

For a week, the disciples kept telling Thomas: “We have seen the risen Lord!” Thomas replied each time, “I’ll never believe it without probing the nail-prints in his hands, without putting my finger in the nail-marks and my hand into his side.” Finally, our Lord appeared to Thomas—Thomas touched his sacred wounds and cried out: “MY LORD and my God!” What a thrill! Imagine the emotions which surged through the soul of St. Thomas as he suddenly realized: “I am in the presence of Almighty God! God, in human flesh, has conquered death!”



Today Our Lord says to each of us, “Give me your hand, put it into my side, feel my wounds, cease your doubting but believe!” We all need to see and touch the wounds of Jesus in order to be cured of our doubts, but why is this so? How was Thomas healed of his unbelief? What do we learn from the wounds of Jesus?

To answer these questions, we must first ask: what is the source of our unbelief? Many people do not believe because they have never heard, or perhaps they have heard, but have deep seated biases against faith which could be rooted in a million different causes; but I would like to focus on OUR unbelief, i.e., those like Thomas who are disciples of Christ—who have experienced his truth and goodness—and want to believe. What are the sources of OUR unbelief? We could name

a few: the experience of suffering, temptation to indulge in sin, or uncertainty about the future. How do the wounds of Christ address these sources of unbelief?

When we are suffering, we need to know that the wounded Jesus is at our side. His wounds are REAL! His suffering was REAL! His suffering was for ME! As Christians, we never suffer alone; Jesus is with us in perfect solidarity. Just as Jesus’ suffering was transformed into something meaningful, so too can ours! Secondly, the wounds of Jesus teach us that God’s love and mercy are real! We believe the teachings of the Catholic Church because they come from the wounded heart of Jesus—they are rooted in divine Love. No matter what temptations we may experience, we hold fast to these teachings which have been confirmed by the wounds of Christ and entrusted to his holy Catholic Church until the end of time! He freely offered his life and was crucified for us! —How much more will he provide what we need all the days of our life? If we can only touch for ourselves the wounds of Jesus, we will have the strength of faith to obey his teachings, to persevere in times of suffering and to entrust our future to him.

Today, with St. Thomas, let us reverently approach the risen Lord, reach out our hands by faith and touch the precious wounds of Jesus. Jesus is speaking to us: “Give me your hand, put it into my side, feel my wounds, experience for yourself my love for you, cease your doubting but believe!”

Happy Easter!!  
Fr. Terry Staples



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