Unless we were there, would we believe it? I am talking about the amazing putts made by professional golfers at events like the Masters. Putting from forty feet away from the hole or chipping onto the green and making a shot cannot be believed unless it is seen. A friend can describe these shots in detail, but nobody would believe that any golfer could possibly hit the ball with just the right pressure and set it off in just the right direction to magically fall into the hole.

Thomas naturally had a hard time believing the news of the resurrection. Understand that Thomas lived before videos made on iPhone captured these moments. He demanded to see the Lord Jesus for himself. Jesus permitted Thomas a sign that is not possible for us.

Think about it. We have those iPhones today, so we can record for the future. Golfers in ten years will be able to see any amazing shots made in the 2021 Masters. On the other hand, we cannot return to the time of Jesus, two thousand years ago. Thomas and the other apostles got to see for themselves what we cannot. In this sense that Apostolic generation were the lucky ones. Perhaps for good reason, the Gospel according to John includes this wry comment from Jesus himself: Blessed are those who believe without seeing.

Those blessed ones include us. None of us, neither the Pope in Rome nor the newly baptized at our local parish church, has witnessed the resurrection bodily. It seems incredible then that Easter Faith has carried us this far. On faith alone, the generation following the Apostles and each succeeding generation has believed and passed on what it believed to others.

How well are we passing on our belief in the resurrection of the Lord? When we do pass along this faith, do others catch our passion or are we simply repeating the Creed? I mean if the resurrection transformed the lives of the apostles, are we thus transformed? The aftermath of the crucifixion left the apostles bereft and fearful for their safety. They were afraid to step out in public let alone talk about their Lord.

Martyrs like the Deacon Stephen willingly stepped outside in public and paid the ultimate price. Generations of martyrs paved the pathway for the church in their blood. This was perhaps the most prized era of Easter faith. It heartens me to see the dedication of our catechists at St. Rita and St. Luke. Our parents, with the aid of catechists and pastors, keep on giving our children the Easter faith, that Jesus is risen from the dead.

When our children are baptized, they are baptized into the death and resurrection of the Lord. When our students are confirmed, they are anointed with the gifts of the risen Lord. In First Holy Communion like this weekend at St. Luke, our children receive the Body of the Risen Lord. I am eager to add a framed photo to our collection on the wall at St. Luke. Honestly, this was one of the first things that caught my eye at St. Luke.

I would, however, much rather know that the children in our photos have grown up to become practicing Catholics. As parish leaders and parents, we serve our children and youth best by passing along the faith, the doctrines for example that we hold, and the practice of the faith, the daily prayer and weekly devotion on Sunday. In my vocation story to become a priest, I cite what my father did which had an impact on me in high school following confirmation. Saturday mornings, he would take me with him downtown to be at early morning Mass, and then he would wait for me to attend a practice of the Louisville Youth Orchestra or Louisville Youth Choir at the Youth Performing Arts Center.

Somehow, I say to parents, grandparents and parish leaders, we have to say or show why we are passionate about our faith. Our example of how Christians practice their faith may be just the sign a family member needs to believe too. This week a doctor was tragically killed by a home intruder, a senseless death. What got my attention was the reaction of the surviving members of the family. They were certain that those who died were with Jesus in the kingdom and better off.

That kind of faith cannot be explained, but we see how it transforms lives. Let us live today for the Lord whose presence we see in the Body of Christ we receive and eat. May the grace of Holy Communion make us confident that we are chosen for the fullness of life that only God can give.