St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church

P.O. Box 906 High Springs, Florida 32655

Second Sunday in Easter 2020

Grace, Peace, and the Love of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with You!

Alleluia, Christ Is Risen! Our Gospel reading today is John 20:19-31. Please take time to read and meditate on this reading. Today is traditionally known as “Doubting Thomas Sunday” throughout the Christian world. The reading definitely applies to us today because as the Lord says, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” What we should believe is the truth validated by the facts given by eye-witnesses. There is a preponderance of evidence and eyewitnesses to the works of Jesus Christ and to his resurrection. Generations of Christians have passed the facts to us today yet we still have a little bit of Thomas in us.

Jesus certainly understands human nature to doubt something that goes beyond the laws of nature or scientific understanding. Coming to believe definitely needs Divine help: “Receive the Holy Spirit . . .” Believing does take an effort on our part but unless we humble ourselves before God and ask to be helped in our unbelief I doubt if there will be much success in coming to believe. The great news in our reading today is that the Lord is always ready to help.

We read today Jesus’ greeting, “Peace be with you” in two separate visitations. The peace of the Lord is a very special gift to his followers especially in troublesome times. The resurrection of our Lord contains all things needed for peace. The Lord has put under foot all fears of life and death for those that choose to live with him.

We are living in a time where it seems that fear of death has taken away the life that God has given us. We grieve with those that must live after the loss of a loved. Jesus grieved for the family and friends of Lazarus. We have statistics given to us day after day of those that have contracted and died of COVID-19. I know good doctors are trying to find cures but reality is that COVID-19 is only a small player to all the deaths that occur in the United States. I still grieve for members of our congregation that were so much a part of my life that have died from various causes. Flu comes every year, many die, and flu shots have not always been on target. Medical science has not been able to prevent ultimate death and we still have some serious diseases that have been taking our loved ones for many years! We pray for cures and are thankful for those seeking cures. However, here is where Jesus steps in. He is the only healer. We are thankful for those that are healed but also know that Jesus has taken away the tragic sting of death and returns divine eternal life to all that believe. Alleluia, Christ is risen! (The Lord is risen indeed)

The peace of the Lord be with you. Much love, fr lance+