Reading: John 20.19-31

**Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed** (John 20.29)

This Sunday = Low Sunday – numbers down? Coming off the high of Easter? Ministers away? Some churches would now brush Easter off and get down to ‘normal business’. They forget that Easter is the church’s *raison d’être.*

“Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” Ever wished you *were* there? Imagine it! Great?

[1] **Those Who Have Not Seen**

Firstly, who is it that are blessed? Those who have not seen. Us!

In Greek ‘see’ = also perceive/understand. Disciples in this sense did not ‘see’ straightaway at first Easter, not even women who fled the empty tomb. Even after Jesus appears they seem to be unable to grasp Easter; even after Pentecost; witness Paul trying to explain.

We wrestle with Easter, death/resurrection, trying to make sense of this. Some preachers will give impression they have got it sorted. They have ‘seen’. I am afraid I am still trying to understand.

Who are blessed? Those who have not seen! But *all* today have not seen. Are *all* today blessed? No.

[2] **And Yet Have Believed**

It was sometimes said that folk went off to Ministerial training believing, and came back having lost faith.

For some faith might have been lost, but what was usually lost was a kind of ‘certainty’. Is this bad?

Even Jesus lost a certain kind of certainty at Cross (My God, my God, why have *you* abandoned me?).

NB it is the Christian faith (not the Christian certainty)!

NB not same as unbelief, or ‘anything goes’, but simply running on faith.

NB not same as no basis for belief, but no proof. In *that* sense, no certainty.

So, I believe in Rn, but have no certainty about what happened. I believe Jesus is God but no certainty about what that truly means. I believe in Trinity, but do not understand how that operates.

It is not easy living with uncertainty, but in real sense, this is what faith actually is!

[3] **Being Blessed**

Why might I be blessed by *not* being there at first Easter? Sounds wrong.

In Deal or No Deal you get $500 for a correct guess. Some consolation prize. Is our blessing the same?

I think it is more positive. Somehow the quality that lives with uncertainty and keeps believing is good. How?
It means we do not insist on our own version of truth. It is one beggar telling another where to find bread.

It means a more mobile faith – we are pilgrims and nomads in this world. Quite exciting actually.

It is more attractive in a post-modern world – people around us are used to living with uncertainty.