**We have another “all-three-years” situation in today’s gospel. I say “another,” because I made the same observation on Good Friday about John’s account of the Last Supper. It appears every year—all three years in our three-year lectionary.**

**Well, every year on the Second Sunday of Easter we read this story that earned Thomas the nickname “The Doubter.” Even out there in the world one can sometimes hear a skeptic described as a Doubting Thomas. And thank God for that. Thank God for Thomas who speaks for so many of us when he’s reluctant to believe something that seems too good to be true. Thank God for John who recorded it. Thank God for all the scribes and translators who left this story intact.**

**Thomas doesn’t tell the others, “Well, that’s quite a story you’ve got there,” or “Let me have a few minutes to mull this over,” or anything of the sort.**

**He says, “Nope. I won’t believe it. Not without seeing it for myself with my own eyes and feel with my own fingers.”**

**Doesn’t seem very apostle-like, does it? I mean, he’s been through the thick of it with Jesus and the other eleven. They’ve been through some trying times together, to put it mildly.**

**As I write it seems to be that Thomas might have even been feeling some relief. “Whew! That drama is over now. It was exciting, and Jesus was an amazing guy who did some truly amazing things, but it’s done. We saw him taken down from the cross, saw his dead body laid in Joseph’s tomb. It’s sad, but it’s done.**

**“And I’m glad we all hung in there until the end, even thought it was touch-and-go at times. And we all managed to make it through intact. Well, except for Judas—I’ve heard things didn’t turn out so well for him. And now we can get on with our lives.**

**“And, and . . . the authorities seem to be leaving us alone ,so I’m grateful. But now these guys—my buddies—seem to have taken leave of their senses with this crazy story. Just when we’re home free—or about to be. I don’t know what took place—maybe some crazy guy tried to pass himself off as Jesus, back from the dead. They’ve always been more gullible than I am anyway.**

**“So, no! I won’t believe what they’re saying, except in the off chance that I’m able to see and judge for myself.”**

**. . .**

**The whole story—not just my imagined one—reads almost like a parable, as far as I’m concerned. Just like a lot of episodes in our own lives—if we’ll only stop and look at them from that perspective of faith.**

**My son Ben worked for a number of years at a small company whose work was to refurbish scientific instruments—specifically electron microscopes and related equipment.**

**His boss was an old engineer (younger than I, of course) who did most of the hands-on work. Once, in the process of getting at a hidden bolt or clamp or screw, Alex told Ben, “I can get this. I’ve got eyes in my fingers.” And of course he got it.**

**Ben told me that recently as we were working on one of our motorcycles. (Don’t get me wrong—we weren’t doing a ring job or replacing a clutch cable, it was more like putting on a license plate bracket.) Still, when Ben told me the story I thought immediately of Thomas.**

**He used his fingers not to locate some hidden mechanical part but to verify the unbelievable truth the eyes in his head were telling him. It must have felt squishy. But more than squishy, it must have had the feel of truth.**

**Then Thomas makes up for lost time by pronouncing that jaw-dropped declaration: “My Lord and my God.” By the way, he was the first to say that aloud, so far as we know. At first I wrote “backpedal” instead of “makes up for lost time,” but he didn’t backpedal. He didn’t say, “How could I have doubted? What a fool I was.” Nothing like that.**

No, he stays in that moment of revelation. He allows the truth to wash over him. And I am *so* grateful to him. Grateful to God for him—this patron saint of doubters and skeptics everywhere. This testimony helps me, and other skeptics and cynics like me, more than any other testimony regarding the resurrection.

If my made-up version of Thomas’s thought process has any validity, I’m sure he revisited those thoughts again and again over the years. “Wow! Just when I thought I was home free, he actually was raised from the dead. And *that* truth is the one that has truly set me free. Now I know that ll I’ve gone through and will go through is worthwhile, because before that I had no inkling of the power of God’s love.”

Maybe, being the good Jew he was, he recalled the words of Psalm 118: “The Lord is my strength *and my song* [I love that], and he has become my salvation.”

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