## Youth Sermon/Lesson: All Things New in the Resurrection

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"Going out of business Sale"

There is a legend that tells about the time that the Devil wanted to close up shop in one part of the world, and open it in another. A "going out of business sale" was announced. One of the first customers, a young girl, being quite fascinated with the various evil instruments on display, noticed that of all the "devil's tools", the highest priced one was called "doubt".

"Why is this so expensive?" she inquired.

"Quite simple," replied the devil. "It is my favorite tool. With the tool of "doubt", I can pry into almost anyone's life and cause all kinds of damage".

In the Gospel lesson on the Sunday after Pascha, one of the 12 Apostles has a moment of doubt. For a moment, the thought comes through Thomas' mind, and he can't fully put his trust in the Lord.

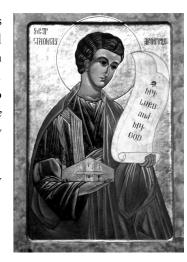
After the Resurrection of our Lord, Christ appeared to the Disciples. Thomas was not with them when Jesus came. The other Disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord". And that's when it happened . . . doubt enters Thomas' mind and he says, "unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe".

The other Disciples told Thomas of the Lord's appearance, but he couldn't believe. It wasn't until over one week later, when Thomas was with them in a house, when Jesus appeared to them again. After Jesus blessed the Disciples, He went to Thomas and told him to "put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing".

Thomas responds to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!"

How often does this happen to us?

How many times do we have moments of doubt?



How often do we say, "can this really be true?"

Doubt is something that is natural in all of us. But not all of us are going to have a great sign, like Thomas, to relieve us from our doubts. For most of us, we have to rely on our Faith. Doubt can be a tool of the devil or an opportunity to turn toward God. Faith means believing in something that we can't see (Hebrews 11:1).

Our Faith is a living Faith, it's a Faith based on experience: the Saints, the Martyrs, the relics we have in every altar table – the Orthodox Faith is anything but a blind faith. It is a living faith! It is a faith that renews us daily. Each Sunday we receive Communion – the body and blood of Christ – by receiving this Great and Awesome Gift – our Faith is renewed.

Doubting is not the worst thing in life — as long as we renew our Faith through it. Thomas renewed his faith with the words, "My Lord and My God". These words, "My Lord and My God" should be on our lips throughout our everyday lives: at home, school, at Starbucks, with our friends and even at the mall. These words, "My Lord and My God" should be a constant reminder that through our doubt, we can renew our Faith in our Lord. By renewing our life to Christ on a daily basis, by struggling to hold our faith, it is then that we can truly believe and act on God's call.

The devil will do everything in his power to get us to doubt Christ . . . he will do everything he can to take our focus off our Lord. He sets up shop all throughout the world . . . but the "things for sale" aren't based on truth . . . but rather, lies and deception.

Keep the Faith! Stay focused!

When you doubt, quickly re-affirm your Faith in our Lord with the words, "My Lord and My God". He will be there to take away the doubt, to remove the hurt, and most importantly, to renew your faith like the Apostle Thomas.

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For additional resources, visit the Youth Ministries website at www.youth.goarch.org.