

## **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, April 28, 2019**

### ***The Second Sunday of Easter***

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on one or more of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom Iwanowski.

Looking to Sunday has been published for more than ten years.

### **MOVING BEYOND DOUBT**

Which of the following phrases sounds right: Doubting Peter, Doubting Mary Magdalene, Doubting Thomas, Doubting Cleopas?

If your answer is Doubting Thomas, you would be correct. The word "doubting" is usually associated with Thomas the Apostle. That association comes from the gospel reading that we hear this Sunday (John 20:19-31).

In that reading the Risen Lord appears to his disciples on the first Easter Sunday evening but Thomas is not with them. When his fellow disciples tell him the amazing news of the Lord's appearance, he doubts their report. He demands proof.

Who could blame Thomas for doubting? He was being asked to believe that a man who had been publicly executed by crucifixion and whose dead body had been locked away in a tomb was now alive and interacting once more with his followers.

Thomas doubts. He demands proof, the same proof the other disciples required before they believed in the resurrection.

When Mary Magdalene discovered the empty tomb that first Easter morning, she cried in sorrow, believing the body of Jesus had been moved. As she said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." (John 20:2)

Peter was not sure what to believe when he and the other disciple who had run to the empty tomb looked in. For as John tells us in his Gospel, "they did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead." (John 20:9)

Cleopas, who was walking back to Emmaus, had heard of women seeing angels who announced that Jesus was risen. But he and the other disciples dismissed those reports. "Their story seemed like nonsense and they did not believe them." (Luke 24:11)

Those first disciples came to believe when they saw the Risen Lord. When they spoke with him, ate with him, interacted with him, they had proof of the resurrection.

So then, why do we believe in the resurrection? Why aren't we doubters like so many people in our world?

We might answer that we believe because we too have been given proof. Not the kind of proof given Thomas, Peter, Cleopas or Mary Magdalene, but the kind of proof that was given Saint Paul. It was his encounter with the Risen Lord on the road to Damascus that brought him to faith.

In that encounter Paul heard the voice of the Risen Lord. In that encounter Paul learned that he was touching the Risen Lord as he violently handled those who believed in him. "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? ... "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." (Acts 9:4-5)

We too have such encounters with the Risen Lord. We hear his voice as we read his word in the scriptures and hear it proclaimed by the Church. We touch the Risen Lord in our brothers and sisters who make up the Church, the living Body of Christ. We experience the presence of the Lord in the sacraments as we journey through life. The Risen Lord is with us, he is not bound to any time or place.

We believe not just because we are people of faith, we believe because the Lord gives us proof of his resurrection.

It is that proof that moves us from being a Doubting Thomas to a Believing Disciple!

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*May the Risen Lord bless you with his presence and peace  
during this Easter Season!*