

Three Messages for Us

This Week's Readings at Mass

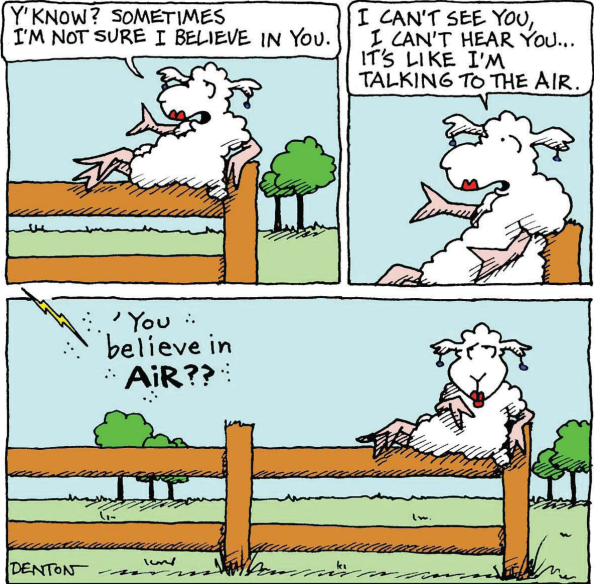
- ▶ Acts 4:32-35 - Life of the first Christians
- ▶ 1 John 5:1-6 - Belief in Jesus Christ
- ▶ John 20:19-31 - Appearance to the disciples

In all of the stories of Jesus meeting his friends and followers after his resurrection, his message can be boiled down into three short phrases: “Do not be afraid,” “Go and tell others the good news” and “Peace be with you.” We hear two of them in today’s gospel reading.

At the beginning of the Gospel, we read that the disciples are still huddled together, fearing for their lives—even though Mary Magdalene has already announced to them that Jesus is alive. They need the reassurance of Jesus’ words, “Peace be with you,” spoken in his own voice, to believe what they are seeing.

Then, as soon as they believe that he really has been raised from the dead, he sends them out to continue doing his work. They aren’t supposed to keep to themselves, and they definitely aren’t supposed to stay holed up in fear of what the authorities may do to them. They have been given the gift of his peace, and now they are to go out and share it with the world.

For those readers who may still struggle with doubts about Jesus’ resurrection, we have the story of Doubting Thomas to help us. Apparently for Thomas, hearing someone else’s testimony that Jesus had risen from the dead wasn’t enough. He needed to see for himself in order to believe. Jesus understands that and gives Thomas what he needs to bring him to belief. Jesus doesn’t crit-



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“Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.”

Sheepish Question:
What helps me dispel my doubts about God?

icize Thomas for his lack of faith, he simply offers a blessing to the billions of us who have come after him and have found ourselves invited to believe without ever having the benefit of seeing him with our own eyes.

Questions of the Week

- 1 Which of Jesus’ messages after his resurrection is most helpful to you: “Do not be afraid,” “Peace be with you,” or “Go and tell others the good news”?
- 2 What helps you to continue to believe in Jesus when you are tempted to doubt?

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