

FR. PETER'S HOMILY  
DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY 2024

3x Christ is risen! Indeed, he is risen!

In today's Gospel it is the evening of what we call Easter Sunday.

Ten of the apostles are hiding behind locked doors.

Judas has killed himself and we don't know where Thomas is.

Their leader and their friend, Jesus, has been put to death.

The apostles are afraid that the same thing might happen to them.

Suddenly, Jesus is standing in their midst, and says to them: "Peace be with you."

Then he shows them his hands marked with the wounds of crucifixion, and his side pierced by the soldier's lance.

He wants to assure them that he is the same Jesus who walked with them, taught them, and worked miracles in their presence.

Moreover, in the Resurrection, Jesus reveals that he has not cast off his human body but has glorified it.

His wounds remain as the sign of the depth of his love.

He suffered them out of mercy for the salvation of all who would believe in him.

Jesus has entered a locked room filled with fear, guilt, and doubt.

When he says, "Peace be with you," he is saying "I forgive you."

"I forgive you for abandoning me, for denying me, for not believing the words I spoke to you."

Through the presence of their Risen Lord, through the wounds that Thomas is invited to touch, the apostles experience the reconciliation they are being empowered to impart to others.

Jesus breathes upon them the Holy Spirit, the very life-breath of God.

Just as the Creator had breathed life into Adam, so Jesus breathed the new life of the Kingdom into his Body, the Church.

And just as Jesus invited Thomas to touch his wounds, so we encounter Jesus in the fruit of those wounds: the Sacraments.

The Gospel according to John is filled with some of the most powerful and memorable words spoken by Jesus, including those spoken to Thomas:

"Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

We are among those who have not seen the Risen Lord but believe in him and his presence among us.

Like the early Christians who believed in the power of Jesus working through the apostles ...

And like John, who experiences the presence of Jesus during the Liturgy celebrated on the Lord's Day ...

... we who gather to proclaim the death of the Lord and profess his resurrection, encounter Christ who brings us his peace ... the peace of his comfort, the peace of his mercy, his peace that gives us hope.

I want to encourage you to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet whenever you find yourself in need of forgiveness, comfort, or consolation.

That's what I find when I take 15 minutes out of my day to pray the Chaplet.  
Today our Lord renews his call to each of us to trust in God's mercy. No one is excluded from the power of Divine Mercy!

As Jesus told St. Faustina, "The greater the sinner, the greater claim they have upon my mercy."

Pope Francis has said, "Mercy is the name of God."

When we experience God's mercy, our faith will be renewed.

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