



ANNUNCIATION CHURCH

"As the father sent me, so I send you."

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SECOND SUNDAY OF

Easter

(OR SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY)

APRIL 19, 2020

Jesus said to Thomas,
"Have you come to believe because you have seen me?
Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

John 20:29

Poor Thomas. Singled out from among the disciples because he refused to believe what they were telling him—that they had seen, in the flesh, their friend and their Lord, Jesus Christ. Can any of us really blame him? All of the disciples were terrified, crestfallen, hiding. But what of Thomas? Just where was he when Jesus appeared the first time to the group huddled in fear? He had gone “out”—out of the community where his faith had life. Maybe this was actually a blessing for Thomas and not the curse associated with the “doubting Thomas” moniker bestowed on him by tradition. Oh, the divine mercy of the Lord! Could Thomas be the forerunner of all of us who come in fragile hope and uncertainty to the Christian community, so beautifully described in the reading from the Acts of the Apostles? Could Thomas be an ultimate exemplar of the faith described in the First Letter of Peter?

YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN THERE!

Most of us have had the misfortune of missing something important simply by being absent, and then hearing about what happened. In today's reading, unique to John's Gospel, Thomas is the only apostle who was not around when Jesus appeared to his friends for the first time after his death and resurrection. They were frightened and grieving, not knowing what would happen to them. Remember, they found themselves to be fugitives, seemingly guilty by association with a criminal executed by government officials. Suddenly, Jesus was with them, beaming peace and mercy to his fragile fol-

lowers. What joy! What a shock, too!

We will never know why Thomas had left their hiding place. All we know is that he returned to wild stories about Jesus being alive after dying a brutal death. He must have thought that the other apostles in their grief had a shared delusion of what they wished were true. When Thomas finally saw Jesus, he gave what is considered the most profound profession of faith: “My Lord and my God!” In his tender mercy, Jesus ministered to Thomas by helping him to see for himself.

WE WALK BY FAITH

But what of us? The early Christian community could only trust the words of these same apostles, the ones Thomas couldn't believe, when they preached Jesus Christ risen from the dead. Who could believe what they said? The Holy Spirit, breathed upon the disciples in that first encounter, emanated so powerfully from them that they were able to convene seemingly utopian communities of faith. Filled with “divine mercy,” their lives became an evangelization to the world.

And this is how we too are sent out, like the disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit and bearing the Lord's peace and mercy to a troubled, suffering world. The wounds of Jesus are very real today in the needy and broken. May we always work to bind up those wounds wherever we find them.

Today's Readings: Acts 2:42–47; Ps 118:2–4, 13–15, 22–24; 1 Pt 1:3–9; Jn 20:19–31



We encourage you to take notes as you reflect on this week readings / homily:

Multiple horizontal lines for taking notes.



Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." John 20:19

CATHOLIC CORNER

DIVINE MERCY

Today's first reading (Acts 2:42-47) presents a beautiful account of life among the early followers of Jesus, the people known as Christians. This list of the things they did showed people that they were continuing the work of Jesus. Next to these descriptions from the Acts of the Apostles, write how you continue that work today.



- They gathered for the breaking of the bread.
I do the same when I _____
- They prayed together.
I do the same when I _____
- They offered what they owned to help those in need.
I do the same when I _____
- They lived their lives praising God.
I do the same when I _____



This second Sunday of Easter is also called Divine Mercy Sunday. One of the most important characteristics of a Christian is the ability to forgive. Jesus even forgave those who put him on the cross. He told his followers that they must do the same. Jesus also forgives us when we find it too hard to do what he asks.

- The early Christians forgave one another.
I do the same when I _____
- The early Christians were not afraid to ask forgiveness. They knew that Jesus was full of mercy.
I do the same when I _____

APRIL 19
2020



SEGUNDO
DOMINGO DE

Pascua

Se presentó Jesús en medio de ellos
y les dijo: “La paz esté con ustedes”.

JUAN 20:19

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Ilustración de la Vela de Pascua: Tony Ward para J. S. Paluch, 2020. Foto: Renáta Sedmáková, mosaico, S. Jacobo, Plaza España, London/Adobe Stock

Muchos de nosotros hemos tenido la desdicha de habernos perdido algo importante simplemente por haber estado ausente y luego escuchar acerca de lo que pasó. En las lecturas de hoy, solo lo menciona el Evangelio de Juan, Tomás es el único apóstol que no estuvo en el lugar cuando Jesús se les apareció a sus amigos la primera vez después de su muerte y resurrección. Tenían miedo y estaban de luto, sin saber que les pasaría. Recuerda, se sabían que eran fugitivos, aparentemente culpables por estar asociados con un criminal ejecutado por oficiales del gobierno romano. De repente, Jesús estaba con ellos, irradiando paz y misericordia a sus seguidores frágiles. ¡Qué alegría! ¡Qué asombro!

Nunca sabremos porqué Tomás había salido de ese escondite. Todo lo que sabemos es que regresó para escuchar una historia disparatada acerca de Jesús, que estaba vivo después de una muerte brutal. Debió de haber pensado que los otros apóstoles en su duelo tuvieron un delirio colectivo de lo que ellos deseaban fuera verdad. Cuando Tomás finalmente vio a Jesús, él da lo que es considerado la profesión más profunda de fe: “¡Señor mío y Dios mío!” En su tierna misericordia, Jesús sirvió a

Tomás al ayudarlo a verlo por él mismo.

CAMINAR CON FE

¿Pero qué hay de nosotros? La comunidad cristiana primitiva pudo solamente confiar en las palabras de estos mismos apóstoles, aquellos a quienes Tomás no podría creerles, cuando ellos predicaron a un Jesús resucitado de la muerte. ¿Quién podría creer lo que ellos decían? El Espíritu Santo sopló sobre los discípulos en ese primer encuentro, emanado tan poderosamente de ellos que pudieron reunir aparentemente comunidades utópicas de fe. Llenos con “la divina misericordia” sus vidas se hicieron una evangelización al mundo.

Y así es cómo nosotros también somos enviados, como los discípulos, llenos con el Espíritu Santo y llevando la paz del Señor y misericordia a un mundo que sufre y que tiene dificultades. Las heridas de Jesús son tan reales hoy con los necesitados y rotos. Que nosotros siempre trabajemos para unir esas heridas donde quiera que nos encontremos.

Lecturas de hoy: Hch 2:42–47; Sal 118 (117):2–4, 13–15, 22–24; 1 Pe 1:3–9; Jn 20:19–31