



“The gift of doubt”

(2nd Sunday of Easter – 2018)

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To have faith does not mean we'll never be afraid. To have faith does not mean we'll never have doubts. To have faith does not mean that EVERY day and in EVERY situation you'll be 100% certain, and you'll know exactly what to do. To have faith means that God will carry you through.

Last Sunday we wondered “where were the men?” They were afraid; “locked up” in a huddle? We they cocooned off in a room with the doors locked? And the women too - “they fled the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.”

Today we hear “where was Thomas?” We don't know. But he wasn't in that room. A room locked up tight in fear. The ‘fear factor’ hadn't compelled him to join the huddle. For far too long, Thomas has gotten a bad rap. He wasn't in the room, but maybe he wasn't in the room, because he wasn't afraid! His courage had led him to a position, where he didn't need to join the group clutched in fear. Perhaps his courage had given him the hutzpah to ‘go on with life’. He certainly had courage to speak as boldly and frankly as he did. *“Unless I see...” “I will not believe.”* That took courage!

And what was it that he “didn't believe?” Was it that he didn't believe in his Lord? Or was it that, he didn't believe what his friends told him? “The gift of doubt”. Who do you believe? Whom do you trust? To “test” your sources is not a bad thing. To “push back” a little is not a bad thing. If the relationship has any substance, it can take it.

Do you believe EVERYTHING, coming out of the mouth of EVERY body? From family? From friends? From parents? Some more than others, of course, but even our trusted sources do we ‘ask questions’ and test a little bit? That's what Thomas did.

Do we trust everything, we see on Facebook? Everything coming out of Washington or the Whitehouse? Do you see "the gift of doubt"? Again, if the relationship has any substance, it can certainly withstand that. Over everything else, GOD can certainly handle your doubts, and questions!

We often hear it said: "If your heart is in the right place it'll be ok". That's what matters - if your heart is in the right place. That is well and good, but God has given us a heart and a head! Today is a day to say: "If your head is in the right place..." That's where Thomas takes us. In the end - in the final analysis - it's where we 'come down'.

Thomas believed! **"My Lord, and my God!"**

The witness of the faithful - is so rich and diverse, and wonderful. We all get their by our own path. Peter "denied", even disowned the Lord. The disciples "ran". The women were 'afraid'. Moses 'argued' with God and offered up every excuse under the sun. Jonah! - Ah Jonah. God said 'go this way' and Jonah did a 180 and went THAT way. St. Augustine came to faith only later in life. GK Chesterton similarly; and CS Lewis. Dietrich Bonhoeffer - SUCH a great voice of faith, against the powers of the 3rd Reich - but said he could never do it alone. He needed "Community". And Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (50th anniversary of his assassination this past week) -his voice got stronger and stronger, as his oppressors pressed in closer and closer.

Whatever it takes. God doesn't belittle ANY of our foibles, struggles, doubts or fears. And what about you? Blessed are those who HAVE not seen and yet have come to believe. V.30 *"Now Jesus did many other did many other signs in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book. But these are written so that YOU may come to believe. And that through believing YOU may have life in his name."*

Doubt can be a gift. Struggles & fears can be a gift. EVERYTHING can be a gift when seen in the light of God's Grace.

May the Resurrection, the Risen Life of Christ, dwell in you richly this week. And may you know the joy of God's Grace, in all that you do.

AMEN.