



Not Seeing, Yet Believing

WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN, my friends and I used to discuss whether aliens were real. They would say it is true that they actually exist, but I would disagree and tell them I would not believe unless I would see one.

In our Gospel today, we hear the story of St. Thomas, also known as “Doubting Thomas,” an apostle who did not believe that Jesus had really risen from the dead. When Jesus appeared on Easter evening, Thomas was not around, and the Twelve (apostles) were living in fear after the death of their Master. This fear is caused by what Thomas witnessed: the suffering and death of Jesus. We can say that like the other disciples, he was also confused and uncertain of what would happen next, most especially to them, Jesus’ disciples. Thus, when the other disciples told him that they saw the risen Jesus, he

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could not immediately accept their testimony. He said, “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.”

Yes, it is indeed hard to believe something that you can’t see with your own eyes, but it is in this way that we can test our faith in the Lord. Thomas’ reaction reflects our own, especially when we are experiencing something difficult because of pain and disappointment. During these moments, we are asking for signs from the Lord. The requirement of Thomas is not due to stubbornness, but is about asking for certainty in life, most especially his mission as an apostle of Christ.

The most striking thing in this Gospel story is the response of Jesus to Thomas’ terms. On his second appearance, he did not rebuke Thomas for being doubtful; instead, he invited him to see his hands and touch his side.

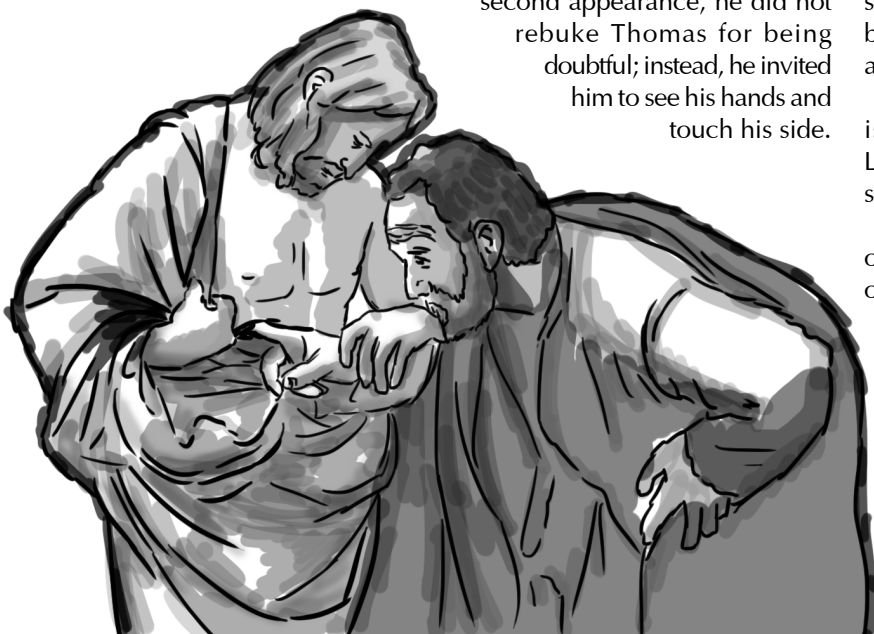
This shows that Jesus really knew Thomas’ experiences and struggles. It reveals how compassionate and understanding Jesus was.

When we are experiencing doubts and struggles, the question is: To whom can we go? In these moments, Jesus is inviting us to turn to the Holy Eucharist to experience him in our midst despite all these doubts. In this way, our faith will be strengthened by the Lord. Our authentic faith will be strengthened if we only have a strong relationship with him, most especially in the Eucharist.

Thomas had the privilege of seeing the risen Lord physically, but we are all invited to believe through the witness of Scripture, through the Eucharist, the life of the Church, and our own experiences of God’s grace. Every time we are in the Holy Mass, the moment when the priest raises the bread and wine, we will also say the words uttered by Thomas before the risen Master “My Lord and my God!”

Let us ask ourselves: How is my relationship with the Lord, especially during times of struggles and doubts?

Can we also make the words of St. Peter to the early Christians our very own: “Although you have not seen him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy” (1 Pt 1:8)?



THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps 118 [117]:28, 21)
(*Recited when there is no opening song.*)

You are my God, and I confess you; you are my God, and I exalt you; I will thank you, for you became my savior.

Greeting

(*The sign of the cross is made here.*)

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(*These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.*)

P—Today, the Church celebrates the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, one of the Twelve chosen by Jesus. St. Thomas is best known for doubting the Lord's resurrection until he saw and touched the wounds of Christ. Yet his doubt led him to a profound profession of faith: "My Lord and my God!" His journey reminds us that honest questions can lead to a deeper faith when we seek the truth with an open heart. As we celebrate his feast, we ask St. Thomas to help us grow in faith and to recognize the presence of the risen Lord in our lives.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. (*Pause*)

All—I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, (striking your breast) through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.
All—Lord, have mercy.

P—Christ, have mercy.
All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.
All—Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

All—Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

Grant, almighty God, that we may glory in the Feast of the blessed Apostle Thomas, so that we may always be sustained by his intercession and, believing, may have life in the name of Jesus Christ your Son, whom Thomas acknowledged as the Lord.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



Reading (Eph 2:19–22) (*Sit*)

The Apostle Paul, though not a witness of the public ministry of Jesus, assures his Christian converts that they belong to the community of faith which rests upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy

ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through him the whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord; in him you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

—The word of the Lord.
All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Mk 16:15, Ps117:1bc, 2)

R—Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

1. Praise the LORD, all you nations;/ glorify him, all you peoples! (**R**)

2. For steadfast is his kindness toward us,/ and the fidelity of the LORD endures forever. (**R**) (**R**)

Alleluia (Jn 20:29) (*Stand*)

All—Alleluia, alleluia. You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord; blessed are those who have not seen, but still believe! Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Jn 20:24–29)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

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 Thomas 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."

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (Sit)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Through the apostles, Jesus shows his love and care for his community of faith. Through him we have the fullness of confidence to ask our heavenly Father, saying:

R—Lord, hear our prayer.

C—That the shepherds of the Church—Pope Leo, all bishops, priests, religious, and lay leaders, through the intercession of Thomas the Apostle, may be shepherds who protect God's people and lead them to the fullness of life, we pray: **(R)**

C—That government officials and civil leaders may follow the example of Jesus who stoops down to serve and minister to the people's needs, we pray: **(R)**

C—That all who encounter doubts, despair, and depression may be strengthened in faith by those who have experienced the Lord's abiding presence, we pray: **(R)**

C—That consecrated persons may stand firm in their faith and be ready to explain to others the source of hope that is in us, believers, we pray: **(R)**

C—That our beloved dead may experience the peace of God's eternal home, we pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: **(R)**

P—Loving, Father, hear the prayers of your people. Do not consider what we truly deserve, but fill us with your graciousness and mercy.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



Presentation of the Gifts

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings (Stand)

P—We render you, O Lord, the service that is your due, humbly imploring you to keep safe your gifts in us, as we honor the confession of the Apostle Saint Thomas and offer you a sacrifice of praise.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface I (Apostles)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you, eternal Shepherd, do not desert your flock, but through the blessed Apostles watch over it and protect it always, so that it may be governed by those you have appointed shepherds to lead it in the name of your Son.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us...

All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion

(*Kneel*)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy...

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Jn 20: 27)

Bring your hand and feel the place of the nails, and do not be unbelieving but believing.

Prayer after Communion

(*Stand*)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

O God, as we truly receive in this Sacrament the Body of your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that we may recognize him with the Apostle Thomas by faith as our Lord and our God and proclaim him by our deeds and by our life.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P—Bow down for the blessing. (*Pause*)

May God, who has granted you to stand firm on apostolic foundations, graciously bless you through the glorious merits of the holy Apostle Thomas.

All—Amen.

P—And may he, who endowed you with the teaching and example of the Apostles, make you, under their protection, witnesses to the truth before all.

All—Amen.

P—So that through the intercession of the Apostles, you may inherit the eternal homeland, for by their teaching you possess firmness of faith.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—The Mass is ended. Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.
All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by your adorable lips. I come to ask this favor: *(Here silently mention your petitions.)*

To whom can I turn if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to you, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted, protection when

persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising, and serving you. My Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled by me and by all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity for those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

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