

## Easter Unbelief

So what was the trouble with Thomas?

His doubts have echoed through history. We often assume that he was just a tough guy who had trouble trusting. But it would help you and me in our own doubts if we could understand more about this man who wouldn't believe the resurrection.

Doubting Thomas.

First, who was he? The Aramaic name Te'oma (Thomas) meant twin, and he was also called Didymus, which meant the same thing in Greek, twin. So he probably was an actual twin.

What else?

Well, he might have been a bit glum. For instance, he gave a practical but gloomy response when Jesus' wanted to go back to Judea after Lazarus died. None of the disciples wanted to return because they knew the Jewish leaders had tried to stone Jesus there (John 10:24-30). Jesus gave them some high-minded talk about what the disciples might learn by going, but Thomas ignored these reasons and said to the others, "Alright, let us also go die with him." A dour and cynical statement (John 11:16).\*

Here Thomas reminds me a bit of Joe Btfsplk, the famous Al Capp cartoon character who walked around with a perpetually dark rain cloud over his head!

Just before the passion Jesus had said, "Where I am going you know the way." This was a spiritual statement about going to the Father, but Thomas took it literally. "Master, we do not [even] know where you are going; how can we know the way?" (John 14:3-6). Again, a very matter-of-fact question, but with an emotional backdrop. "You haven't even told us anything! Are you going to leave us like this?"

Thomas loved Jesus doggedly but moped about the dangerous situations Jesus was always walking right into. Thomas' practical nature looked frankly at these and drew out the pessimistic conclusion. He had twin emotions, as his name implies. Love and loss. Is it any wonder, then, that in this Sunday's Gospel Thomas laid down his requirements for believing in the resurrection? His worst misgivings had come true on the cross: Jesus actually was killed. To deal with his sorrow Thomas resolved to accept the death stolidly, no matter what it felt like. He would never slip and talk about his departed friend in the present tense, as people sometimes do when a beloved friend has died. Thomas the pragmatic knew that beloved Jesus was dead and gone.

Suddenly the apostles reversed the field.

"Didymus, Jesus is alive! When the doors were locked, suddenly he stood there among us!

He talked to us!"

NO. NO. Thomas' heart could not accept it. Too much was at stake.

Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands  
and put my finger into the nail marks  
and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.

This is exactly in character for Thomas/Didymus. The tough words are really a protection for a heart that would break in half if given still another false hope. "The only way I would believe such nonsense is if you give me very practical proof."

Jesus gave it. Fingers in nail marks. Hand into side.

In spite of his cynicism, Thomas had always belonged to Jesus. When he got the practical proof he needed, he sank to the ground.

"My Lord and my God."

What a great story for Eastertide.

John Foley, SJ

## Second Sunday of Easter

### April 19, 2020

### St. Stephens Indian Mission

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Sr. Teresa Frawley, OSF.....Past. Asst./Director of Religious Education

**Please view the Diocese of Cheyenne website [dioceseofcheyenne.org](http://dioceseofcheyenne.org) as they have a plethora of information on the Church's response to the coronavirus outbreak. There is also a link to view Sunday Mass celebrated by Bishop Steven. The link is very helpful and provides many, many resources to join in prayer.**

**Reminder there is no daily Mass, no Sunday Mass, or Adoration and all public meetings (including AA and Bible Study) normally held on the Mission grounds are also suspended until April 30th. The gift shop is also closed. The office is closed to the public as we encourage everyone to stay home. You may call 851-2912 in an emergency otherwise calls to the parish office will be returned as soon as possible. These restrictions are necessary as it is imperative we are responsible and act in solidarity for the common good. Bulletins will be posted to the parish website at [www.saintstephensmission.com](http://www.saintstephensmission.com).**

**Please remember the church is open for private prayer every day from 8am-7pm. Continue to pray for the end of this pandemic. God Bless!**

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Come in seeking; come in wondering; come in hurting. Come into this house of companionship and compassion. Come in. You are welcome here. Our faith Family opens its doors to you and in the name of Christ, bids you Welcome!  
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*The purpose of St. Stephen's Indian Mission, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, is to grow into a strong community of believers, sharing our lives in the Holy Spirit, forming one welcoming People of God, who are committed to Jesus Christ, His gospel and mission.*

