
From the Pastor's Desk..... 12 April 2015

The journey from unbelief to belief is the great driving force behind the Gospel of John. The evangelist makes this clear in the conclusion to his gospel: "Now Jesus 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 that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name" (John 20: 30-31).

This movement from unbelief to belief is dramatically illustrated in the scene from today's gospel. Thomas is absent when Jesus appears to the other apostles on the first day of the week, the day of the resurrection. Where was Thomas? We are not told but it is easy to speculate that the death of Jesus was a catastrophe that forced him to detach himself from the other apostles in order to grieve in solitude. When Jesus does reappear a week later Thomas has rejoined the others but cannot accept their testimony that Jesus is alive. Hence the term "Doubting Thomas" that has entered the common parlance.

At this point – a time of crisis in Thomas' life – Jesus engages him in conversation and challenges his unbelief. Through this encounter with the risen Lord Thomas is once again restored to the community. Furthermore, it is Thomas alone who is recorded in giving the most explicit acknowledgement of Jesus' divinity when he utters "My Lord and my God".

For me, the story illustrates that our belief in Jesus goes hand in hand with our place in the Christian community. While the Christian community is never perfect, it is the place where we encounter the Risen Lord, especially, and above all else, in the communal celebration of the Eucharist. Second, this episode in John's gospel shows us that doubt may be a stage

along the journey to faith and that is often in the midst of crisis that the Risen Lord reveals himself to us.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many, many people involved in the preparations and the celebrations over Easter. From those who joined the working bee to get the church and grounds in order; to the members of staff and the liturgy committee who did so much in ground work in preparation and coordination; to the choir and musicians for the hours of rehearsing; to the flower arrangers who also put in many hours in assembling such a dazzling floral display; to the many ministers: readers, acolytes, communion and hospitality ministers; to the youth who lead us in a beautiful, moving and reflective stations of the cross.

***Easter blessings,
Gerard***