

A LETTER FROM FATHER DANIEL CARUSO

4/17/2020

Dear Friends,

This weekend we mark the Octave of Easter. Since last Sunday the Church has celebrated each day as if it were Easter Sunday itself; everyday filled with the proclamation of the Resurrection of Jesus and the Hope that is ours because He Has Risen.

Our Gospel reading this Sunday (John 20: 19-31) begins on the evening of the first Easter. Jesus appears to the disciples in the locked room and He bestows His peace upon them. The Apostle Thomas was not with them at the time. When he returns, the disciples tell him that they have seen Jesus, but Thomas refuses to believe. He tells them “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

Thomas was one of the Twelve, one of those closest to Jesus. He had spent three years following Jesus; He had heard Jesus talk about how He would suffer, die, and be raised up; he knew the people that were witnessing to him; but none of that was sufficient. Thomas was obstinate in his unbelief. Jesus, however, shows that He is always there to give us what we need to strengthen our Faith. On the following Sunday, Jesus once again appears to the disciples in the locked room. He bestows His peace on the disciples and then He turns to Thomas and says “Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.” This leads Thomas to make a profession of Faith, “My Lord and My God!”

It is not uncommon for us to follow the example of Thomas. Too often we are obstinate in our unbelief; refusing to open our hearts to the witness of those who have experienced the Risen Lord in their lives; refusing to hear His Holy Word. And yet, Jesus does not abandon us when we show a lack of Faith. Just like He does for Thomas, He will give us what we need in order to believe.

This Sunday is also Divine Mercy Sunday. In the image of the Divine Mercy which was revealed to St. Faustina, underneath the image of Jesus appear the words: “Jesus, I Trust in You”. Trust is at the heart of Faith, at the center of Belief. In the past, we have fallen into the trap of placing our trust in ourselves, in other people, in the world in which we find ourselves, failing to ultimately place our Trust in Jesus. I truly believe that the Lord is using all that is taking place around us to invite us to place our Trust in Him. He is the one who can save us; He is the one who lets us start over; He is the one who brings us true peace. He is there to show us His Mercy.

I pray that at this time of crisis, when the “truths” that we based our lives on have all proven inadequate, that we will realize that the one Truth that remains constant, that is always

there, is the Truth of God's Love for us in Christ Jesus. Having been, like Thomas, unbelieving in the past, may we take the opportunity the Lord is offering us to start over, to experience His peace, to be wrapped in His Mercy, to proclaim with our hearts, our voices, our lives: "My Lord and My God!"

You are all in my prayers as we continue our Easter journey; please pray for me.
In The Peace of the Risen Lord, Fr. Caruso