

Second Sunday Easter - John 20: 19-31 -- 28 Apr 19 – Divine Mercy heals and restores

Intro

Good Afternoon my brothers and sisters in Christ. **Happy Easter!**

When I was a student in second grade at St Mary's Elementary in 1964 , I remember approaching my teacher, Sister Andrew and asking her if I could change my name. After all, Thomas was a doubter and I had already known that doubt was not a good thing Sister Andrew was a 'gem' and assured me that I need not change my name, but if I could, what name would I pick, I said Dominic, because I thought all of the apostles were kind of messed up and I had to start fresh with St Dominic .

Body

Our gospel today starts on the evening of the Resurrection. It is the evening of the First day – Easter Sunday. I really enjoy the gospels, as you can see the humanity of the all the followers of Christ ... we get to see them as 'real' people who struggle – like us

So what has already happened? ... Lets go back to last week's gospel

Mary Magdalene was the first one to find the empty tomb, she runs to tell Peter and John, they go to see the empty tomb, no Jesus here, they leave and go back to the UR leaving Mary alone ... While Mary is alone, she sees Jesus and thought he was the gardener.

Mary is THE first to see the resurrected Jesus ..

for the second time she goes to find the apostles and says, I have seen the Lord .. so what do they do ...**nothingThey are stuck in that upper room Sounds like they are all lacking some faith right now**

So it is evening and it seems that Mary has all the initiative and joy at this point and the apostles are just stuck ... **there are not even looking for Jesus** , they are letting the morning pass into evening ... I guess they were waiting on Jesus (or Mary) to do something

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So now let's pick up at today's gospel

Jesus does appear to them and offers them Peace, Not worldly peace, but the word in Greek is an **inward deep spiritual serenity** that is not dependent on circumstances (the world)

So immediately Jesus shows the apostles his hands and his side ... It is to remove all doubt ...

THIS IS Truly THE LORD and not a ghost

For the second time, Jesus speaks **Peace to them** and then breathes on them (like Adam that receives new life from God) the apostles receive new life from Jesus ... they are given authority to forgive sins

Things are looking up for the apostles They have just received the gift of **Divine Mercy**

Let's talk for a minute about Divine Mercy

Remember the parable of the prodigal son ... when the Father sees his lost son, he does **NOT** say, **I love you in spite of your sins, and you are forgiven !**

Now Jesus sees his hand-picked 10 apostles that have been hiding out in this room all day. For this first time encounterit is equally important what **Jesus ' does not say '**

"O faithless and perverse* generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I endure you? (Matt 17:17) .

He spoke this after the disciples not able to cast out a demon out of a young boy ...Jesus chastises them because of their lack of Faith

But not todaySo Jesus acting like the father of the prodigal son, **does not condemn them, but goes one step farther,**

Jesus pours out His forgiveness and tells his disciples to follow his example

Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

Divine Mercy heals and restores except for one, Thomas.. We do not know the reason, but Thomas is not with the others

Let step back and look at Thomas In John 11 , Jesus was made aware that his friend Lazarus was ill and had passed away,

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So Thomas, said to his fellow disciples, “**Let us also go to die with him.** Some scholars suggest that Thomas was suggesting that all the disciples’ face death’,
either like ‘Lazarus ‘or like ‘Jesus’

Does not sound like someone who is lacking in faith ?

So now in less than two weeks, Peter who would never deny Jesus, John standing at the foot of the cross taking Mary as his mother and Thomas would was willing to die for the glory of God are all hiding in the upper room

What Happened?

Like all of us, all began to doubt, all began to feel alone, that when Jesus died, hope was lost, that the relationship that Jesus wanted with them is mired in their circumstance and lack of trust

Thomas misses the Lord’s visit.. Thomas is not convinced by his brothers’ testimony and declares that he will only believe if he can touch Jesus

Have you ever been so down in the pit that you can’t accept good news? The rest have been forgiven, but Thomas believes he has missed his chance

But Thomas gets his day, but he must wait for seven more days for Jesus to return.

Jesus acting like the father of the prodigal son, **does not condemn Thomas**, but Jesus pours out His divine Mercy on Thomas; to which Thomas responds “

My Lord and My God “

Then Jesus asked the question, Have you come to believe because you have seen me?

Then Jesus adds a commentary directed to us,

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

The Lord calls those blessed who believe without seeing

The apostles’ faith in the Resurrection was born under **divine grace** from a personal contact with the risen Jesus ; Thomas is given the opportunity to be our representative who obtains this hard evidence, **that the Jesus who was raised is the same Jesus who had died**

Closing

Isn't it appropriate this is Divine Mercy Sunday? What is Divine Mercy Sunday ?

St. Faustina 1905-1938, was a poorly educated daughter of a humble Polish family, kept a 600-page diary of the apparitions of Jesus she claimed continued for years.

Her entries focus on :

- God's mercy,
- the call to accept God's mercy ,
- to be merciful,
- the need for conversion,
- The call to trust in Jesus.

On May 5, 2000, five days after the canonization of St. Faustina, the Vatican decreed that the Second Sunday of Easter would henceforth be known as Divine Mercy Sunday .

Please join us Sunday afternoon to celebrate the Gift of Divine Mercy at 3 PM that Jesus offered Thomas and his brothers – is offered freely to us and is liberating

When I was a student in third grade at St Mary's Elementary in 1965 , as I was preparing to receive my first Holy Communion , I was taught by Sister Modesto that when Father was to elevate during the consecration of the Body and Blood of Christ , that I was to repeat as a profession of Faith, using the words of St Thomas

My Lord and my God

So my prayer for you , is that like Thomas ,

**May your faith in the risen Lord grow stronger each day by your trust in Jesus,
fueled by the grace of Jesus' love and forgiveness found in His Divine Mercy.**

Christ is calling you to love and forgive others as he has done for you and I

Amen