

Easter 2C

During excavations in Egypt during the 1920's, archaeologists found a handful of wheat in a tomb belonging to one of its ancient Kings. The wheat would have been about 5000 years old. Someone decided to plant the grains and, to their amazement, they grew and came to life after all those myriad of years.

My faith in the Resurrection will be like those dormant grains until I come to know Jesus as a real living person who touches my life in the here and now with His reassuring presence. Only then will the latent grains of my faith come to life and bear fruit.

There is an old French proverb which says: 'God often visits us but most of the time we are not at home'. That's what happened to 'doubting Thomas'. We are '*not at home*' either if we think that science has the answer to everything or if we're part of the 'seeing is believing' brigade. Thomas would not believe that Jesus had risen until he'd seen Him in the flesh.

Even though we don't see Jesus in the flesh, we believe He's with us, especially in the Mass. If we don't come to Mass then it is so easy for doubts to arise in our hearts. Book knowledge, even Bible knowledge about Jesus is not what it's about. Take a person who has perfected the technique of making bread from following instructions in a cookery book but who has never ever tasted or eaten the stuff. It's obvious there's a vital ingredient missing. Referring to Himself in the Eucharist, Jesus says "Whoever eats this bread will draw life from me".

This happens in the Mass. But we're also meant to draw life from the words of Jesus which we listen to at every Mass. These words are meant to have a transforming effect on the inner man or woman in the here and now rather than provide me with historical facts and figures about Jesus which happened 2000 years ago. At the end of the gospel today St John tell us that the things he wrote concerning Jesus are

meant to be a life-giving words not a dead letter. If Jesus were to walk into this church right now and after all the initial excitement had died down, would there be any guarantee that we would go out and live better lives as a result of seeing Him in the flesh? I doubt it. But if receiving Him in Holy Communion and listening to his Word increases my love for Him whom I don't see in the flesh then things are really moving in the right direction.

I suppose, in the scientific age in which we live, there is a kind of doubting Thomas in all of us who want factual proof of everything before we make a commitment. But as I said last week true believers will have experienced lots of little resurrections along the road of life preparing them for the final one at the end of time.

Thomas wanted to touch the wounds of Jesus. But it is he who is touched when Jesus reveals to him his true identity. Then his doubts and fears begin to ebb away. As we grow in faith may our doubts about the Risen Lord recede as well?