

Easter 2B

7.04.24

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In reality, Thomas is not the only one who struggles to believe. In fact, I'm sure, Thomas represents all of us a little bit.

But Thomas does not only represent us with his explicitly articulated doubt. Rather, Thomas highlights our tendency to walk away.

Thomas had absented himself from the community, he was missing when it counted. Returning to the community, he seems a touch transactional: "Show me the proof, then I'll commit!"

Jesus answers Thomas' doubt in front of everyone, in the community. It was, as if Jesus was telling Thomas that 'if you want to meet me, do not search far away; remain in our community, remain with the others, your family of faith, your community, and don't go away. Pray with them. Break bread with them. Eat and drink with them. Share your life with them.' Be open to encounter, not closed to possibilities.

This, evidently, is a lesson for us too. Every Christian generation is called to find the Risen Christ together – in community – within the family of our sisters and brothers in Christ. We belong with each other, with Christ forming a mystical unity out of our diversity.

In this, the story of Thomas has another lesson for the Church. We Christians are called to be a welcoming people. Let us ask ourselves, if in the name of Jesus' wounds, we are willing to open our arms to those who are wounded by life, excluding no one from God's mercy but welcoming everyone.

After all, despite his attitude Thomas was still included and welcomed by the community whose testimony he doubted. Even more pointedly, Our Lord opens his exchange with Thomas the doubter with some clearly welcoming words: 'Peace be with you.'