



May 8, 2022 – Easter 4 (C)
Week 3: Reflections on the Resurrection

During the Easter season, Sermons That Work is pleased to present reflections from bishops of The Episcopal Church on the resurrection of our Lord. Check back each week for a brief exploration of how Jesus Christ's rising from the grave changes everything. To listen to this reflection, scan the QR code on this page and subscribe to the Sermons That Work podcast.

Jesus said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe" (John 20:27).

Jesus' hands, feet, and side remain wounded as he appears to his first followers after his resurrection. He has risen from the dead yet remains wounded. What is the Holy Trinity telling us with this not insignificant detail? This is Jesus, after all, who made lepers clean, gave hearing to a man born deaf, and sight to one born blind. Jesus fed the multitudes, walked on water, calmed the storm, and raised the dead. Jesus healed the centurion's servant without even stepping foot in his yard. Jesus, who in so many ways showed that his power was unlimited, does not heal himself.

Jesus comes back still bearing humanity's marks on his flesh. If Jesus rose healed over, nice and neat, we could be tempted to see the cross as less significant. We could decide that suffering, particularly suffering and sacrifice for others, holds no meaning for us. Instead, we see how far the compassion of the Holy Trinity extends. Compassion means "suffering with." Jesus had compassion for Thomas whose doubts had overtaken his faith. Jesus offers Thomas the proof the disciple needs to understand that, though Jesus died, he has truly risen from the grave.

For me, the most astounding part of these wounds is that it reveals Jesus as vulnerable. The literal meaning of vulnerable is "able to be wounded." God the Son was fully human as well as fully divine, and so able to be wounded. He was wounded by humans for the sake of humanity. This matters to our day-to-day lives, as we are called to live our bodily, daily existence, transformed by the Christ who is present with us in our suffering and loss. Jesus, who felt the pain of what humans did to him, knows suffering. Jesus, who experienced abandonment on the cross, knows that pain – and yet will never abandon you.

To love is to make oneself vulnerable. Jesus' vulnerability shows the depths of God's love for all humanity. The Holy Trinity could have remained outside of creation as a righteous judge. Instead, God entered the creation in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. A necessary part of being one of us is emotional and physical vulnerability. People could and did reject him and put him to death. Yet Jesus did not give up on loving us, even when the cost of that love was death on a cross.

Whatever you are facing, you have alongside and within you a loving God who understands fully. Ask Jesus to touch your wounded life with his hands that still bear the marks of what we humans did and yet remain open, reaching out with love and healing.



*This reflection, titled "Touch My Hands and Side", was written by **the Rt. Rev. Frank Logue**. Logue is the bishop of the Diocese of Georgia. He previously served as the church planter for King of Peace Episcopal Church in Kingsland, Georgia, and as canon to the ordinary of the diocese he now serves as bishop.*