## Readings April 20th through April 26th:

Mon: Acts 4:23-31; Ps 2:1-9; Jn 3:1-8  
 Tue: Acts 4:32-37; Ps 93:1-2, 5; Jn 3:7b-15  
 Wed: Acts 5:17-26; Ps 34:2-9; Jn 3:16-21  
 Thur: Acts 5:27-33; Ps 34:2, 9, 17-20; Jn 3:31-36  
 Fri: Acts 5:34-42; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Jn 6:1-15  
 Sat: 1 Pt 5:5b-14; Ps 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17; Mk 16:15-20  
 Sun: Acts 2:14, 22-33; Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-11; 1 Pt 1:17-21; Lk 24:13-35

Father Jim and Father Hugo are celebrating a PRIVATE Mass every day so the Mass for the scheduled intentions are still being celebrated. Please feel free to call and leave a message if you have an intention. God bless.

### Mass Intentions this week

4/18:	Saturday	Jolene & Vern Scheer
4/19:	Sunday	+Donna Antelope
4/20:	Monday	+Juanita Stamp
4/21:	Tuesday	Brad Tyndall
4/22:	Wednesday	Vern Scheer
4/23:	Thursday	Those who are unemployed
4/24:	Friday	Cecelia Kasper
4/25:	Saturday	Intention of the priest
4/26:	Sunday	Hayley Cole

Christ Is Risen!

Indeed, He Is Risen!

The churches at St. Josephs and St. Stephens are open daily from 8am-7pm for private prayer. No more than 10 people are to be in the church at one time.

Eternal God,  
 in whom mercy is endless  
 and the treasury of compassion  
 - inexhaustible,  
 look kindly upon us  
 and increase Your mercy in us,  
 that in difficult moments  
 we might not despair  
 nor become despondent,  
 but with great confidence  
 submit ourselves to Your holy will,  
 which is Love and Mercy itself.  
 Amen.



*Homily for Divine Mercy Sunday by Father Hugo L. Blotsky, O.S.B. April 19, 2020*

The new life promised by the Risen Lord Jesus was meant for you and for me, not just for the disciples of Jesus 2,000 years ago. We are to receive His Divine Mercy throughout the Church's Liturgical calendar year, and especially as we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. Pope John Paul II had designated that Second Sunday of Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday.

A devotion to the Divine Mercy of Jesus began at the request of Jesus Himself through visions and messages to a Polish Nun, Sister Faustina. She kept a diary in which she wrote messages she was receiving from the Lord.

The Message of Divine Mercy calls people to a deeper understanding that God's love is unlimited and available to everyone—especially the greatest sinners. Sister Faustina, an uneducated Polish nun, wrote a diary of about 600 pages recording the revelations she received about God's mercy. Even before her death in 1938, the devotion of The Divine Mercy had begun to spread.

The message is simple: Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world. Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us. Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive.

Sister Faustina said that the Lord instructed her to have an image of Him painted in which rays of light are beaming from His heart. These rays represent the Lord's mercy flowing from His heart to all those who place their trust in Him.

Below the image are these words that we are asked to say frequently, "Jesus, I trust in you."

The Lord gave a promise to Sister Faustina, who is now a canonized saint, "I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over (its) enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I, Myself, will defend it as My own glory."

The enemies that Jesus referred to are the devil and his minions who attack us spiritually with a bad thought, image, or past memory which can stir up our passions. These passions are "love, hatred, desire, fear; joy, sadness and anger." When these passions get stirred up, an individual might react and create an emotional response that could cause a person to become physical.

For example, we know that anger in itself is not sinful. If we misuse or abuse anger, the actions that come from anger are then sinful.

Out of this devotion to the Divine Mercy Image has flowed quickly a movement to many parts of the world. Another promise of the Lord to St. Faustina was, "By means of this Image I shall be granting many graces to souls; so, let every soul have access to it."

This devotion to the Divine Mercy Image is very timely. Pope John Paul II strongly encouraged this devotion. He designated the Second Sunday after Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday throughout the Catholic world.

As we repent of our sins and place our trust in the Divine Mercy of the Risen Lord Jesus, we will find that new life will come into our lives. All the major problems in the world today, the problems in our country, the problems in the church, and the problems in our personal lives will become as small compared to the Divine Mercy of the Lord.

None of us is able to out-sin the Mercy of the Lord. The Lord is offering us hope for our future as we turn our lives over to His Divine Mercy.