



Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

Well, we got through that! Isn't that the tendency, with just about anything momentous? Whether bad or good? Holidays and Holy Days? Moments in time that we anticipate, now come and gone? Isn't that how we're accustomed to speak about Easter: "Did you have a good Easter (albeit very different this year compared to years past)?" On to the next thing.

But here's the thing: with the Resurrection there is no other thing. There certainly isn't the "next thing," somehow surpassing Resurrection, somehow "new and improved." With the Resurrection, this is as good as it gets! So, if you get a better offer, which you won't, take it. As for me, and hopefully all of you, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and live in the Resurrection. Starting right now.

Now Resurrection living asks a couple of hard questions: What do we do with the fear? What do we do with the doubts? These are the issues that the Disciples, including Thomas, have to deal with on this Second Sunday of Easter.

First the fear. That's why the Ten (Twelve minus Thomas – not with them – and Judas) are locked away, “sheltering in place.” There're are things out there that can do us harm; that mean to do us harm. Interesting, how, although the particulars change from time and place, we find ourselves restricted, “staying at home,” more than a little fearful of what might happen next.

I imagine Thomas also was fearful, every bit as much as the others. But he wasn't with them, we're told. Where is he? What's he up to? Why doesn't his fear keep him in that locked space? Well, as one of our younger parishioners once reminded me when I kept asking similar questions in a homily, “WE DON'T KNOW!”

True, we don't know; but that doesn't mean we can't wonder. And wondering about such things, I think, is what is wanted of us when we read the Scriptures. Maybe he was getting food for the others – “In our common fear, I will provide for you.” Maybe he was checking on those of their company who had gotten separated from them – “In our fear, I will be present to you.” Maybe he was out there speaking the truth, best he knew it, about Jesus – “In our fear to speak up, I will witness.”

The point, these wonderings suggest, is that although fearful, Thomas wasn't defined by fear. In the face of fear, there can be courage to take care of each other, courage to connect with the lost and lonely, courage to be faithful. Tradition holds that Thomas kept going out there...all the way to India...all the way to a Martyr's Death.

Now the doubts. Thomas is known, of course, as The Doubting Thomas, as some sort of diminishment of his standing among the Apostles. I've never been comfortable with this characterization of him. Because doubt is not the opposite of faith; despair is. I think we've thought that doubt was the opposite of faith because we think that faith is what we think. What we think about God is what we believe; how we live our experience of God is our faith.

It may not have been intellectually, rationally falling into place for Thomas right then and there; but in his fear, in his courage, in his daring to ask for the flesh and blood marks of the Passion, Thomas desired Jesus. Not some theological treatise, but a Person. He sought to be with Jesus, and he sought to behold Jesus' Passion, playing out in the fearful, the hungry, the marginal, the confused of this world.

Thomas got out there and lived the Resurrection. Because it's the only thing left for us to do. In the midst of fear, in the face of doubts, in a sacrificial living that others might simply live. So, after the “stay-at-home” order is lifted, when things “get back to normal,” may it be a new kind of normal. A Resurrection Normal.

May every Easter Blessing be yours,

Fr. Grogan

P.S. As the Fifty Days of Easter unfold, I encourage you to pick up a [candle](#) from Church, I encourage you to pray the [Eastertime Blessing of Homes](#), and I encourage you to celebrate [The Easter Procession Devotion](#). Together (albeit separately) let us keep the Feast!