

HOMILY FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER
(DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY)
BY FR. CIRILO CERVANTES

MERCY AND FORGIVENESS, FRUIT OF THE RESURRECTION.

Each year, on the Second Sunday of Easter, the Church celebrates the Sunday of Divine Mercy. In the 1930s, Jesus chose a humble Polish nun, St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, to receive private revelations concerning His Divine Mercy that were recorded in her Diary. St. Faustina's Diary records 14 occasions when Jesus requested that a Feast of Mercy be observed. On May 5, 2000, five days after the canonization of St. Faustina, the Vatican decreed that the Second Sunday of Easter would henceforth be known as the Sunday of Divine Mercy.

When we celebrate it, we are called to reflect more personally on the graces won through the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this way our hearts may be more fully aware of the mercy of God for us personally and for the sake of the world. The Divine Mercy image depicts Jesus at the moment he appears to the disciples in the Upper Room, after the Resurrection. This moment is recorded in John 20:19-31, which is the Gospel reading for this Sunday in all three yearly Sunday liturgical cycles (A, B, and C). It includes the appearance of Jesus to the disciples on Easter evening, when he empowered them to forgive or retain sins. The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation or Confession is given to the Church, as the fruits of Jesus Paschal mysteries. It is like someone who has gone on a journey and brings back gifts to the people he or she loves. This is the Sacrament of Mercy where God shows his infinite Love through his Merciful Love. Throughout his life, Jesus showed this love by all he taught in word or example. His parables of the prodigal son, the lost sheep and lost coin reflect what He wants us to know about God as He says: "there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who no need of repentance" (Lk 15: 7). The Church is so blessed to have received this tremendous Gift from God, and to show our gratitude we need to believe and accept his Love; for there is no greater love than to give one's life for his friends. God is the only One who can forgive sins and the only perfect Sacrifice to atone for our sins was that of Jesus on the cross.

How does this scripture passage from the Gospel relate to the sacrament of confession? It relates directly to it. Jesus empowered the apostles (and their successors in ministry) with the Holy Spirit to either forgive or retain (not forgive) sins.

Because they are empowered with God's Spirit to do this, their administration of forgiveness is efficacious--it really removes sin rather than just being a symbol of forgiveness a person is already thought to have obtained. Because they are instructed to forgive or retain, they must discern which they are to do. This means that they need to know about the sin and whether we are truly repentant of it. As a result, we must tell them about the sin and our sorrow for it. Hence: confession.

In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation the priest acts in "persona Christi" - in the person of Christ. Jesus is the one forgiving sins through the priest. "The formula of absolution used in the Latin Church expresses the essential elements of this sacrament: the Father of mercies is the source of all forgiveness. He effects the reconciliation of sinners through the Passover of his Son and the gift of his Spirit, through the prayer and ministry of the Church" CCC 1449

The full text of the absolution given by the priest is: "God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Included in this text are several important messages:

1. Forgiveness comes from the mercy of God.
2. Reconciliation takes place through the death and resurrection of Jesus.
3. The presence of the Holy Spirit among us is a sign of God's forgiveness.
4. The Church plays a role in the extension of God's forgiveness to us.
5. The priest acts as judge of the person's sincerity in seeking forgiveness.
6. Forgiveness is granted in the name of the three persons of the Trinity.

Let us unite ourselves in thanksgiving with St. Peter and all those who have recognized the Great Merciful Love of the Father: "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, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you".
God bless you.

Follow us on Facebook at St. Monica Catholic Church to watch Masses via live stream. If for any reason we are not able to go live at the exact times listed we will inform you via media.



Thank you for your generosity and your contribution to Saint Monica Parish!

Let Us Pray for Our Brothers and Sisters:



Marlene Koon, Ruth Word, Diane Millsaps, Joan Culp, Allen Junk, Juana Calzada, Anita Andres, Daniel Guldner, Mike Niehues, Casey Moore, Concepcion Ramirez, Olivia Ramirez, Janna Alves, and for those with health complications, the homeless, for all those who serve and their family. For all the intentions of the families not listed.

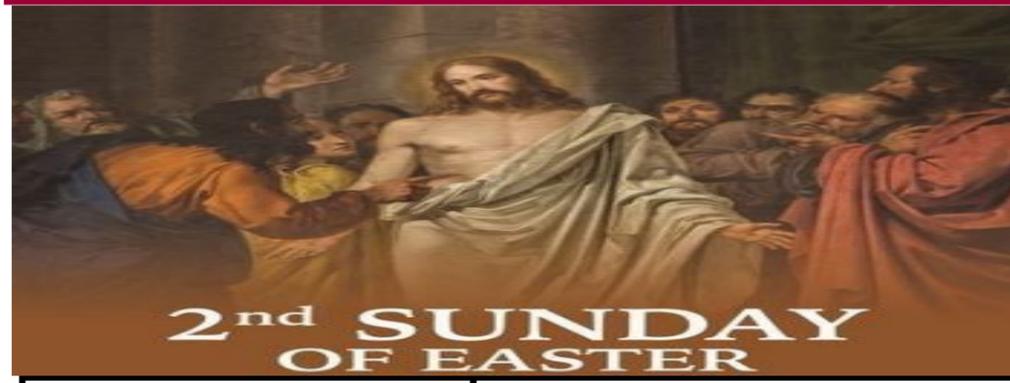
We Pray to the Lord.

St. Monica Parish News & Announcements:

Confessions will be held every Sunday at the Church from 10:15-11:45am and from 4:00-5:00pm. Reminder to Parishioners please maintain social distancing—minimum 6 feet from each other.

-We will continue to update Parishioners on any news by using our Facebook page, My ParishApp and our website stmonicawillows.com.

-Live Mass will be celebrated via Facebook live Monday-Saturday at 10:00am and Sunday's regular Mass scheduled times 9:00am (English) 12:00pm (Spanish). If for any reason we are not able to go live at the exact times listed we will inform you via media.



2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER

Responsorial Psalm:
Psalm 118: 2-4, 13-15, 22-24

"Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting. OR Alleluia."

-First Reading

Acts 2: 42-47
Luke wrote a two-volume work: Volume One was his Gospel, and Volume Two was the Acts of the Apostles which describes the life of the Church after the Resurrection of Jesus. Every year, during the seven weeks of the Easter Season, the first reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles. In today's passage, Luke gives an idealized description of early Christian community life.

-Second Reading

1 Peter 1: 3-9
Our second reading during most of this Easter Season is taken from the first letter of Peter, which was addressed to Christians living in the northern part of what is today Turkey. These Christians found themselves out of step with the society in which they lived, and they felt abused and discriminated against. The resurrection of Jesus was held out to them as a basis of hope during their trials, which is why the Church chooses to read from this book during the Easter Season.

Mass Schedule & Intentions:			
Date	Time	Int	Name
Sat. 4/18	10:00am (Facebook Live)		
Sun. 4/19	9:00am	+	
	12:00pm (Facebook Live)		Genaro Arellano+
Mon. 4/20	10:00am (Facebook Live)		Birthday: Fatima Lara
Tues. 4/21	10:00am (Facebook Live)		
Wed. 4/22	10:00am (Facebook Live)	+	Anselmo Quezada+
Thurs 4/23	10:00am (Facebook Live)	+	Brian Holvik+
Fri. 4/24	10:00am (Facebook Live)	+	Dick Lacroix+

Do you have a Mass intention?

Call the parish office when you need a Mass celebrated (530)934-3314. During this time, we would like to inform parishioners that we will continue offering Mass Intentions listed via Facebook live Mass.