**“Divine Mercy”**

Today is the second Sunday of Easter and we are also celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday. God who created all things, has filled the world with His mercy. In His mercy, He sent His only begotten Son to come and redeem the world. It is through His mercy that we are saved. Because we receive mercy from God, we are expected to show mercy to others, just as God shows mercy to us.

In our first reading. We heard about how the early Church lived by showing mercy to all. They lived with one heart and one belief. They lived by being generous with each other. They lived in a way that says to others that whatever they had, did not belong to them. They learned from the teachings of the Apostles that all things belong to God.

So they shared whatever they had with others who did not have. They learned from the teachings of the Apostles that our Lord, in His mercy, gave Himself up as the sacrificial Lamb to the Father for our redemption. Because of this, we are to proclaim His death until He comes again.

In His mercy, He left us His body and blood in the Eucharist as a reminder of that sacrifice. So that every time we re-present His **“once for all”** perfect sacrifice of Calvary to His Father, we also eat His body and drink His blood in the Eucharist. When we do this, we are strengthened by His grace and we receive remission of our venial sins.

The Apostles’ desire was to eat this sacrifice of mercy daily in the breaking of the bread. They knew it is a priceless gift from God. They longed and thirst for it and they were rewarded by God with unquenchable fire in their hearts to receive this life giving grace from God. God rewarded them by giving His gift of faith to many others so that the numbers of the elect continued to grow.

We who are in the Catholic Church are blessed to be able to receive this same Gift as the Apostles did every day or whenever we so desire. The Church has continued to keep the same desire to gather together as a community of faith as the early Church did. The Church as kept these teachings of the Apostles going, and will keep them going until the end of time by offering daily Mass so we can receive the true body and blood of the risen Christ.

On Sundays, we come to Mass and demonstrate our mercy, by sharing part of the gift God in His mercy has given us with those who do not have as much as we do. We do this by putting with love, part of the gift God has given us as offerings or collection. The Church then distribute our offerings, as needed to others who are in need and to maintain the services of the Church.

In our second reading, St. Peter in his first letter to the community of faith, tells us that we have received the gift of mercy by being born again when we were baptized. He reminds us that the grace that comes from our baptism is only possible because of the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary and because of His resurrection. By remaining His faithful followers, we will share in the imperishable inheritance His Father has prepared for us in heaven.

St Peter reminds us that though we might have to suffer in this life, we should keep our eyes on the reward which has been prepared for us by our Father. Peter tells us that when we suffer for Christ, as Christ Himself tells us in the Beatitudes, we should rejoice because we are being blessed with more perfect faith in God. Our suffering would lead to glory and honor for us on the last day. Our faith is our belief in Christ and all He taught us through His Apostles.

In our Gospel reading, we come across the man who has been enshrined in a phrase we are all too familiar with, ***“doubting Thomas.”*** Thomas went through trial in his faith. He doubted the resurrection of Christ even though he was told by ten other Apostles that they had seen the Lord. Thomas’ faith was lukewarm in his believe of Jesus’ teaching about His Paschal Mystery.

To those ten Apostles, Thomas’ obstinate in doubting his brothers would have been unbelievable; because in the Jewish culture, when two people tell the same story you are supposed to believe what they say as truth. To have ten people tell the same story and you refused to believe them, would be beyond their comprehension.

But Jesus in His mercy forgave Thomas. Jesus came the next Sunday, and told Thomas not only to see, but to verify by touching His wounds of our salvation. Some Theologians wondered why Christ was resurrected with His five wounds!?I would venture to say, it was because of Thomas and people like him. People who would doubt that He has risen. In response, Thomas acknowledged Jesus as **“My Lord and my God.”**

However, Jesus in His mercy, brought greater good out of one man’s doubt. He blessed all those who have not seen the resurrected Christ but believe in His resurrection and His Gospel. We who are His militant church on earth, are recipient of this blessing. As our Mother Mary said, **“His mercy is for those who fear Him.”**

Today we also celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. Through Sr. Faustina, Jesus asked that the first Sunday after Easter be reserved for His unfathomable Divine Mercy. St Mary Faustina Kowalska was born on 25 August 1905 in Poland. She died at the age of 33 in 1938.

She prayed this part of prayer to Jesus; ***"0 my Jesus, each of your saints reflects one of your virtues; I desire to reflect your compassionate heart, full of mercy.”*** Jesus also gave her this simple prayer for us who believe to pray, "***Jesus, I trust in you.”***

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask for more of His mercy so we too can be merciful.

“Today bring to Me souls who have become lukewarm… These souls wound My heart the most painfully. My Soul suffered the most dreadful loathing in the garden of Olives because of lukewarm souls… For them, the last hope of salvation is to run to My Mercy.”

