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“Look at my hands and feet, that it is I myself” (Luke 24:39).

Acts 3:11-26; Luke 24:35-48

Luke’s lively appearance stories were composed some 50 years after the Christ Event from the oral witness tradition of a previous generation of believers. His Gospel is directed to his contemporaries, who were asking, as we do, just how *real* the resurrection was. So, after the Emmaus encounter between two disciples and a stranger who revealed himself as Jesus in the breaking of the bread, Luke describes a vivid and more explicit encounter with the other disciples, who at first think Jesus is a ghost.

No, Luke asserts, the crucified body of Jesus is the glorified body, recognizable because of the wounds in his hands and feet and in his familiar act of eating baked fish with them as he had done so often during their shared ministry. Jesus invites them to touch him and to receive his *shalom*, which dispels their fears and doubts. “It is I myself.”

If these details seem familiar, the fourth Gospel will develop them further in next Sunday's reading about Doubting Thomas, who demanded forensic proof of the resurrection before falling to his knees to worship Jesus as his "Lord and God." The response to those who doubt is the last beatitude recorded in the New Testament: "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed" (John 21:13).

We know by faith. How else can the Gospel become a present reality instead of a history lesson, or can Jesus of Nazareth come to us now as the timeless Christ instead of a line in the Apostles Creed? What makes the risen Christ real is that he is truly present today in the crucified and glorified members of his body in the world. If we do not believe this, then we have yet to encounter him in the wounds of the poor, the crucified of history, or in the ordinary saints all around us who serve them out of love for their Lord and God.

The eloquent ASL sign for Jesus is to touch each palm to recall the nail holes of his crucifixion. We make his hands our hands, his feet our feet as we take the Gospel into the world. To share his suffering is also to share his glory. This is how we show our Easter faith in action.

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