

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

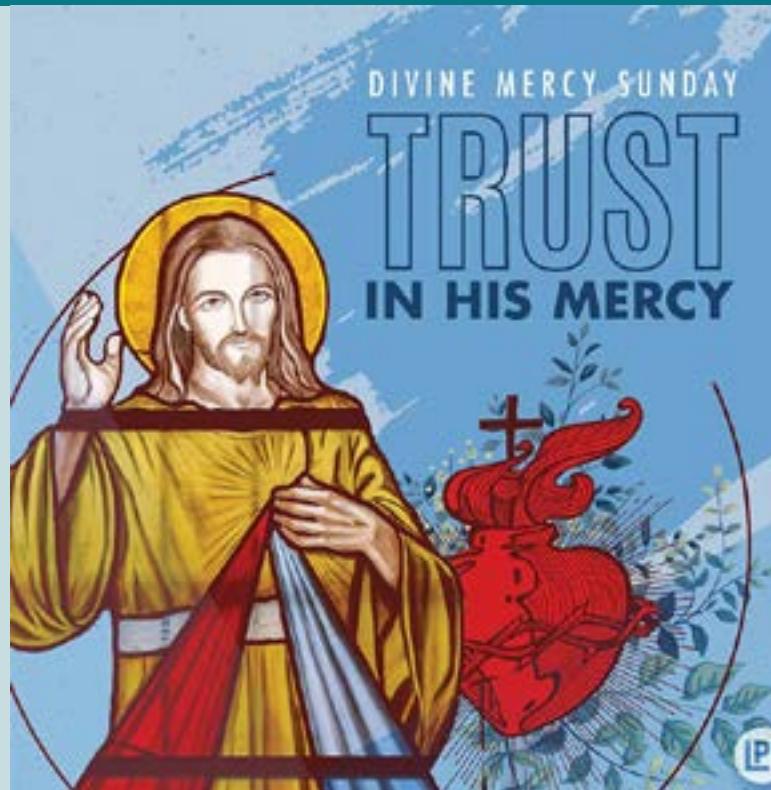
2nd Sunday of Easter — Sunday of Divine Mercy | For Sunday, April 24, 2022

The Divine Mercy of Jesus

Written by Allison Gingras

Acts 5:12-16

**Revelations 1:9-11a,
12-13, 17-19
John 20:19-31**



Sometimes, it may be hard to remember that we live in Jesus' victory over sin and death, we are not waiting on it. And we, who have not seen and yet believe, are truly blessed (John 20:29), as Jesus so compassionately proclaims to Thomas in [today's Gospel](#).

Jesus showed his Apostles great mercy, even after they abandoned him in his greatest hour of need, running and hiding in fear — only St. John the Evangelist (along with some of the women) remained and stood at the foot of the cross. However, Jesus' greeting as he stands among the Apostles is not a chastisement but instead, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19). Jesus demonstrates the limitless power of his mercy as he breathes the Spirit upon them, conferring the authority to forgive sins. In yet another way, fulfilling the words spoken as Jesus washed their feet, "For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).

St. Thomas, sometimes called "Doubting Thomas," is the only Apostle missing during this incredible encounter with the Risen Christ. He struggles to believe, he requires signs and wonders, physical evidence to open his eyes to the Truth. Is that not still true today, a world so suspect of everyone and everything they struggle to believe? However, unlike Thomas, who proclaimed "My Lord and My God," when Christ reveals himself, so many people find temporal explanations to keep them from embracing the Savior they so desperately

need — who longs to be in communion with them. Although something entirely without explanation, save a heavenly one, will occur, and maybe they entertain the idea of God for a moment, then, like the seed in the Parable of the Sower ([Matthew 13](#)), they foolishly allow any glimmer of hope to be blown away, devoured, scorched, or withered.

In [Acts 5](#), the Apostles “heal many.” And while the sick will always long for physical healing, it is the work of spiritual healing that is truly miraculous. No matter how many times the sick are made well, eventually, death will come. At that moment, it is Jesus’ mercy, as shown to the Apostles in the Upper Room, we all long to receive. Even the most fervent follower of Christ will fail, gratefully, God’s love never does!

In the [Catechism of the Catholic Church \(699\)](#), “Jesus heals the sick and blesses little children by laying hands on them. In his name, the Apostles will do the same.” Even more pointedly, today, that same power flows through our bishops and priests (and deacons), through the imposition of hands, as they continue the work of Jesus and his Apostles, “this visible sign, from the New Testament onward, is the imposition of hands” ([see LG 21](#)).

We experience this spiritual healing most profoundly through the Sacrament of Confession (also referred to as the Sacrament of reconciliation, conversion, penance, and forgiveness). In Confession, the priest sits “In persona Christi,” a Latin phrase meaning “in the person of Christ.” Here, we encounter Christ in a real and personal way, to be cleansed of our iniquities and strengthened with the grace to go forth and sin no more. Although we will fall again, the grace that we receive in the sacraments empowers us to resist temptation and seek God over the things of this world, even if it’s just for a little while. Made right with God through this sacrament, we experience an outpouring of God’s mercy.

Sadly, 2000 years later, even the faithful seem to diminish the wonder and awe of Jesus’ life, death, and Resurrection. We fail to take advantage of the abundant graces that flowed from his side that dark afternoon on Calvary. Instead of emerging into the light of Easter, we continue to choose darkness — stuck on Good Friday because of sin. We can start living our heaven now because if we wait for it, we may miss the opportunity altogether.

PRAYER

Come Holy Spirit,
inspire my heart to seek the mercy
Jesus won for me during His Passion.
Help me to live in the light of Easter,
and to cast aside all darkness and doubt.
May I be counted among the blessed
who do not see, yet believe!

Allison Gingras