



The Incredulity of Thomas – Caravaggio (c1601-1602)

## **DARE TO DREAM**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Eastertide – Embracing Uncertainty**

## **Before you begin the prayer...**

The period of Eastertide gives us seven weeks of opportunity to reflect upon the experience of the disciples as they come to know that Jesus is alive, that he has risen and what it means for us as people of Clifton Diocese

In our introductory session, we experienced Mary Magdalene, paralysed with grief wondering where her Lord has been taken. On this second Sunday of Easter we find the disciples still fearfully huddled together in a room with closed doors. Despite Mary telling them, they are still full of anxiety! Only when Jesus is standing in their midst do they truly believe and then they can rejoice. Jesus offers them 'Peace' – a deep peace.

Thomas, however, is not there on this occasion and it is only a week later that he encounters the Lord. Thomas is at a different stage in the journey from the others. He has missed out on the experience of the other disciples, but his uncertainty is not so different from the uncertainty we can experience – about all kinds of things, even in the existence of God. Or we can doubt that there is any kind of problem. When we reflect on the pandemic and how we responded, did we fully believe that it was going to have the impact that it has? Ultimately, Thomas experiences transformation from doubt to belief. His doubting is just the starting point. We all have our starting points and the starting point for us will differ from the person next to us. Whatever we are dealing with be that joy or pain– this is the place that Christ enters.

Resurrection is not just a one-off event or idea. It is a way of being and living. As we hear in the gospel – not everything has been written – it remains an open book and we have an opportunity to contribute to the story. As Pope Francis reminds us, 'We are called to become living waters of the Gospel, heralds of the Good News to all men and women today. We can 'doubt' that our Diocese is facing huge challenges and bury ourselves in the sand or we can 'dare to dream' of a future that we can write, we proclaim and we live, with Christ at the centre.

**Video - Watch and listen to Fr. Dominic Findlay-Wilson**

## **Prayerfully read this passage from the Gospel of John 20:19-31**

*On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*

*Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So, the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe."*

*Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand and place it in my side; do not be faithless but believing." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."*

*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.*

- Take some to ponder on the words you have just read.
- Notice if there is anything, a word or phrase that stands out for you.
- Read the passage again and then reflect upon all or some of these questions: if you are doing this as a family or a group, make sure everyone is given the opportunity to speak.

## **Personal Reflections**

- What does the Resurrection of Jesus mean to you?
- Thinking of a time when you felt left out of something significant, how did you feel? What would have helped you at that time?
- Where do you find peace, the deep peace that Christ offers you?

## **Now thinking about your parish and local community**

- Sometimes it is not possible for everyone to be present to the important events in the parish. How does your parish ensure that these people do not miss out?
- Thinking of the first reading for today from the Acts of the Apostles, is your parish that is of one mind and one heart?
- How readily does your parish/deanery share what resources you have?
- The apostles receive the Holy Spirit from Jesus so that they may go out and spread the Gospel. In what ways is your parish doing that and does it need to do more? What would that look like?

## **Action**

Take a look at your parish newsletter and the display boards in your Church. Do the contents of either inspire, invite, and encourage others to get involved? Do they share the joy of the Gospel? Consider how relevant it is to all age groups and take steps to make what you have even better.

**Finish with a prayer asking the Holy Spirit for the grace to respond.**