

## Homily

### Feast of St Thomas, Apostle

July 3, 2019

Who has ever been a victim of a practical joke? I think we all have enjoyed them one time or another, even if we were the target. Who remembers the peanut brittle that is jumps out at you like a snake when you open the can? After the first time, you are probably ready if it happens again.

What do you call a person who believes everything you tell them? Gullible.

What do you call a person who believes nothing you tell them? Skeptical. Even stronger words are incredulous or denialism. No matter what you tell them, they refuse to believe.

Tonight, we hear of the Apostle, Thomas, and his skepticism. Think about what was going on at the time. The Apostles were in shock. Jesus was dead. They couldn't believe He was dead. Now, for Thomas, his friends come to him saying Jesus is alive! How can this be? He wasn't just skeptical; he was overwhelmed with grief and disbelief in the events of the past few days. Now he's being told that Jesus was back among the living! This is too good to be true. He had to see for himself.

We have the benefit of a handful of centuries to know the truth; that Jesus died on the cross and rose again on the third day. Let's think about this in modern terms. There are people who don't believe Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon. They will tell you it was a hoax, that it didn't really happen. The only way they might believe is if they could see it for themselves. And even then, they might not believe.

Rational people, like you and me, base our beliefs on a certain amount of healthy skepticism. Jesus invites Thomas to "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Jesus encourages Thomas to check for himself. Jesus then encourages us to believe even though we have not seen.

And what is believing without seeing? Faith. Jesus calls us to a life of faith. That doesn't mean we should believe everything without seeing. That would make us gullible.