

Easter 2A - 2026

No Evidence Necessary

When Thomas was first told about the meeting with Jesus that he had missed, he was understandably guarded. The notion that a dead man was back alive again was not exactly something you grabbed hold of and easily believed in a minute or two, not today and not 2,000 years ago, either. Modern scholars sometimes pet the disciples as such bumpkins that they'd believe anything. Not so. They knew the dead stayed dead and this was not a fact you revised on a whim. So Thomas plays it safe but also then speculates aloud as to what it might take for him to believe this after all. As he talks, his rhetoric gets more and more exaggerated. "My friends, I'd have to see with my own eyes the nail holes in his hands. No, tell you what, I'd need to touch those holes with my own finger. Better yet, I'd want to stick my whole hand right into his side where the sword pierced him!" Thomas kept mounting up an ever-larger heap of evidence that he thought he'd need to believe. His words seemed calculated to induce some eye-rolling. Of course, once he does meet Jesus, all that evaporates. To paraphrase a traditional aphorism, if you don't have faith, then there will never be evidence enough to convince you, and if you do have faith, no evidence is needed. Without faith, no evidence is sufficient; with faith, no evidence is necessary. (by Scott Hoezee, comments and observations on John 20:19-31)

The Prelude to Faith

Several years ago I spoke on a university campus, and when I finished speaking, a young man accosted me in the hall. He said, "I don't like what you had to say in there." I asked him to tell me which part he didn't like. "He replied, "Actually, I didn't hear you. I just don't like preachers." I agreed that I have some trouble with preachers too. I said, "Well, what are you?" And he said, "I'm a seeker." I said, "That's interesting. Where do you meet?" He said, "We don't meet." I said, "What are you seeking?" He said, "We're seeking truth." I said, "Well, what have you read?" He said, "I haven't read anything in particular." We went on with the conversation for a short while. Finally, I looked at him and said, "I don't think you are a seeker. I think you are a runner. I think you are hiding. For you see, not to decide is to decide. You have decided that you want to hide in unbelief." The disbelief and the doubting for Thomas was not something that was rooted in fact. It was something that was inside of Thomas. Doubt is like a front porch. All of us go through it before we get into the house of faith. (by William L. Self from *The Prelude to Faith*)

St. Thomas' way of experiencing God:

Fr. Mark Link, SJ in Illustrated Sunday Homilies Year B, offers a scenario: "You are called up to the lectern and blindfolded and a bucket full of water is placed in front of you; then, you are asked if the bucket is empty or full." Then he asks a question: "What are the ways you can learn the answer such inquiry without removing the blindfold?" Fr. Link said that there are three ways we can learn to answer such question: One way is to reach into the bucket and feel if there is water in it. In other words, you can experience first-hand if the bucket is full or empty. This way of learning is called experiencing; it is knowledge that our senses give us. The second way of learning if the bucket has water or has none is to drop an object like a coin, into it. If the object hits the bottom of the bucket with a loud or ringing sound, you know the bucket is empty. On the other hand, if the object hits with a slurp or a splash, you know the bucket contains water. This way of acquiring knowledge is called reasoning. A third way to learn if the bucket contains water is to ask someone you trust. The person could look into the bucket and tell you if it has water in it. This way of learning is called believing. It's knowledge that we acquire by Faith.

But of the three ways of acquiring knowledge, that is, by experiencing, reasoning, and believing, by which way do we obtain most of our knowledge? Is it by experiencing, by reasoning or by believing? If we said believing, then you and I are correct, according to some experts, who estimate that we acquire as much as 80 percent of our knowledge in this way. For example, Fr. Link continued, " ...few of us have travelled around the world. The only way we know about most countries is by what others tells us. We are told in today's words; we trust the people who have been there. If they tell us there is a country called China and that its people do this or do that, we believe them. — Today's Gospel describes how St. Thomas the apostle chose the way of experiencing the Risen Lord by touching him.

Ants in The Pants of Faith

Whether your faith is that there is a God or that there is not a God, if you don't have any doubts, you are either kidding yourself or asleep. Doubts are the ants in the pants of faith. They keep it awake and moving. (by Frederick Buechner)