

**April 28, 2019**

**Easter 2**

*Touch of Belief: Presence of God*

**Ancient Reading ~ John 20:19-31**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the room where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Temple authorities, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Having said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw Jesus, who said to them again, "Peace be with you. As God has sent me, so I send you." After saying this, Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone's sins, they are retained."

It happened that Thomas (nicknamed Didymus, or "Twin"), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples kept telling him, "We have seen the Christ." Thomas' answer was, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later the disciples were again in the room, and Thomas was with them. Despite the locked doors, Jesus came and stood among them, saying, "Peace be with you." Then to Thomas, Jesus said, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas said in response, "My Savior and my God!" Jesus then said, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Anointed One, the Holy One of God, and that through believing you may have newness of life.

**Contemporary Reading ~ from Andre Debus**

On Tuesdays when I make lunch for my girls, I focus on this: the sandwiches are sacraments. And each motion is a sacrament, this holding of plastic bags, knife, of bread, of cutting board, this pushing of the wheelchair, this spreading of mustard on bread, this trimming of the bread. All sacraments, as putting the lunches into a zippered book bag is, and going down my six wheelchair ramps to my car is. I drive on the highway to the girls' town, to their school, and this is not simply a transition; it is my love moving by automobile from a place where my girls are not, to a place where they are; even if I do not feel or acknowledge it, this is a sacrament. If I remember it, then I feel it too. Feeling it does not always mean that I am a happy soul driving in traffic; it simply means that I know what I am doing in the presence of God.