

Reality television has certainly come a long way since MTV followed a bunch of college kids in a Winnebago around the country back in the late 1990s on the show *Road Rules*. One of the more disturbing reality shows that has surfaced lately is titled *Hoarders*. The show follows the struggles and treatment of individuals who suffer from compulsive hoarding. Oddly, it is in its sixth season. The episodes focus on what is called an “intervention,” which is where the “hoarder” is provided with a therapist and a professional cleaning team. As disturbing as the content is, the show debuted as the most-watched series premiere in A&E network history among adults aged 18 to 49.

Today is the eighth day of the Octave of Easter. Easter is such an important day in the Church calendar, that for one week plus one day, each of the days is treated as if it is still Easter. In the past, there were many feasts that had octaves - special eight day celebrations following the particular feast day - but in the current calendar, only Easter and Christmas continue to receive this special treatment. This Sunday carries many names: Divine Mercy Sunday, Sunday in White (Albis), Low Sunday, Quasimodo Sunday, and Doubting Thomas Sunday.

The readings during this whole past week concern the doubts and disbelief of not only Thomas, but all the other Apostles. These guys were hard-headed, and disregarded the evidence brought to them by the women who were at Jesus’ tomb, as well as anyone else who had seen the risen Lord.

Thomas gets the prize for being the longest holdout of all the Apostles as far as doubting goes. And when he persists in his disbelief for a week longer than the rest - despite the other Apostles desperately trying to convince him - Jesus intervenes.

It’s not difficult to understand how these men who were so close to Jesus during His earthly ministry could be so hard to convince.

They had followed him for three years; and during that time fought over who got to sit closest to the throne. They argued over who was the greatest among them; and even had their moms step in to try to sweet-talk Jesus into giving them preferential treatment. So, after watching Our Lord suffer brutal treatment at the hands of the religious leaders; after seeing Him handed over to the civil authorities for further abuse; and then watching Him die on a cross outside of the city gates - they figured it was all over. After all, don't we say "seeing is believing?"

Only when Jesus Himself comes to them - individually or in a group ... only after an intervention of the Son of God Himself - Jesus Christ risen and glorified - do the Apostles start to let go of the years of trash they had accumulated in their hearts and in their minds ... and begin to recognize first the reality of the risen Christ, and then the reality of not only His mission but also what that means as far as their own mission as Apostles.

For ourselves, we too have baggage cluttering up our minds and hearts. We too have seen or heard of the cruelty and brutality that invades our world - and even exists in our own Church. And we all are in need of the Divine Intervention of Jesus Christ to personally bring us to a deeper and stronger Faith ... so that we can embrace our own mission as both Apostles and as the children of God.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ; let us ask Our Lord for a personal intervention - to help us to sort through the baggage and the accumulated clutter that we all carry around - as a result of having to live in an imperfect and dysfunctional world. Let us also pray for a renewed outpouring of the Baptismal graces which we have already received. Let us pray that these graces be strengthened and refreshed; as we close out this Easter Octave and move forward in Faith ... into the Easter Season.