

2nd Sunday of Easter Time - Year B

1. When Demerri's funeral home was here last I asked what was their strangest request
 - a. A farmer requested he'd be buried in his pickup
 - b. "I never seen a hole that old truck couldn't get me out of"
 - c. He BELIEVED it, because he'd SEEN it

- ## 2. The Apostles SAW the Risen Christ and BELIEVED

BUT

- a. There is a difference between BELIEF and FAITH
 - i. All the Apostles lived with Jesus
 - ii. All the Apostles saw Cana – Loaves & Fish – Healings – Palm Sunday
 - iii. All the Apostles were at the Last Supper
 - iv. All the Apostles were at Gethsemani – and ran away
 - v. NOW – Jesus is in their midst
 - vi. They saw – and BELIEVED – except Thomas

Thomas missed it – separated by grief, fear, anger, despair – He missed it
 “I won’t believe unless I see the holes in His hands and side”

HERE IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM AND US

They saw and believed

We've never seen the Risen Christ – and have FAITH

HEB 11:1

“Faith is the realization of things hoped for and evidence of things NOT seen”

WE BELIEVE NOT BECAUSE WE SEE – BUT BECAUSE WE HAVE FAITH

3. FIRST THING JESUS DOES: *Peace “As the Father sent me, I send you”*
And He breathes on them – Receive the HS – Sins you forgive are forgiven
Sins you retain are retained

THE 1st THING HE DOES – Receive the HS and power to forgive sin.

MERCY → Jesus knew our sin. Jesus knows our need for forgiveness

Lent was about REPENTANCE

Easter is about FORGIVENESS and MERCY

4. 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
 - Need for forgiveness and mercy was everywhere – So JC Empowers Apostles.

NOW THEN -

- Look at Doubting Thomas – does he need Mercy? YES
Can he see Mercy? NO
Does he know it's real? YES
HIS BELIEF BECOMES FAITH

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

If he needed to put his finger in the hole – here it is

Jesus says “You believe because you have seen - Blessed are those who have not seen, yet believe”

He is talking about us – people of FAITH

What Good News – we get to proclaim what we believe – because of our FAITH

What we do next – and what Thomas was now able to do

we only do, because of God's Mercy – because of Easter!