

**Second Sunday of Easter**  
**April 12, 2026**

The story is told about a woman and her ever-complaining husband who went on vacation to Jerusalem. While they were there, the husband passed away. The undertaker told the wife, “You can have his body shipped home for \$15,000, or you can bury him here in the Holy Land for \$150. The woman thought about it and told him she would have him shipped home. The undertaker asked, “Why would you spend that kind of money when you could bury him here in this wonderful place for only \$150?”

The woman replied, “Long ago a man died and was buried here, and three days later he rose from the dead. I’m not going to take that risk.”

(Now you can tell Fr. Michael that I can tell a joke, too.)

That may have been a wise decision for her, but Easter is all about taking risks. The early faith community understood that and came to embrace it in their lives, and we need to, also, if we are to keep the Easter message alive. Not jumping out of the airplane kind-of-risks, but risks nonetheless.

Because like them, we too must take the risk to believe even if we have not seen. It is not always easy to rely upon the experiences of others and accept them as authentic, as we would our own experiences. But like the believers of old, we must trust in the faith stories of others, trust in their experiences of God, trust in the truth of Christ they discovered and believe, even if we (personally) have not seen.

It is one of the reasons why we gather as a faith community every weekend. Like Thomas, we might feel like we are on the outside, locked out of the so-called mysteries of what others have come to believe. But trusting in others’ experiences, gathering with others, and then sharing our own experiences makes us a stronger and more authentic church. It’s what disciples do.

At the same time, we take a risk to welcome those who are still searching, and that doesn’t always make for a nice and tidy church community. Sadly, there are some who argue that Catholics who struggle with their faith or who don’t live up to a certain standard or way of life think they should just “shape up or ship out.” But we must remember that the apostles didn’t reject Thomas because he questioned their story; they didn’t shut the door on him or send him away. They continued to welcome him into the upper room. And in the end, we must also remember that he was the first -before all others- to declare Jesus as “my Lord and my God,” the first to declare, not the humanity but the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Finally, like the early church, we must risk forgiveness. Forgiveness was one of the greatest challenges of the early church and remains one of our greatest challenges today. It is far easier to simply draw a line, to declare a war, to shut the cell door, to burn the bridge or build a fence. Those things take little risk, especially for those in power.

To forgive is to place ourselves in a vulnerable position. But what else can we authentically do and still call ourselves Christian? What else unites us with the mercy of God than to forgive? Isn’t that exactly what Jesus did on the cross?

Every Easter season we watch the Church being born anew, an ongoing act of God’s creation in every generation. It is never finished. Every generation must take the opportunities for the breath of Christ to blow over us, for the Holy Spirit to come upon us. Every generation must face the challenges to become an Easter people. And it takes what it has always taken: the risk to believe, to risk to welcome, to risk to forgive.