

*We Respond*

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**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) Like newborn infants, you must long for the pure, spiritual milk, that in him you may grow to salvation, alleluia.

**(Or)**

Receive the joy of your glory, giving thanks to God, who has called you into the heavenly kingdom, alleluia.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** (Ps 117)

**ANTIPHON:** Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

**RESPONSE:** Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

**(Or) Alleluia!**

**LECTOR:** Let the sons of Israel say: "His love has no end." Let the sons of Aaron say: "His love has no end." Let those who fear the Lord say: "His love has no end." **R.**

**LECTOR:** The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone. This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes. This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad. **R.**

**LECTOR:** O Lord, grant us salvation; O Lord grant success. Blessed in the name of the Lord is he who comes. We bless you from the house of the Lord; the true God is our light. **R.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Alleluia, alleluia! You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me; happy those who have not seen me, but still believe! Alleluia!

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) Bring your hand and feel the place of the nails, and do not be unbelieving but believing, alleluia.

**TODAY'S READINGS** Acts 5:12-16; Rev 1:9-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31

**NEXT WEEK** (3rd Sunday of Easter, Year C) Acts 5:27-32, 40-41; Ps 29; Rev 5:11-14; John 21:1-19

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## Looking for the hard truth



**24 April 2022 2nd Sunday Easter Year C**

Although Thomas is called the 'twin', he might be better named Thomas the 'realist'. Unlike other disciples, Thomas is not about to believe in something as improbable as Jesus rising from the dead unless he has hard evidence. We might even call him Thomas the 'sceptic' who believes only in things he can see and touch. Yet, our 'doubting Thomas' has more to teach us than is commonly realised.

In John's Gospel, Thomas is presented as someone who does the right thing even in the face of adversity. This is shown when Jesus decides to visit the ill and dying Lazarus. Thomas urges the disciples to accompany Jesus on this difficult mission – even if they might face death: "Let us go that we may die with him" (Jn 11:16). Thomas is a person of action who is true to his word. This is in contrast to Peter who commits himself to follow Jesus to the point of death, but then denies him three times! Nor is Thomas afraid to express his ignorance and ask the hard questions.

At the Last Supper, when Jesus tells the disciples they know where he is going, Thomas bluntly expresses his confusion: "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" (Jn 14:5). Finally, from today's gospel, we are presented with both a 'doubting Thomas' who is slow to believe, and yet someone who remains open-minded and continues to search for the truth. Once the resurrected Christ appears to him, his response is full-

hearted and immediate: "My Lord and my God" (Jn 20:28).

We, like Thomas, are people caught up with deeply human doubts and questions. Unlike Thomas, we do not have the luxury of walking beside Jesus for three years in his public ministry. Yet, this is not for Thomas enough to suggest Jesus had risen from the grave. Nor do we have the privilege of touching the wounds in the risen body of Jesus, as Thomas did. Yet, in a strange twist of events, Jesus says that you and I are even more blessed than Thomas: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (Jn 20:29).

Yet, our faith is not blind belief in things that others tell us. Easter faith is a genuine experience of the risen Lord who always walks with us on the journey of life. This is especially the case when we experience "crucifixion moments" in our own lives, or when our doubts threaten to overwhelm us. As Thomas' own experience teaches, doubt is not the opposite of faith, but its pre-condition, leading us to search for the 'hidden God' who is closer to us than we are to ourselves. Pope Francis says that by living our faith in loving service of others "many doubts vanish because we feel the presence of God and the truth of the Gospel."

In other words, Easter faith is less about a set of things to believe in than a way of life leading us to ever deepening discipleship.

**Gerard Hall SM**

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