

Homily. 2nd Sunday of Easter. Year. C. 23/24 April 2022.

I'm convinced that we don't understand the enormous shock which the resurrection of Jesus was for his friends and followers. It was a surprise so unforeseen that it left all of them stunned and stupefied. During His years of ministry with them, especially with the close circle of the 12, Jesus did talk about His upcoming death and resurrection. But, as we do when friends and family speak of their deaths, they glazed over this conversation focusing instead on what was next in trying to stay alive.

Moreover, the disciples, unlike us, had no teaching about the resurrection to reference. Their entire understanding was that the Christ, God's chosen and anointed Messiah, would triumph over Israel's enemies and go on to rule gloriously in this world. The key point here is that their vision, their future expectations, were for this world and life only. In their minds life after death was a shadowy concept at best, resurrection from the dead being disputed and not yet part of their culture.

On the first Easter evening then, Jesus made it a point to reveal Himself again to them, effortlessly coming through the closed doors of their fears, showing them that He was undoubtedly the same crucified Jesus now risen and Lord. His wounds were visible, the reality of His presence beyond dispute. As we know, for some reason, Thomas wasn't there that evening. He didn't get to see, hear, touch and experience the risen Lord. More importantly, he wouldn't believe the testimony of those who did. He remained firm in his scepticism until he could see for himself.

It was a whole long week later before Jesus came to them again, a 2nd Easter Sunday if you will, and this time for the sake of Thomas. The

fearful doors we're still locked tight because it would take some time to overcome their shock, turning it into the energy of joyful surprise. It always takes a while to cast off a life time of expectations, awakening to God's new work which only the gift of the risen Jesus' Holy Spirit brings.

Thomas was convinced after experiencing the risen Jesus, proclaiming and worshiping Him as both Lord and God of all. At that moment in doing so Thomas became reborn and formed into the most convinced of them all. He saw that it wasn't only their old friend and teacher Jesus coming back to reassure them, but the unmasking of God who had always been present and at work in what He'd said and done, a gift for everyone.

This is where you and I are. We've felt and seen Him and are hearing our Lord again telling us that He's alive and reigning in glory having overcome our enemies, the greatest of which are our fears about the emptiness of dissolution and death. He has triumphed in His sacrifice by loving us into life, our new life in Him. If we accept this good-news, making it our own, then no matter what comes everyday can be an Easter Day for us because He now Easter's within us, just as He did in Thomas.

This disciple nicknamed The Twin, almost as if he mirrored Jesus Himself, freely and fearlessly went on to proclaim the joy of the resurrection as far away as India where faith in Christ alive thrives to this day. We needn't go so far, but proclaim and live Him we must to people like us haven't yet been awakened from their death to all the good that Jesus offers.