

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

FAITH BOOK - NOT FACEBOOK!

The story is told of a man, his wife and mother-in-law. They all went on a vacation to the Holy Land. While they were in Israel, the mother-in-law passed away. So, they called the funeral director. The undertaker said, "Well, you have two options; you can have her shipped back home which will cost you \$5,000.00 or you can bury her right here in the Holy Land for \$150.00.

The man thought it over and told him that he would just have her shipped home. The funeral director asked, "Why? Why would you spend \$5,000.00 to ship your mother-in-law home, when it would be really wonderful to have her buried here and spend only \$150.00?" The man said, "Well, it's like this. A man died here 2000 years ago, he was buried here and three days later, he rose again and I just can't take that chance! Well, there was a man who believed in the reality of Jesus's resurrection!

In the gospel for this weekend, we read about a man who was not really convinced about the fact that the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead. That man's name was Thomas the Apostle. Thomas was a man who certainly was good; but he had somewhat of a pessimistic nature. Do you know the difference between an optimist and pessimist? The optimist gets up in the morning and says, "Good morning Lord!" The pessimist gets up and says, "Good Lord-morning!" It's all the way you look at things.

Thomas not only was inclined to be negative, he also distrusted the witness of his fellow apostles; men he had been with for three years. When they told him that the Lord had been raised from the dead, Thomas discounted the whole story. Because of his refusal to believe, Thomas has come down to us through the centuries with the nickname "Doubting Thomas." Even today, if you say that you are a "Doubting Thomas" it means you probably don't believe in someone or something.

Thomas did not believe in the resurrection. To give him some credit, the resurrection of Christ was not something very easy to believe. The events of Good Friday had shattered all of the disciples hopes and dreams. So Thomas demanded a radical proof for the resurrection of Jesus; he wanted to place his hands into the wounds of Christ and touch the wound in his side. Of course, we know the story. The Lord arrived a week later, came to the upper room and invited Thomas to make the proof that he demanded.

Jesus let him touch those wounds which were the trophies of his victory over sin and death. And Thomas cried out, "My Lord and my God!" The last to believe in the resurrection, he was the first to confess his belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Saint Gregory wrote: "The disbelief of Thomas has done more for our faith than the faith of the other disciples." Why? Because when it comes to things of faith and religion we are often "Doubting Thomas's too. Jesus tells us in the gospel, "Blessed are you who have not seen and yet have believed." And that is each and every one of us, we have not seen and yet we believe in the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes we have doubts but that is normal. Recently, I saw a sign in front of a Presbyterian Church which read, "Get off Facebook and take our Faith Book." Yes-let's pray for a stronger faith. May we move away from doubt and fear and put our trust in Jesus, "The Resurrection and The Life."

Sincerely,
Father Jerome