Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

In each Eucharist we celebrate the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus who has wanted to stay with us on the Altar every Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. Every Eucharist and every Sunday is the Merciful Easter of Christ who stays with us. So why does the Church names today, Friday the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus?

Today’s Feast gives us the opportunity to reflect on the consequences of the three days of the Paschal Mystery, which we observed Holy Week. Today we consider the great act of salvation from this side of the Resurrection.

God so loved the world that he sent his only Son, not to condemn us, but that we might have life. After the Resurrection, how do we experience risen life and our human frailty?

Today’s feast encourages us to remember that although we are sinners and deserve punishment, God loves us and pours out his mercy upon us. A merciful Heart that embraces us. A merciful Heart that fills us and leaves us in a state not of condemnation, but in a transformed state as new creations.

We only have to look back at Good Friday to see that mercy comes at a great price. In today’s feast, we are initiated to meditate on how can the pierced Sacred Heart of Jesus help our community to be a place of mercy, compassion and rest for our life and the life of our brothers and sisters?

The sacred wounds are a permanent mark on Christ, even in his glorified body. When Jesus beckons Thomas to place his hand in the wound where the soldier thrust his spear, Thomas is moved to an act of Faith, My Lord and my God.

The wounds of Christ show us all he suffered for us. But it doesn’t appear that God counts the cost of his wounds, rather he counts the souls that are saved by them. God’s mercy not only overcomes sin but is a perennial invitation to face the difficulties and trials that mankind will experience in the years to come. Our expectation of God’s mercy strengthens our faith.

The spirituality of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus revels to us an open heart pouring out his mercy and love. This image elicits to all of us the memory of the apparition to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, three hundred years ago. Jesus exposed his wounded heart and asked the French nun to consecrate her life to repair that wounded heart. He asked the saint to encourage Christians seeking holiness to enthrone an image of the Sacred Heart in their homes.

After meditating on the sufferings of Holy Week, we may be convinced that justice and mercy are in opposition. Rather, Thomas Aquinas asserted that divine mercy complements divine justice. While there ARE clear standards of right and wrong the merciful scars of Jesus do not wipe out justice; they transfigure it.

The wounded heart of Jesus is a reality, but the wounded heart of Jesus, overflowing and outpouring mercy, is a lesson we need to learn over and over. Mercy proceeds from the heart of love. Justice and mercy are complementary, qualities that work together to create the greatest possible good. After the Resurrection we are called not to absolute justice but to merciful love for one another.

Jesus, I trust in you. Have mercy on us and on the whole world.