jesus did not disappear immediately after Thomas' declaration of faith. He still continued to speak to the Apostles, and asked for something to eat. I saw a little oval dish brought to Him again from the partitioned recess in which the table stood. It was not precisely like that presented to Him the first time. There was on it something that looked like a fish, of which He ate, then blessed and distributed what was left to those around Him, beginning with Thomas.

Jesus then told them why He stood in the midst of them, although they had abandoned Him, and why He did not place Himself nearer to those that had remained faithful to Him. He told them also that He had commissioned Peter to confirm his brethren, and explained why He had given him that charge. Then turning to them all, He told them why He wished to give them Peter for a leader, although he had so recently denied Him. He must, He said, be the shepherd of the flock, and He enlarged upon Peter's zeal.

John brought on his arm from the Holy of Holies the large, colored, embroidered mantle which James had received from Mary and on which, in those last days, the holy women had worked at Bethania. Besides that, he brought also a hollow, slender staff, high and bent at the top like a shepherd's crook. It was shining and looked like a long pipe. The mantle was white with broad red stripes; and on it were embroidered, in colors, wheat, grapes, a lamb, and other symbols. It was wide, and long enough to reach to the feet. It was fastened over the breast with a little four-cornered metal shield, and bordered down the front with red stripes which were crossed by shorter ones on which were letters. It had a collar and a kind of hood, of a sky-blue color, which could be drawn up over the neck and head.

Peter next knelt down before Jesus, who gave him to eat a round morsel, like

a little cake. I do not remember seeing any plate, nor do I know where Jesus got the morsel, but I do know that it shone with light. I felt that Peter received with it some special power, and I saw also strength and vigor poured into his soul when Jesus breathed upon him. This action of Jesus was not a simple, ordinary breathing. It was words, a power, something substantial that Peter received, but no merely spoken words. Jesus put His mouth to Peter's mouth, then to his ears, and poured that strength into each of the three. It was not the Holy Spirit Himself, but something that the Holy Spirit was to quicken and vivify in Peter at Pentecost. Jesus laid His hands on him, gave him a special kind of strength, and invested him with chief power over the others. Then He placed upon him the mantle that John, who was standing next to Him, was holding on his arm, and put the staff into his hand. While performing this action, Jesus said that the mantle would preserve in him all the strength and virtue that He had just imparted to him, and that he should wear it whenever he had to make use of the power with which he had been endued.

Peter addressed the assembly in his new dignity. He had become as it were a new being, a man full of vigor and energy. His hearers were greatly moved; they listened with tears. He consoled them, alluded to many things that Jesus had before told them, and which were now being fulfilled. He told them, as I still remember, that Jesus, during His Passion of eighteen hours, had borne insult and outrage from the whole world. In that discourse mention was made of how much was wanting to the completion of Jesus' thirty-four years. While Peter was speaking, Jesus vanished. No alarm, no exclamations of surprise broke in upon the attention with which Peter's words were received. He appeared to be endowed with strength entirely new. The discourse ended, they sang a Psalm of thanksgiving. Jesus addressed neither His Blessed Mother nor Magdalen.