

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, April 16, 2023
Second Sunday of Easter
Cycle A

“To see is to believe.” “Seeing is believing.”

How many of us would echo the words of Thomas when challenged to believe that Jesus was alive without seeing the evidence for himself? Today’s gospel passage, particularly the part that deals with Thomas, reminds us that our journey of faith is, at times, covered by cloud and darkness. Filled with failures and frustrations, marked by locked doors – that is, by closed minds and closed hearts.

We want to be very much in charge or in control of our life; we want to think that things should go our way. Maybe that is why we seem to have less faith when it comes to living through difficult times – times of disappointment, frustration and failure. But it is exactly at those times of hardship and difficulty, of trial and struggle, that our faith is strengthened and once again renewed. It is then that we truly recognize and realize that faith is a gift.

Thomas had a hard time believing. It was not that he was a man of little faith. If the other disciples had received Jesus’ Spirit, his power, his word to go out and tell the good news of the Resurrection, why were they still sitting around as if waiting for something to happen? Maybe that is why Thomas had those doubts. Those who told him of the great news that Jesus had risen from the dead remained stuck and locked in fear. They were supposed to be “out there” proclaiming the good news, giving witness to the risen Lord, and doing Christ’s work. Thomas was looking for some sign – some indication of what they said was true.

When Jesus appeared once again, Thomas was with them. Thomas reached out and touched the risen Lord and he believed: “My Lord and my God.” The Lord responded by saying, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.” Then the gospel goes on to tell us that Jesus performed many other signs to help others come to faith.

Strange as it seems, **seeing is believing**. We need to help our sisters and brothers to see and to believe. We need to help those who are struggling with doubt and unbelief – help them see the power of Christ’s Resurrection working in us and believe that it can also work in them if they choose to. We need to help them see the proof of God’s goodness in us and believe that God’s love will see them through.

We need to help our children who are scrambling to find the meaning and relevance of our faith in the risen Lord in their everyday lives, help them see how the Resurrection is influencing us (the way we live our lives, the way we relate to others, the way we conduct our affairs, the way we think and act) – and believe that our life’s meaning, purpose and fulfillment can be found in God – and in God alone.

We need to help our friends who are burdened with guilt, overwhelmed by sinfulness, and terribly ashamed – help them see the light of God’s loving mercy and believe that God’s love is greater than all our sins. We are to be signs of the risen Lord in our day if others are to see and believe in him.

Like the first believers, the early Christians, we have to spend time being together, sharing what we have with those in need, meeting regularly for prayer and liturgy, and breaking bread together in the Eucharist.

- We must live with joyful and generous hearts.
- We must live in hope, praising God even amidst our pain and suffering.

- We must give witness to our new life in Christ by the expression of faith and trust in God who is Love.

This is how our presence can help others come to faith. This is how we would become the living proof of the Risen Lord. Yes indeed, seeing is believing!