

Sunday of Divine Mercy



We have experienced agony in our lust addictions and sexual compulsions, only to be offered resurrection through willingness and mercy. We were saved and called to share with men who suffer. We show our wounds to the newcomer, to the stagnate old timer, and to the complacent member on thin ice. We offer ourselves, our histories of self-obsession, our isolation and pain, and, most importantly, our resurrection.

Our Lord gave Saint Faustina a set of prayers to invoke his mercy known as the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. One prayer includes: "Eternal Father, I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins, and those of the whole world." The Chaplet of Divine Mercy is a helpful way to reemphasize God's plan of mercy for us and the world.

Through recovery from addiction, we get a unique chance to witness our small acts of repentance be met with God's mercy for us. When these two forces meet, spiritual growth takes place. Saint Augustine summarized this by suggesting we "pray as if everything depended on God and work as if everything depended on us."

The Church recognizes the Second Sunday of Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday. This day concludes what is known as the Easter Octave and calls us to rejoice in the merciful love of God as it is revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Gospel Reading this Sunday testifies to the peace that Jesus brings into our lives, overcoming fear and uncertainty:

*On the evening of that first day of the week,
when the doors were locked, where the disciples
were, for fear of the Jews,
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.
The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.
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,
and whose sins you retain are retained."*

After Jesus' crucifixion, his disciples were hiding out hoping they wouldn't be next. When Jesus arrived, he simply offered a word of peace, showed the wounds of his death, and reminded them that they are to be sent out into the world. However, they will not be alone as the power of the Holy Spirit—which dwells in us today—will be their advocate.

We can find comfort in the support from others who have been in a similar situation and testify to the presence of God and good news in their lives today. In a very Christian way, we gain trust when we are privileged to see the wounds of those in our fellowship. With the witness of others, we can align with the spirit of Divine Mercy and proclaim, "Jesus, I trust in You."

Reflection Questions

- How have you experienced Jesus through the process of other people showing you their wounds and testifying to the good news?
- What is it like for you to share honestly and openly in a Christian fellowship?
- What *daily conversions*—actions, prayers, devotions, or spiritual routines—strengthen your trust in God on a regular basis?

Peace and Easter Blessings

We wish all members of the Catholic in Recovery community a very blessed Easter. It is a gift to journey together as God's beloved children, and together we pronounce the Resurrection of our Lord to all who seek freedom from the grip of addiction. May you and your family live as Easter people and know that freedom and new life await us all!

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Acts 5:12-16

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

Second Reading: Revelations 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

Gospel: John 20:19-31