

## LOW SUNDAY 2018

Beloved,

we live in an era when doubt is invariably the first reaction to spring from human hearts when confronted with religious teaching. How very unfortunate for all those who go no further.

In seeing the persecution and violence done to the Lord Jesus, the Apostles were witness to His gruesome death and the incomprehensible end to all His teaching and good works. Beaten, broken, His lifeless body was laid in its tomb. A heavy stone enclosed its sad interior in the shadow of dreams completely shattered. There was nothing to follow. The Master Who had healed so many – even restoring life to the dead – Who had been their constant companion for three years, had vanished by a series of events as swift as they had been cruel and unjust. The Jews masterminding these affairs had now become a very real danger to the dispirited band of followers apparently orphaned on that first Good Friday.

And deeper still, despite all Jesus' teaching, the disciples remained deaf to the actual sense of His teaching. So they locked themselves into a room and prayed. For what? It is hard to imagine.

But Jesus had come from God – He *was* God: He had come into this world, not to reign as political power but to lead us out of the transitory things of this present life by elevating us to the glory of the greater world to come.

The death and resurrection of Jesus are historical facts. Each person born to this life, therefore, has a choice in this regard: accept the witness of the Apostles or reject it. This is not new: even the Apostles themselves found it amazingly difficult to swallow something that is seemingly impossible: they had been told by eye witnesses that the dead Lord was living again. How could this be?

And so, while they were locked in an upper room filled with fear and paranoia, Jesus suddenly appeared there in His glorified flesh: “Why are you sad? Give me something to eat; it is I. *Peace be with you.*” This wonder was to confirm the eyewitness of others to them; it was also to consolidate their knowledge by teaching them the sense of Scripture as it concerned Himself.

But the Apostle Thomas was not present at the first such appearance. Truly a man for our times: “If I can not put my finger into the place of the nails, if I can not put my hand into His side, I will not believe!” Beloved, this Thomas has seen

for us – he was there. Incredulous, he *wanted to hope*, but *refused to believe*. Doubt was the more rational course of action. But supernatural faith is a means of believing – not on the dictate of empirical evidence, but through the witness of another. Suddenly, Jesus was there in Thomas’ field of vision: the Savior of all mankind, glorified, resplendent, in all His humanity. The Lord, risen from the dead, was standing there: living, speaking, inviting Thomas to come to Him, to touch and feel, to see that it was truly He: Jesus, living, the God and Savior of all mankind.

What a scene, what a divine invitation: “Come and touch these wounds – touch the source of your life: put your hands into My side, for here is the fountain of grace, here is the gateway to our Father in glory. Touch Me, love Me: I am your Resurrection and Life.” Oh, my Lord and my God.

And so Jesus turns to us, dearest Easter children, and says, “I have given you Thomas so that you may have *faith*. Here are the witnesses: my Apostles and my Church; I have sent them with the Sacraments of divine grace so that *you may not be unbelieving*: for, yea, more blessed are they who have *not* seen and yet who believe. . . Herein is the pledge of love by which the divine mercy of God flows from heaven into our very souls.

And so, beloved, Holy Church has proclaimed with unrestrained joy, lo these 20 centuries: Our Lord and God is risen from the dead that we may die no more. Heaven is once again opened to those who will believe, and for these sin and death have been forever vanquished. Rather than surrender in doubt to the sinful distractions of this world, let us believe in Him Who is the Alpha and Omega of all creation. Indeed, with all the faithful through-out the ages let us rejoice, for *this is day which the Lord has made*. Yea, indeed, *let us rejoice and be glad in it*.