

April 11/12, 2026

2nd Sunday after Easter

Look, look! Grandma!

Oh Luci, do you have a boo-boo?

Yes, I was running down the street and fell! See?! See?!

It starts at an early age and really never stops.

They call me bionic grandpa. Look - my scar starts there and it runs all the way to here.

I had to have that surgery because my knee just wasn't working the way I used to!

There's the scar to prove it.

Scars testify to new healing and new life. The ability to walk and play golf again! The ability to get down on knees to see the bugs as grandchildren see them. The ability to live without pain.

I once heard a surgeon say, "the irony is that I have to inflict pain upon the body in order to heal the body." How true that is!

Our scars, all the way from scraped up hands and knees, to broken bones and surgeries, tell stories. Not only a story of what was hurt and then healed, but also the story behind that story.

I love that we hear this text every single year on the Sunday after Easter. As with so many biblical texts, it has layers and layers and layers.

This could be a sermon about the disciples' fear... As real as it was. Fear that confessing in Jesus - particularly the risen Jesus - could also get them crucified.

Could've been a sermon about Jesus, giving the disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit so that they could now be equipped to continue the mission that he had started.

It also could've been a sermon about Thomas's doubts. Doubt is an essential part of faith. Our questions and our doubts keep us growing.

And yet... The reality of Jesus wounds kept speaking to me.

"The irony is that I have to inflict pain upon the body in order to heal the body."

It's what the surgeon said. Right after she said that surgery should always be the last option. "It's time." You've waited long enough. It's bone on bone and you need more quality of life. It's time.

God, the creator in essence said the same thing, yes? "it's time that I draw pain into myself, that the body, my church, my people, can finally have more quality of life. The reality of a broken world, needs a broken Savior. It's time."

Then one week later, the disciples who saw Jesus and told Thomas so, were forgetting Thomas had also seen the Lord.

Thomas had seen Jesus bloodied and hanging on a cross. As far as Thomas was concerned, Jesus was dead. Life moves on. He had already moved on. Perhaps that's why he wasn't with the other disciples locked away in fear. He was a pragmatist after all. He had said once they should all go with Jesus and die with him.

'It is what it is,' as the saying goes. So why belabor the point? Jesus said he would die. He died. Just move on.

Maybe 'it is what it is' on the surface, but there's always more to the story, I think.

There's always the story behind the scar.

Jesus, knowing what Thomas needs, invites him closer. Put your finger in my hands, touch them. Look at them. See the wound? See the scar? Take your hand and put it in my side where they cut me with a spear. See where the wound was? Look at the scar.

When the Romans crucified people, sometimes they would linger on for days. Thus, their legs would be broken to make them die faster.

But when they went to check Jesus, it appeared he was already dead. Now after death, body fluids separate. A living body produces blood. A dead body would produce a mixture of clotting blood and watery fluid. When the spear went in, it was the second. Jesus was dead. That was the story under the scar.

But when the creator of the universe dies for all of creation, this is what happens. There is a new creation! A living, talking breathing, Jesus who can pass through doors and has evidence of the wounds he has endured. They are fresh, they are new, and Jesus is still alive!

The scientists who trained the astronauts in Artemis II, told them to not only give scientific data of what they were seeing, but also to express what they were seeing and feeling in real time, in unscientific words. At one point, Kristina Koch looked out the window and she said of something on the moon, "It looks like a wound." When NASA received the picture relayed back to them, they agreed it really did look like a wound. The real life story behind the stark reality.

Therefore, when Thomas says my Lord and my God! He has suddenly seen and comprehended the story underneath the surface of Jesus' scar. His mind and his spirit are opened to new beginnings. Just as Jesus has walked through the doors of a locked

room, now Jesus opens new doors in Thomas' faith. His death is no longer just a fact of reality, His resurrected presence is a living, breathing beginning to a whole new creation.

How would one function, knowing for certain there is life after death? What freedom would it bring to live that reality? What would a person do? How would they be changed?

Thomas didn't take this new reality for granted. He went on to found churches in India in Christ's name. He helped usher in the resurrected life for many others to also confess, "My Lord and my God!"

That's the question for you and I this day. How are we going to live differently believing as Easter people? How are we going to dare, and risk, and grow beyond the scars inflicted upon us? How will we call people to accountability so that pain is not inflicted upon millions of people in the world, simply for the sake of creating wounds.

God is able to heal all kinds of wounds. We saw it over and over again when Jesus was alive. So do not doubt, but believe!

For the first time in humankind, a man has risen from the dead. It is mind boggling but we are sitting here tonight because we do believe! We do believe the story underneath the scars. We do believe that after three days, Jesus rose again from the dead.

It is what it is? Not this time! Jesus is alive with scars!

Christ is Risen. He is Risen indeed! Amen.