

Easter 1.

- What has been your experience of Easter this year?
- Read John 20: 19-31
- What were your expectations?
- What did the disciples expect following the crucifixion events? What actually happened?

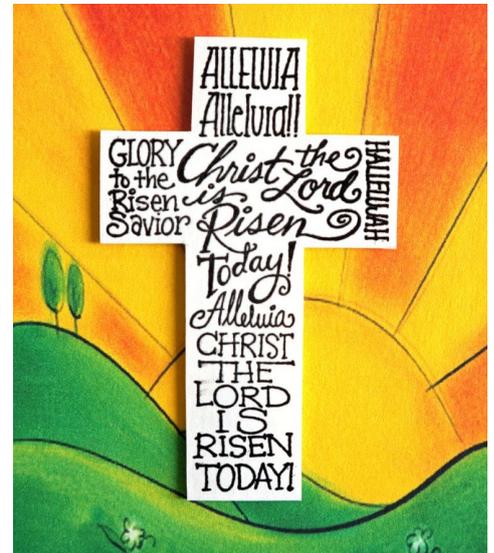
'God revealed himself in Jesus, but revelation rarely conforms to our expectations. We have such stereotyped ideas of what God does and how he does it that we frequently misread the signs'

[The Message : p. 1678]

- What did Thomas expect? Were his expectations any different from the other disciples?

When Jesus breathed new life into his disciples (v22) this mirrors the breath of God in Genesis 2 when Adam became a living soul & order was brought out of chaos and form out of formlessness.

- Is it ok to have doubts about the reality of Jesus' resurrection?
- How do you think the other disciples would have reacted to Thomas wanting proof before belief? How does Jesus respond?
- How might Thomas' realism help us better understand the 'cost' of the resurrection?
- Thomas' declaration of faith is the strongest in the Gospel. v 29 suggests that those who haven't seen Jesus in the flesh might be even more blessed than those who did at the time of the resurrection. Are you encouraged by this thought?
- How might we modify our own expectations of faith in a way that is authentic and compelling to others?
- Close in prayer, praying for all who have doubts and are struggling to find faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ.



'My Lord and My God'

"All great spirituality teaches about letting go of what you don't need and who you are not [our expectations]. Then, when you can get little enough and naked enough and poor enough, you'll find that the little place where you really are is ironically more than enough and is all that you need. At that place, you will have nothing to prove to anybody and nothing to protect.

That place is called freedom. It's the freedom of the children of God. Such people can connect with everybody. They don't feel the need to eliminate anybody . . ."

[Richard Rohr: Healing Our Violence through the Journey of Centering Prayer]

