

HOMILY 2ND SUNDAY EASTER

April 27, 2025

There is a Japanese technique called kintsugi (kin-tso-gee) that is used in preparing broken pottery. Instead of trying to cover up and hide the imperfections, they are repaired with gold and lacquer to accentuate the imperfections. The pottery becomes more beautiful and precious than before it was broken. They recognize the beauty of the imperfection. In our culture we would be much more likely to try and hide or cover up the imperfections. That is what repair is all about for us.

In the Gospel reading Jesus appears to the disciples in the upper room in his glorified body. Jesus retains his scars in his glorified body. His scars are part of what makes him who he is and helps the disciples to recognize him. I think it is our scars that make us who we are. Life is hard and we all have our struggles, our challenges, our suffering, and our failures. But it is through these scars that we become more beautiful and more precious. If we can share these scars with one another, we can help one another.

The Gospel reading is usually called “Doubting Thomas,” and I can see why. Thomas would not accept that Jesus had risen from the dead until he saw him. However, I think there is something bigger going on here. I think the disciples had become cynical, and with good reason. They had just lived through a period of great suffering, not to the degree that Jesus did, but suffering just the same. They had given up everything for the last three years of their life. They had come to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the one they had been waiting many years for, and then he was dead and in the grave. What did they give up the last 3 years of their life for? They must have been terribly disappointed. And now they find out that Jesus has risen from the dead. I think they believed what they saw, but they were cynical. They were still locked in the upper

room. Maybe we need to lower our expectations. Maybe we need to try and avoid the heart break and disappointment we just experienced. Jesus offers them peace. This peace that he offers is not just the absence of conflict. This peace is the gift of faith and trust that God will be with them spiritually. They will see this through the difficulties that they will face as they move forward. If they are going to be able to leave the upper room and spread the Gospel, they need to find God's peace.

I think with what is going in our country and our world it is easy to become cynical, to lower our expectations. Certainly nothing can disappoint you if you are pre-disappointed, but is that the life you want to live? A life of cynicism filters out all of the things that make life vibrant. If we expect the worst, we will be more likely to get the worst. Studies have been done where athletes were competing with one another and they were pretty well matched in terms of skill level. They told half of them that they were much more skilled than their opponent and could easily win. They told the other half that their opponent was much more skilled than they were and they would likely lose. Remember they were evenly matched in skill. Those who were told they would win were more likely to win and those who were told they would lose were more likely to lose. Now there is certainly more involved than expectations, you have to have the skills to succeed, but your believing that you can succeed is an important factor.

If we are going to make our lives better, if we are going to make our country, our world a better place, we need to believe that it is possible. We have to let go of the cynicism that is robbing us of our joy. We have to find God's peace, the faith and trust that God will help us through and we will ultimately be ok. We need to believe that love triumphs over hate. That hope is not foolish. Change is hard and sometimes we will suffer and struggle and even fail. But it is through our scars that we become more beautiful, more precious.