

2nd Easter: Doubts and Faith Doubting Thomas.

- Face it, we all have doubts, it's part of being a human
- But I'm still shocked when I read that the disciples doubt the Lord during His ministry
 - They even doubted Him after the Resurrection. And it wasn't just Thomas
 - MT 28 At the Ascension, Jesus appears & the scripture says, "some still doubted."
 - Why did they doubt? Here they had the Resurrected Lord right in front of them.
 - That was more than Thomas had when the disciples told him that they'd seen JC
- **What are the causes of these doubts?**
- Many of us have to put up with people challenging our faith.
 - Many of us have to put up with teachers, relatives, & friends who ridicule our faith
 - Usually those who attack us like that help us deepen our convictions.
 - Still, these people can place some doubts in our minds.
- I can remember the type of doubts I had when I was young:
 - "Does God really exist? Am I sure that this isn't all being made up?"
 - How could God be One in Three.
 - How could Jesus be fully God and fully man?"
 - Questions like that would really bother me until I finally realized, "There are a lot of things I don't understand, but I don't have to understand to believe. I just have to believe."
- A far more troublesome source of doubts come when we're in crisis:
 - Where was God when a child dies?
 - Where was God when you prayed for your Mom and Dad to stay together, they still broke up?
 - We think that if we ask for help, and God doesn't intervene, He must not exist.
- **Rather**, I believe that God is present with us in crisis.
 - Sometimes our prayers are answered, sometimes not.
 - But even when they're not, God is still present holding onto us.
 - Remember that the shortest verse in scripture? "Jesus wept"
 - In Gospel of John, Jesus stands outside Lazarus' tomb with Mary & Martha - crying
- **The most serious cause of doubts in our faith come when we sin.**
 - In sin, we go through a period of hypocrisy
 - We say one thing in Church and doing something else outside of the Church.
 - Eventually, it catches up with us, and we have to make a choice –
 - Are we going to live in sin OR in faith
 - Listen - if you go through life looking for the next party, or the best drugs, or the next sweetheart, you are not going to be able to deal with Church.
 - So the choice will be to either change your life or your faith.
- These are reasons why we have doubts. **But why do we have faith?**
- 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

THEN – a week later He appears again – and He shows His hand and His side to Thomas.

Thomas' only response is "My Lord and My God" It is what we say as well.

At the end of today's Gospel we heard - Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

We have faith because Jesus has given us life. The tomb is empty - our lives are full - our sin is forgiven.

Jesus

Christ opens up His side for Thomas to examine.