

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

Easter is a season of resurrection, but those of us in recovery know that new life rarely begins with feelings of triumph. More often, it begins in fear, confusion, and the painful awareness that we cannot save ourselves. Many of us entered recovery after exhausting every strategy we could think of. We hid behind locked doors of secrecy, denial, resentment, or shame. Even after taking meaningful steps toward healing, we may still carry a quiet question within us: Can mercy really reach this part of me? 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 become ready. 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 first thing Jesus offers is not correction or instruction, but peace. He does not ignore what has happened, nor does he pretend the wounds are gone. Instead, he shows them his hands and his side. The marks of suffering remain, but they are no longer signs of defeat. They have become signs of mercy. This is at the heart of both Easter and recovery. Our wounds do not disappear, but through God's grace, they can be transformed.

Many of us carry wounds from our addiction, compulsion, or unhealthy attachments. Some are visible in broken relationships or consequences we cannot undo. Others

are internal, shaped by shame, regret, and the fear that we are beyond repair. In recovery, we begin to take small, honest steps toward God—admitting our powerlessness, acknowledging our need for help, and becoming willing to change. What we discover is that God's mercy meets us there, not after we have everything figured out, but right in the middle of our imperfection.

The message of Divine Mercy reminds us that God's love is not cautious or limited. Through Saint Faustina, the Church has been given the simple and profound prayer: "Jesus, I trust in you." This trust does not come easily for many of us. We have trusted ourselves, other people, substances, or compulsive behaviors to fix what we could not control, only to be disappointed. Learning to trust God is often a gradual process, shaped by daily surrender rather than a single decision.

The apostle Thomas represents a part of the human experience that many in recovery understand well. He struggles to believe without seeing. He wants proof, something tangible to hold onto. When Jesus appears again, He does not reject Thomas for his doubt. Instead, He invites him closer. Mercy makes room for our questions, our hesitation, and even our resistance. Over time, as we continue to show up in prayer, meetings, and honest conversation, trust begins to grow.

Recovery also reveals that we are not meant to keep this mercy to ourselves. Just as the disciples are sent out, we are invited to share what we have received. We do this not by presenting ourselves as perfect, but by being honest about where we have been and how God is working in our lives today. In a very real way, our willingness to share our experience becomes a channel of mercy for others.

Divine Mercy Sunday is a reminder that no part of our story is beyond redemption. The same Jesus who entered a

locked room now enters the places in our lives that remain closed off. He brings peace, offers mercy, and invites us to trust. As we continue on this path of recovery, we are not walking alone. We are walking with the One who has overcome death and who continues to transform wounds into sources of hope.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you experienced God meeting you in a place where you felt closed off, afraid, or stuck in your recovery?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What does trusting in God's mercy look like for you in this season of your life?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How are you being invited to share your experience, strength, and hope as a way of extending mercy to 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