

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER (DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY). (2022)
THE LOCKED DOORS:

The second Sunday of Easter, which is today, is also known as ***Divine Mercy Sunday***. Our readings talk so much, emphasizing the institution of the sacrament of Reconciliation. The overall themes present in the readings are ***forgiveness, locked doors, scars, Doubting Thomas, peace, commissioning, and the Holy Spirit***. All of these can greatly help each one of us in connecting the actual physical Resurrection and believing in Jesus Christ not only in **vision but also in the Living Word**.

Jesus Christ established his Church not among the **angels, but upon weak human beings here on earth and not in heaven**. What a privilege for all us to be in that Church using the very **talents, time, and treasure** He has given us to work in His Church here on earth. In consolation He tells us that we are not alone, He is with us... ****Behold I am with you till the end of the world****. He gives that assurance still that **His Grace is enough for us**. The remedy for human weakness is the ***Institution of the sacrament of Reconciliation in today's Gospel***. It is in God's Presence in this sacrament that we see the **forgiving merciful God** (extended to all through His loving grace).

His first followers, the apostles, were all very human. They ate with Him, they drank with Him, they saw Him person to person... **They saw Him working miracles, healing, and curing the sick...they saw Him raising the dead...they witnessed Him multiply the loaves of bread and fish...yet when they heard**

about His Resurrection in spite of all that they experienced they **doubted him**.

This is clearly seen after his Resurrection when Jesus appeared to them as they hid behind closed doors, windows, and walls afraid of the Jews outside. He appeared to them showing His **glorified body** for all to behold, so they could see that He overcame all obstacles, even the obstacle of death...yet they still doubted. He retained the physical **scars** He received during His passion from the crucifixion,...and after His Resurrection, the scars still showed similar to how a birthmark does, despite being a **transformed, exalted, and glorified body**.

This is what Jesus showed his apostles as a sign that He is indeed the same **Christ who was crucified**. This is what Thomas wanted proof of. ****unless I have seen in his hands the print of the nails, and put my fingers in the marks of his side, I will not believe (Jn. 20:24).***

After eight days there is a shift from **unbelief to belief**. ****Put your finger here and see my hands, stretch out your hand and put it on my side (Jn.20:27).*** This prompted proclamation of faith from Thomas, ***“My Lord and my God!”(Jn.20:28).***
****Happy are those who have not seen and believe (Jn. 20:31).***

Thomas then became a bridge of those who have seen Christ in person and those who have not seen him except by Word. Are we not among those who have not seen yet we believe in Him especially through the **Sacraments** and His **Word**?

*****The sight of Jesus in vision may not save us, but faith and trust in Him will.**

Divine Mercy Sunday has a lot in store for us as followers of Jesus in this world. The first reading shows us the solidarity of the believers, their unity in being together. The apostles did their part by preaching and curing the sick and being in unity, this is where the Risen Lord appeared to them. Whether or not it was their fear of the Jews that bonded them together, they were indeed united.

The risen Lord appeared to them and gave them what they desperately needed through His Peaceful Presence with the very words, ****Peace be with you (Jn.20.19).*** Next came the ***commissioning, *As the father has sent me so I send you (Jn.20:21),...*** culminating as He breathed on them giving them the **Holy Spirit** for strength and for the **institution of the sacrament of Reconciliation. *For those sins you forgive are forgiven and for those sins you retain are retained.**

Christ is present among us in many ways and especially in the sacraments He has given us,...given to help us to believe and have faith in Him,...though we have not seen Him we believe in Him, not only in **vision but in word.**

-Baptism- Christ calling new disciples.

-Confession- Forgiveness of sins and equipping us with grace.

-Eucharist- Food for the journey.

-Confirmation- Strength for a particular mission.

-Ordination- Transmitting His priesthood to ordinary men.

-Marriage- Creating a permanent bond of unity for two people.

-Anointing of the Sick- Bringing comfort, strength, and healing as we prepare for the transitional ending of our physical life here on earth.

WHAT A MARVELLOUS PRESENCE OF THE RISEN LORD AMONG HIS PEOPLE TO THIS TIME!?