

2nd Sunday of Easter Homily, C Cycle, 2019

We know some facts from history:

- **There was a man called Jesus who was a rabbi**
- **He suffered and died in Jerusalem**
- **He was buried**
- **A few days later his tomb was empty**

Then comes the 11 recorded stories of the **witnesses of his resurrection.**

- **Not resuscitation like Lazarus or the son of the woman at Nain who would die again.**
- **He could come through doors and suddenly appear and join others in walking down the street.**
- **Many of these appearances often happened in the midst of gatherings of his disciples. We have two of those appearances in today's gospel.**

It was the first day of the week. Though the doors of the room were locked for fear of the Jews, he stood in their midst. Peace be with you...he showed them his hands and his side...again peace be with you.

His side out of which on the cross poured blood and water. Natural outcome of the birth of a child. Now the birth of new life for the world.

He sends the disciples out to bring peace and unity to a divided and warring world. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven, whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.

Second story of witnesses of the resurrection in today's reading. A week later (the first day of the week) they are once again gathered together, and this time doubting Thomas is with them. Thomas was not with them the previous week. He still wanted to encounter the physically resurrected Jesus. Remember the last Supper scene? "We do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" "I am the way and the truth and the life.

So Jesus says "Come here Thomas, place your fingers into my hands and your hand into my side and be not unbelieving but believe."

Thomas, without out placing his hand on Jesus' body says, "MY Lord and MY God." He comes to experience the new life in the Spirit flowing out of the side of Jesus. He witnesses to the resurrection. You have believed because you have seen. Blessed are those who do not see yet believe.

It is almost as if the Gospel of John inserts a Commentator who turns towards the audience and says, “There are many other witnesses who tell stories of to his resurrection, but these are told so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and that you might have faith in him.”

Key point: The importance of a faith community (in spite of our sin), because we (you and I) stand as witnesses of the new life in the risen Lord. (story of the woman who called).