

## Homily – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter

A father and son went fishing one day. After a couple hours out in the boat, the boy suddenly became curious about the world around him. He asked his father, “How does this boat float?” The father thought for a moment, then replied, “Don’t rightly know, son.” The boy returned to his contemplation, then turned back to his father, “How do fish breath underwater?” Once again the father replied, “Don’t rightly know, son.” A little later the boy asked his father, “Why is the sky blue?” Again, the father replied. “Don’t rightly know, son.”

Worried he was going to annoy his father, he says, “Dad, do you mind my asking you all of these questions?” “Of course not son. If you don’t ask questions, you’ll never learn anything!”

Thomas reminds us that it is essential to ask questions. To cite a Thomas from the 13th century, Thomas Aquinas, we have faith seeking understanding, even when the people we ask do not have the answers. At baptism parents accept the responsibility to help their child learn the Christian faith. They name godparents to assist them and we are all called to love and support each other. Sometimes things may not make sense but we can learn and grow together, like Thomas and the other Apostles.

Every year on the Second Sunday of Easter we have the gospel we just heard about Jesus appearing to his disciples after the resurrection, without Thomas being present. From this gospel many have heard that Thomas was called the apostle filled with doubt. My dad, who had the middle name of Thomas, always would say with a laugh: “Remember, I am doubtful Thomas.” Let’s take a closer look at what happens with Thomas in the gospel today.

First, Thomas never denies the possibility that Jesus may have risen, only that he wanted more than the testimony of the other disciples. He wanted to experience Jesus himself. Are we open to the possibility that God is indeed working in the struggles of our life, even if our prayers seem to remain unanswered or God feels distant? Do we remain hopeful that God can work miracles in even the most helpless situations in our lives and our world? Second, Thomas encounters Jesus when he rejoins the community of faith. We do not know why Thomas was not with the other disciples when the risen Lord first appeared to them. However, it is when Thomas rejoins the community of the Twelve that he experiences a very personal encounter with Jesus.

As it was with Thomas, so it can be for us today. Perhaps this Easter is an invitation to search for the Risen Lord with others. This could be an invitation to join the weekly Scripture reflex ion group or faith-sharing group. It could be an invitation to join a faith-based support group for something we struggle with. There may also be an opportunity to rekindle an old relationship

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with another believer. Serving can be another great way to connect with a community of believers while working towards a common goal. All of these can be avenues for us to encounter the powerful presence and love of the Risen Christ.

The wonderful thing about our faith is that it isn't just plausible, it is the most reasonable thing we can possibly believe.

On this Divine Mercy Sunday, we recall the immense love the Risen Lord has for us. It is a love that far outweighs our doubts, fears, and struggles to believe. As Jesus demonstrates through His presence to Thomas, it is a love that understands our fears, is patient with our doubts, and passes right through locked doors to meet us where we are and lead us to true faith. (Repeat this sentence.) Amen.