July 3rd: Feast of Saint Thomas, Apostle

Gospel text (*Jn* 20:24-29): Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” But Thomas said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “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.” Thomas answered and said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.”

"My Lord and my God!"

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Today, the Church celebrates the festivity of St. Thomas. After describing the apparition of Jesus on Easter Sunday, John the Evangelist, tell us that the apostle Thomas was not with them, and when the Apostles —who had seen the Lord— were bearing witness of him, Thomas replied: “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” (Jn 20:25).

Jesus is good with Thomas and meets him. Eight days later, Jesus appears once more and tells Thomas: “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.” (Jn 20:27).

—O Jesus, you are so good! If you ever see me moving away from You, come to meet me, as you did to meet Thomas.

These words were Thomas' reaction: “My Lord and my God!” (Jn 20:28). How beautiful these words are! Thomas calls him “Lord” and “God”. He makes an act of faith in the divinity of Jesus. When seeing him resurrected, Thomas not only sees Jesus the man, with the Apostles and eating with them, but his Lord and his God.

Jesus reprimands him and tells him not to be incredulous but a believer, and He adds: “Blessed are those

who have not seen and have believed." (Jn 20:28). We have not seen the crucified Christ or the resurrected Christ either, nor has He appeared to us, but we are happy because we believe in this Jesus Christ that has died and resurrected for us.

Let us therefore pray: "My Lord and my God, take from me everything that distances me from you. My Lord and my God, give me everything that brings me closer to you. My Lord and my God, detach me from myself to give my all to you." (St. Nicholas of Flüe).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "He [Thomas] saw and touched the man, and acknowledged the God whom he neither saw nor touched; but by the means of what he saw and touched, he now put far away from him every doubt, and believed the other" (Saint Augustine)

- "The Apostle Thomas' case is important to us for at least three reasons: first, because it comforts us in our insecurity; second, because it shows us that every doubt can lead to an outcome brighter than any uncertainty; and, lastly, because the words that Jesus addressed to him remind us of the true meaning of mature faith and encourage us to persevere, despite the difficulty, along our journey of adhesion to him" (Benedict XVI)

- "The hypothesis that the Resurrection was produced by the apostles' faith (or credulity) will not hold up. On the contrary their faith in the Resurrection was born, under the action of divine grace, from their direct experience of the reality of the risen Jesus" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 644)