

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER *(Sunday of Divine Mercy)*

Easter is a season of resurrection, but those of us impacted by another person's addiction know that new life rarely begins with feelings of relief or resolution. More often, it begins in fear, confusion, and the painful realization that we cannot fix what is broken. Many of us spent years trying to manage, control, or rescue someone we love. We may have believed that if we just tried harder, said the right thing, or held everything together, things would change. Even after beginning our own recovery, we may still carry a quiet question: Can mercy really reach this situation? Divine Mercy Sunday meets that question with the presence of the risen Christ.

This Sunday's gospel reading brings us into a locked room where the disciples are gathered in fear after the crucifixion. Jesus does not wait for them to have clarity or confidence. He comes to them as they are and speaks peace into their uncertainty (John 20:19-23):

Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them."

The peace that Jesus offers does not depend on changed circumstances. The disciples are still living in a dangerous and uncertain world, yet Christ meets them in the middle of it. Many of us long for peace that comes from external change—a loved one's sobriety, restored trust, or stability at home. While those are good and meaningful desires, recovery teaches us that peace begins within. It begins when we stop trying to control what we cannot and allow God to meet us where we are.

The wounds that Jesus reveals are not hidden or erased. They are transformed. In our own lives, the wounds caused by another person's addiction may include broken trust, emotional exhaustion, or years of uncertainty. These wounds are real, and they deserve to be acknowledged. Recovery does not ask us to pretend they do not exist. Instead, it invites us to bring them into the light, where God can begin to transform them.

Step One helps us accept our powerlessness over another person's choices. This can feel like loss at first, but it is also the beginning of freedom. When we release the illusion of control, we make space for God's grace to enter. We begin to focus on our own healing, our own relationship with God, and our own daily choices.

The message of Divine Mercy reminds us that God's love is not limited by the complexity of our situation. Through the simple prayer, "Jesus, I trust in you," we are invited to place our loved ones, our fears, and our future into God's care. This trust often grows slowly. We may find ourselves returning to it again and again, especially when anxiety rises or old patterns resurface.

Like the apostle Thomas, we may struggle to believe without seeing change. We may want proof that things will get better. Yet Jesus meets Thomas in his doubt and invites him closer. In the same way, God meets us in our uncertainty. We do not need perfect faith to begin. We only need willingness.

Recovery also shows us that our experience can benefit others. As we grow in serenity and honesty, we become a source of encouragement for others walking a similar path. We learn to share not from a place of control, but from humility and trust.

Divine Mercy Sunday reminds us that no situation is beyond God's reach. The same Jesus who entered a locked room enters the places in our lives that feel stuck or unresolved. He brings peace, offers mercy, and invites us to trust. As we continue this journey, we are not alone. We are walking with the One who restores hope in ways we could not have imagined.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you noticed yourself trying to control or fix a situation that is beyond your power?
- What does trusting God with your loved one's life look like for you right now?
- How has your experience helped you grow in compassion or support for others?

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Acts 2:42-47

RESP. PS. Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

SECOND READING 1 Peter 1:3-9

GOSPEL John 20:19-31