

Divine Mercy or Second Sunday Y.A. 16th April 2023.

Today is the Second Sunday of Easter, it marks the Feast of the Divine Mercy, as instituted by Pope St. John Paul II in the Year 2000, based on the visions of the Divine Mercy by St. Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun who received visions and experienced the Lord's Divine Mercy, all that He had done offering Himself, Body, Soul and Divinity for the salvation of the whole world. The Divine Mercy novena which began on Good Friday ends today. Throughout the period, we reflect on the mercy which God shows to the world by sending his only son Jesus Christ.

Out of curiosity, I checked the Greek meaning of Mercy, *Eleos*: (Compassion, Pity, goodwill or kindness toward the miserable and afflicted). In the NT Matthew said, I desire mercy and not sacrifice (9:13). Mercy is key in today's Liturgy.

In our first reading, we see the power of the risen Lord at work in the life of disciples, many came to believe, and the manifestation was seen through the miraculous healing of those who were sick, and all those with an unclean spirit. Hence in the second reading, Peter proclaimed; blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and the psalmist proclaimed: give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

In the gospel reading, He appears to his timid disciples, to let them know he is alive, to restore their faith, and to give them peace. That's why he said, "peace be to you" and to empower them spiritually, He breathed on them saying: "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Today we cannot but appreciate the power of resurrection, it brings healing and peace to our body and soul. As Jesus reappeared to the disciples, he keeps appearing to us through the Eucharistic celebration, like the disciples, if we are attentive, he shall be there to strengthen us on our journey, to heal us of our sickness, to protect us in our trouble world and to grant us his mercy.

It's no doubt, our world needs mercy, healing, forgiveness, cleansing and peace! Our journey to the kingdom may not be possible without the mercy of God; Since God has offered himself to show compassion by being kind to us, we should not hesitate to grab the opportunity.

When he breathed on the apostles and by extension to we, His followers. "Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit", he has commissioned us to bring mercy, healing and peace to our world that is full of corruption, injustices and suppression. It's a lack of

all these qualities that we hear people at war; How can we enjoy the mercy of God if we are not merciful to one another?

Beloved, on this Sunday of Divine mercy we are called once again to reflect on the joy of Easter which brings about the mercy of God to humanity, also we are called to focus on Jesus' words: the disciples were living in fear because they lose focus, and Thomas doubted the resurrection of Jesus for lack of believed. There is a tendency to accuse Thomas of being doubted: doubts are a normal part of life. Thomas' doubt is a ***constructive*** one: it searches sincerely for a deeper understanding, is open to new ideas and other points of view. What is wrong is a ***destructive*** doubt: which is rebellious in nature, rejecting authority and having little respect for the beliefs in question. Here the intent is to get rid of beliefs rather than to gain a new understanding of them, to destroy rather than discover.

Many of us doubted the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, therefore, we do not value Christ let alone introduce Christ to others. Since Alleluia is our song this Easter period, let's all rejoice like the Apostle when they saw Jesus. I wish all of you a happy Divine Mercy Sunday.

Peace,

Fr. Jingbe Simon