

2nd Sunday of Easter Time - Year C

1. Today we hear about two appearances of Jesus

First, without Thomas is Evening of Easter Day

Second, with Thomas is a week later

To understand Thomas lets look where else he appears in scripture -

Remember Lazarus – When Jesus says “Let us go to Bethany”

Thomas says “Let us also go, that we might die with him”

Thomas expected Jesus’ ministry to end in death. – Conflicts with Sanhedrin, Temple Cleansing -

Expectations come true & when it happened, Thomas is so overcome with grief he takes off

Thomas isn’t with the disciples, and when Jesus appears he misses it.

NB - When Thomas separated himself from his community – he missed Jesus

In crisis sometimes we feel our faith slipping

Why did my friend have to die?

Why did my parents separate – I prayed and prayed and prayed

There is no God – why would he let that happen?

Remember the death of Lazarus – they sent for JC – they prayed for healing

Lazarus died – but when JC showed up, at the tomb, Jesus wept

God **is** with us in our crisis, crying with us in the midst of it

Same is true of Thomas in his crisis

It was easy for disciples to follow Jesus in good times

But when things get hard, they are hiding (and Thomas is alone)

2. So - WHEN JESUS APPEARS WHAT IS THE FIRST THING JESUS DOES?

“Peace be with you” and He breathes on them – Receive the HS –

Sins you forgive are forgiven - Sins you retain are retained

WHY IS THIS THE 1st THING HE DOES?

He brings M E R C Y → Jesus knew our sin & Jesus knows our need for forgiveness

3. Forgiveness was important to Early Church

- Some converts had shouted for Jesus’ death
- Others had taken part in the proceedings of the Sanhedrin
- Others had to deal with family and friends as they became Christians
- Look at Doubting Thomas – one of the 12! – But so HUMAN!

Jesus was ready – Jesus meets him where he is, in his disbelief.

So too with us – in our crisis – when OUR faith slips, he meets us in our disbelief

Our pain Our brokenness

And as recipients of forgiveness, we’re called to forgive as well

“As the Father sent me, I send you”

In our faith walk we will have mountain top experiences – Just like Apostles

In our faith walk we will have time of crisis – where we’re in the depth of the valley

JUST LIKE THOMAS DID

- **But nothing grows on the mountain top – everything grows in the valley.**
- In the depths of his unbelief, in the valley, Jesus comes to Thomas and opens His side
- In the midst of our problems, our valley, Jesus does the same, inviting us to come closer

This gospel ends “Blessed are those who have not seen and believe”

Jesus is talking to us – we haven’t seen the Risen Christ, yet we believe.

In faith we know He is with us on the mountain top – AND -- in our valleys.