

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 7, 2024

Gospel: (John 20:19-31)

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to 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 into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace, be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God." Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Reflection:

The remarkable thing about belief is that it always has room for unbelief. Like mystery itself, belief isn't something we have and that's it. There is always room to grow in our belief, just as there is always room for our unbelief. We call Thomas "doubting Thomas" and so he was. Truth be told, so are all of us. There come times in our lives when we are simply overcome with emptiness and absence—perhaps the death of a loved one, the painful illness of a small child, loss of a job. At these times doubt or unbelief are natural. This doesn't mean we have lost our faith, it means that at these times we need to keep our eyes focused on the risen Christ and, in due time, we know the Lord is with us inviting us to belief. (Living Liturgy, p.116)

Vincenzian Meditation:

Blessed Frederic Ozanam wrote "... the poor we see with the eyes of flesh; they are there and we can put finger and hand in their wounds and the scars of the crown of thorns are visible on their foreheads; and at this point incredulity no longer has place and we should fall at their feet and say with the Apostle, *Tu est Dominus et Deus meus (You are my Lord and my God!)*. You are our masters, and we will be your servants. You are for us the sacred images of that God whom we do not see, and not knowing how to love Him otherwise shall we not love Him in your person?"

Discussion: (Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence)

Share a time when you moved from unbelief to belief.

Closing Prayer:

Risen Lord, your resurrection brought joy to all believers,

- give joy to those who live in sadness.

Risen Lord, your resurrection brought hope to all believers

-give hope to those who live in despair.

Risen Lord, your resurrection turned unbelief to belief,

-give faith to those who live in doubt.

Risen Lord, your resurrection gifted the fearful with peace,

-give peace to those who live in suffering. Amen

