

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Last Sunday we stood with the women at the tomb, the ground shaking beneath our feet, the stone rolled away, the world as we knew it breaking open. It was not subtle. It was not interior. It was not symbolic. It was God, in the flesh, overturning death in the flesh.

And if Easter Day leaves us breathless at the scale of it all, this Second Sunday of Easter brings us closer—uncomfortably close—to the detail.

Because now we are no longer standing at the mouth of the tomb, peering into mystery. Now we are in a locked room with frightened disciples. Now we are face to face with wounds.

In Gospel of John, the risen Jesus does not appear as an idea, or a memory, or a spiritual presence hovering vaguely in the room. He comes and stands among them and says, “Peace be with you.” And then—this is crucial—he shows them his hands and his side.

Not covered. Not erased. Not transformed into something unrecognisable. The wounds remain.

The resurrection, it seems, does not discard the body that was crucified. It redeems it.

And then, a week later, comes Thomas. Poor Thomas, who has been unfairly reduced to a caricature of doubt, when in fact he is asking the most honest question of all: *Is this real? Is this the same Jesus? Can this possibly be true in the world as I know it?*

Thomas will not settle for second-hand faith. He will not live on someone else’s experience. “Unless I see... unless I touch...”

And when Jesus comes again, he does not rebuke Thomas. He invites him.

“Put your finger here. See my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side.”

This is astonishing. The risen Christ offers his wounded, physical body as the ground of faith.

If last week we were told that the stone was real, that the earthquake was real, that the tomb was really empty—this week we are told that the wounds are real. That resurrection is not an escape from the body, but God's irrevocable commitment to it.

And that matters.

Because it means that God has not abandoned the material world. God has not given up on flesh and bone and breath and blood. The incarnation—the Word made flesh—is not a temporary strategy that God discards once it becomes inconvenient. It is the way God chooses, forever, to be known.

The Jesus who is raised is recognisably the Jesus who was crucified.

The Jesus who bears the scars is the same Jesus who bore the suffering.

And that tells us something decisive about our hope.

In First Epistle of Peter, we hear of a “living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Not an abstract hope. Not a vague optimism. A living hope—grounded in the living, breathing, wounded-and-raised body of Christ.

This hope is not about escaping the world. It is about the redemption of the world.

It is not about leaving our bodies behind. It is about God raising them up.

It is not about pretending that suffering and death are illusions. It is about God entering into them, bearing them, and overcoming them from within.

And in Acts of the Apostles, Peter stands and proclaims exactly this: “This Jesus... you crucified... God raised up.” Not another Jesus. Not a spiritualised version. *This* Jesus.

There is a continuity here that we dare not lose. The one who walked, who taught, who touched lepers, who broke bread, who was nailed to a cross—that same one has been raised.

Which means that what God does with Jesus, God intends for all creation.

Including us.

Including our fragile, ageing, aching, beautiful, vulnerable bodies.

This is where the “earthshaking” reality of Easter begins to press in on our ordinary lives.

Because if resurrection is real—if it is physical, embodied, continuous with the life we now live—then it speaks directly into every place where bodies suffer.

It speaks into hospital rooms and aged care facilities.

It speaks into grief and loss and the slow diminishment of illness.

It speaks into the exhaustion we carry, the wounds we bear, the ways our bodies fail us or are failed by the world.

And it says: *these matter to God.*

Not in a distant, abstract way. But in the most concrete way possible. God has taken flesh. God has endured wounds. God has raised that wounded flesh into life that death cannot touch.

And so when Thomas reaches out his hand, he is not just verifying a miracle. He is encountering the future of creation.

A future where wounds are not denied, but transfigured.

A future where death does not have the final word over the body.

A future where the life of God holds and restores what has been broken.

No wonder his response is not analysis, but worship: “My Lord and my God!”

Because at that moment, Thomas sees what the women glimpsed at the tomb: that the world has changed. That God’s new creation has already begun. That resurrection is not an idea to be explained, but a reality to be encountered.

And perhaps we are not so different from Thomas.

We, too, live after the event. We, too, have not seen with our own eyes. We, too, wonder whether this can really be trusted in the world as we know it.

And so the question is not whether we doubt. The question is where we bring our doubt.

Thomas brings his doubt into the presence of Christ—and finds that Christ meets him there, not with condemnation, but with invitation.

“Come and see. Come and touch. Come and believe.”

The same invitation given to the women at the tomb. The same invitation extended to us.

But notice this: we are not invited to domesticate the resurrection. Not invited to make it safe, or manageable, or “normal.”

Because it is none of those things.

It is still as disruptive, as unsettling, as world-altering as it was on that first day.

It still insists that death is not ultimate.

It still insists that God is not finished with this world.

It still insists that love—real, embodied, costly love—is stronger than all that opposes it.

And it still sends us out, like the women, like the disciples, into a world that may not yet recognise what has happened... but is already being remade by it.

So this is the invitation of this second Sunday of Easter:

Not simply to admire the empty tomb from a distance.

But to draw near.

To look at the wounds.

To trust that the risen Christ we meet is the same Christ who has walked the road of suffering.

And to dare to believe that in him, our lives—our actual, embodied, complicated lives—are held within a living hope that death itself cannot extinguish.

Christ is risen.

And he still bears the wounds.

And that is our hope