

Tell us, Thomas

A Eucharistic Meditation for the Feast of Saint Thomas

The Rev'd Mark D. Schultz

I

Tell us, Thomas.

Thomas, teach us.

Thomas, turn our hearts to Jesus.

No doubt it is as Doubter that you know me
though by that name I do not know myself.
Yet 'Thomas' was, I have to say, a joke
For twin it names me: twin to him, my Lord;
Though not by birth: a likeness seen when squinting
in uncertain light or at a distance.
My brothers, fellow 'postles, thought it funny
And I, so serious, I balk'd at first
Then laugh'd. But inwardly I made a vow:
I would not merely *seem* but *be* like him
And love like him and live like him and shine
Like him.

So Thomas, 'twin': my name by chance
But by God's grace it has become my nature.
And 'Thomas' is a prayer for you: that here
You may Behold that which you are and more:
Become what you behold: Love's Sacrament.

II

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When they told me he had risen, I was
Confus'd. Another joke, I thought, and cruel
and unbecoming: could not they, my friends
read all the depth of bitter heartbreak on
My downcast tear-worn sorrow-shadow'd face?
Were they so cold, insensate, stony hearted?
Liars! I cried, And I will not believe
'Til I have touch'd his wounds and pour'd out all
My grief at his sore-pierced feet, 'til then
There is no joy nor light nor peace for me:

My Lord my friend my love my all is dead.
But they, insistent, gently smil'd: Come see
and I: What could I do but go with them?
Perhaps, and here, a thought, not mine, occur'd
Perhaps there is an end to grief and death
cannot unmake the love that made the heart
And gave it beat, perhaps the faith that is
Itself the stuff of all that can be hop'd for
Can in my heart make such a home that love
Not lost, but living, be enthron'd. Perhaps...
I took my place within the upper room.

III

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If I could tell you just what happen'd next
Describe the feeling in the room and speak
Of how the Real Presence, presencing
Himself, appear'd to us, if I had words
To limn the humble Majesty, depict
The glorious Humility, those words
They still would not remotely be enough.
The doors were shut the windows clos'd but listen:
Whence does that gentle shining music come
The sound of yearning and fulfillment join'd
In one sweet chorus of abiding love
And sounding to the root of ev'ry heart
To grow in it a paradise of praise?
Whence is that trembling bright'ning breeze that wafts
From some unknown familiar place and seems
to beckon souls from sorrow's sleep and fan
weak faith to fullest flame?

And how could it

Be so that now with us there stands our Lord
Our Teacher, Jesus, looking like himself
Yet more himself than ever we did know?

You can, I hope, forgive me if I say:
I was afraid and ev'ry fiber of
My being sang within me Mercy, Lord!
And sang it with more confidence and joy
Than I could ever think was possible.
O friend o fellow child of grace e'en now
I hesitate to speak the wondrous scene.
No earthly flower's fragrance can compare
To those Thrice Blessed Blossoms whose perfume
infus'd that radiant air: of righteousness
The savor flowing from and wreathing round
The brilliant body of the Savior: Christ.
Is this the true humanity reveal'd?
Is this the shining edge of that Abyss
Of love which from the ages lay conceal'd
within the Father's joyous heart? Is this
the Dawn of that great depthless Mystery
Which neither ear nor eye hath heard nor seen?
The Word made Flesh in all his deathless glory
Wounded, Arisen, Reigning even now.
And Peace, he says, and suddenly before
me is my kindly smiling Friend.

'Look here,'

He says and gestures with his eyes to those
Still-wounded hands; 'And here,' a finger points
Unto his wounded side 'And touch,' he says
'The well of mercy, here, my Open Heart.'
My hand, full trembling, reaching out, was drawn
By his compassion on, 'Oh weep no more,'
He says, 'In hopelessness and grief, but lay
Your weight of sorrows down at my sore-pierced
Feet.'

How dare I touch the beating heart of
Ev'rything that's real? Or turning from
the Lord's command, refuse now to be heal'd?
What can I say but only this: 'twas not
So much that I could touch the Blazing Heart
Of all Eternity but that somehow
By grace alone Eternity touch'd me.

IV

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Onto my knees I fell and from my soul
a cry of deepest love upsurging rang:
My Lord, My God my spirit sang before
The Living One.

And you who here behold
Him now in unveil'd Sacramental splendor
I see you here through him with us in that
Bright Upper Room where ev'ry tear is wip'd
Away and ev'ry broken heart is mended:
The Resurrected Body of Our Lord
Cannot by time or space be bounded nor
Can height nor depth nor circumstance impede
The love on which the universe was founded.
And you see now what I saw then: the Lord's
Own condescending glory. Will you not
fall to your knees and make your own confession?
Will you not cry my Lord, my God, and ope
Your heart to his? Will you not lay your weight,
Your burden down at his sore-pierced feet?
O friend, my friend, become my twin and make
You here a vow—that seeing what you are
In Christ you may no longer seem but be:
A living Sacrament of Love Divine,
And with God's Real Present Glory lit
Your life, in his, with his, may brightly shine.

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