

Faith—A Jump into God St. Thomas, apostle Tuesday, July 3, 2018 8:15 AM
Eph 2:19-22; **Jn 20:24-29** (This unity of God only comes through the Spirit of God and the experience we might call mystical, but it's introduced by faith.)

“Jesus said to him, ‘Have you come to believe because you have seen me?’”

That’s a question. It often is not put as a question. It’s put as “Jesus said, ‘Because you have seen me, you believe.’” That’s not what he said. He asked the question, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me?”

Now seeing is not believing. Some people take this story to mean seeing is believing; it is not. This is a point that’s made very clearly by Pope Gregory the Great in his meditation on today’s feast. This is not about seeing and believing. **It’s about the importance of doubting, but going beyond doubt.** We all doubt. We have to doubt. Certainty alludes us. There are some few things we can be certain about, but not many.

Now there is an attitude found in our modern world where some so-called sophisticated intellectuals say, **“I only accept what I can prove.”** It’s called **scientism**: I only believe evidence that I can see, also called **naturalism**. **It leads directly to atheism and complete incoherence**, so I don’t recommend it.

But the alternative is **jumping from what we see and can be sure of to something we cannot see or be sure of. This jumping is what faith is about.** Thomas, as St. Gregory points out, affirmed something he did not see: “My Lord my God.” He didn’t see God. He saw Jesus resurrected from the dead, but open to inspiration he said, **“My Lord and my God.” That’s going beyond what he saw.** I would bet many of you have seen miraculous things in your life and not even noticed. Faith is going beyond what we see. Sight proves nothing. Think of how many people saw healings during Jesus’ life, just during Jesus’ life, not mentioning all the healings that take place since then. And there are many, but people can totally ignore them.

Seeing doesn't do anything. **Faith is a jump, a deliberate, free jump beyond experience,** beyond what we see, beyond what we hear. That's what Thomas represents, as St. Gregory points out.

Now today we live in a world that is greatly incoherent because of actually the evolution of democracy. In **democracy** everyone is equal. **Everyone's opinion is equally valid,** which creates an enormous hodgepodge of opinion and viewpoint and value system, and it really moves toward a sort of nihilism. Since nothing is certain and very little can be proved, **things like values tend to fall away, and all we have left is "me" and what I want.** And that's what we see in the world today, narcissism one of the earliest, most infantile forms of consciousness, asserting itself in grown up people, in groups.

We need to jump beyond the evidence. The world needs a jump into **the unity of God** and the vision of the kingdom that Jesus preached, and by the way, has also been preached by many other prophets in many different periods and times. **This unity only comes through the Spirit of God and the experience we might call mystical, but it's introduced by faith,** by the jump that Thomas made when he said, "My Lord and my God." So Thomas is now our patron. He was doubting, and that's okay: we all doubt. St. Augustine said, "*Dubito ergo sum*, I doubt therefore I am." Doubt will never leave us. But the opposite of doubt is certainty, which we can't have. Faith isn't the opposite of doubt; it simply goes beyond it. It's a jump into God.