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Easter 2C
Peace, Seattle
April 11, 2010 epk
John 20:19-31

LETTER TO THOMAS

My sermon this morning is entitled: LETTER TO THOMAS

DEAR THOMAS,

OH—YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE!

There we were, in the house—tense, fearful, numb—doors bolted, windows shuttered—holed up like a bunch of caged animals.

There we were, each of us lost in his own little world, when—with no warning whatsoever—we found HIM in the room with us!

It was unbelievable! He simply…appeared.

We stared at him, not at all convinced we could believe what our eyes were telling us.
But before any of us could speak, he spoke.

"SHALOM," he said. SHALOM! "PEACE BE WITH YOU!"

And then, he held out his hands and showed us his wounds… our RISEN LORD!

I know it sounds strange, but…
HIS BROKEN BODY WAS THE MOST WONDERFUL SIGHT IN THE WHOLE WORLD!
HIS WOUNDS WERE HIS GLORY!…THE VERY WOUNDS HE SUFFERED AFTER WE HAD SCATTERED…AND LEFT HIM TO DIE ALONE.

OH—THE SHAME! …But, Thomas, none of that seemed to matter to him.
It was as if our failures, our betrayals had simply melted away…
And in their place…was this perfect peace.

I felt his breath on me then…and it was as if I, as if we—all of us—had become one with him:
- **his breathe now *our* breathe;**
- **his spirit *our* spirit,**
- **joined in a way which only GOD could imagine.**

Then, just before he left, he said: "IT'S YOUR TURN NOW."

At first, we weren't sure what he meant, but now we know:
We are to go into the world **with** his peace, to **be** his peace—to be instruments of peace and forgiveness.

It's so simple! I MEAN, OF COURSE! WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

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Thomas, you remember how preoccupied we all were with making a good impression?
- So worried about being ordinary,
- *wanting so* to impress him—to be *good enough* for him?

You remember how humiliating it was when he washed our feet that night?

WHAT IS HE DOING?! we thought. OUR MASTER—WASHING FEET! How dull we all were.

But, Thomas, I tell you now:
I WILL SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE WASHING FEET IF THAT IS WHAT SERVING HIM MEANS.

HE IS MY PEACE, AND NOW, EVERYWHERE I LOOK AROUND ME, I SEE HIM.
- I see his wounds in the frightened glances of the little ones.
- I glimpse his grace in the newfound dignity of the women.
- I hear his joy in the children's laughter.
- And I feel his glory as our community gathers at his Table.

Oh, Thomas, you should have been— . . . ***Thomas? Is that you?***

Oh, it's so good that you're here.

I didn't tell you the best news: he promised to be here today!

Yes!…bringing peace...stilling fears.

Look around you, Tom, and behold his body:
- *young and old,*
- *hurting and hopeful,*
- *wounded and glorious.*

Go ahead—reach out…touch this body...and let him embrace you.

And know this: Wherever you go, he goes with you, and he will be your peace.

What's that, Thomas? What was it you said?

"MY LORD AND MY GOD"?

Yes: your Lord, my Lord…our Lord and our God.

AMEN, THOMAS. AMEN.