

## Homily Divine Mercy Sunday 2022

We all have doubts about our faith! Otherwise, it wouldn't be faith. Even some of the greatest saints experienced 'the dark night of the soul'. I personally, went through a period of doubt telling myself that it wasn't rational to believe in the Resurrection and a life in heaven to come. How could we possibly live, together with our dead relatives and friends, for ever in some Kingdom up there? Was Jesus just a good man or a great Prophet? Eventually, through faith and reason I came to terms with my doubts.

St Thomas is one of my favourite saints, not because he doubted but because he didn't accept faith blindly and belief had to make sense and have it's proof. 'Not until I put my fingers into the wounds in his hands and place my hand in the wound of his side will I believe.' 8 days after The Resurrection, Jesus returns to the Upper Room. Thomas is present and Jesus invites him to touch the wounds on his hands and side. With this physical proof Thomas has the humility to exclaim 'My Lord and My God.'

In today's Second Reading from the beginning of the Book of Revelation, The Apocalypse, St John begins his very profound and symbolic book as he finishes his Gospel. He knows his faith is on solid foundations because he personally witnessed The Resurrection. 'I write as someone who has seen all these things and my testimony is trustworthy. St John, like St Thomas bases his faith on empirical proof that Jesus died, was laid in the tomb, rose again after 3 days and physically appeared to the disciples on various occasions, eating and drinking with them – truly a physical resurrection.

St, Luke in Acts of the Apostles Chapter 5 also states that many came to believe because of the signs and wonders performed by the Apostles in the name of The Risen Jesus. The Early Church was not founded on blind faith but on physical proof that belief in The Lord led to miracles and wonders never witnessed before.

My journey back to deep faith in Jesus began with a realisation that indeed there is written proof, from a various of sources including the Gospels, that The Christ lived, performed miraculous deeds, suffered, died and rose again appearing physically many times. I also considered the teachings of The OT and the prophecies, particularly of Isaiah almost 700 years before Christ of The Suffering Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12) read during The Good Friday Liturgy so graphic in foretelling in detail Christ's Passion:

*He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.*

*He was despised and rejected by others;*

*a man of suffering and familiar with sorrow; one from whom others hide their faces*

*he was despised and rejected*

*He has borne our infirmities and carried our sins*

*He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our sins and by his bruises we are healed.*

*The LORD has laid on him all of our sins.*

*He was tortured and afflicted,*

*yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,*

*For he was cut off from the land of the living,*

*stricken for our transgressions.*

*They made him a grave with the wicked*

*a tomb with the rich although he had done no harm and there was no deceit in his mouth.*

I realised that Jesus truly fulfilled not only this prophecy but all of The Law and Prophets, and indeed The Passover and Exodus, in his death and Resurrection. I furthermore saw proof that lives were transformed for the better by belief in The Christ Event and that ordinary people became extraordinary through their personal relationships with Jesus. How could I continue to doubt when the evidence for Christ being The Son of God was so compelling? I couldn't!