

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTERTIDE (B) (2021)

A) DOUBTING DISCIPLES

- Some people have claimed that the Gospel stories, especially the story of the Resurrection of Jesus, just aren't true
- but if it is all a pure invention, then whoever made it up was not very clever.
- Because the disciples are presented in such an unfavourable light
- Wouldn't it be more sensible to present the followers of this Jesus as people who believed in him from the very beginning,
- who followed him faithfully, even to his death,
- and who recognised him and accepted him immediately when he appeared to them after his resurrection?
- And yet that is not what we read
- Jesus told his disciples several times that he would suffer, and die and rise again
- But they constantly failed to understand what he meant
- They all professed loyalty to him before his passion, but almost everyone of them let him down and abandoned him when his sufferings began
- And when he appeared to various people after his resurrection, the disciples refused to accept their testimony
- Thomas was not the only disciple who doubted: they all did.
- But the very fact that the disciples did doubt, for me, makes their testimony all the more convincing: yes, it is true!

B) UNIQUENESS OF THE RESURRECTION

- Perhaps we should not be too hard on the disciples who doubted
- Would we have fared any better?
- After all, the rising of someone from the dead had never happened before
- It goes completely against our knowledge and experience of life
- In any case, Jesus was rising to a completely new kind of existence
- there is nothing else we can compare it with
- In spite of Jesus trying to prepare them before his death, they were completely unprepared
- They were astonished, incredulous, and unable to accept the evidence of their eyes
- And Jesus chides them for their lack of belief
- But even so, he meets them where they are
- He gives them tangible proofs
- He lets them touch him
- He eats something in their presence
- above all, He shows them his wounds
- Yes, it really is the same Jesus they had known and loved and lost
- And found again

- And so Thomas is doing exactly what the rest of them had done
- And asked for unmistakable proofs
- He did not want to believe just on someone else's say so; he wanted to be able to believe for himself; And he does
- His great act of faith becomes the faith of the Easter community: My Lord and my God

C) HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO HAVE NOT SEEN

- But this will be the last time that people will have physical evidence of the resurrection of Jesus
- From now on, all faith will be based not on physical evidence but on the witness of the disciples
- Jesus says, happy are those who have not seen, and yet believe
- This is opening the way to the believers of the future, those who have not had the good fortune to be eye-witnesses of Jesus' life and work, and yet still believe
- They will believe not because of evidence they can test, but because they trust

D) OUR FAITH

- ultimately we believe because we trust
- we trust the witness of the apostles, as it is recorded in the New Testament
- we trust the testimony and the example of generations of Christians who have gone before us
- we trust the testimony and the example of our parents and teachers, and other significant people in our lives
- and ultimately we trust in God himself
- we trust the Holy Spirit, who is given to us in baptism and confirmation, and enables us to believe, without doubting, whatever God has revealed.
- happy are those who have not seen, and yet believe