

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

April 7, 2013

Second Sunday of Easter (or Sunday of Divine Mercy)

Gospel Jn 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

Spiritual Reflection:

Let us look at Fulton Sheen's book *The Life of Christ* one more time: "These nail prints, this pierced side, these were the unmistakable scars of battle against sin and evil. As many a soldier looks upon the wounds he received in battle not as a disfigurement, but as a trophy of honor, so He wore His wounds to prove that love was stronger than death." Perhaps Thomas above all the other disciples felt horrible for leaving Christ. He was the first to recognize that Jesus coming to Jerusalem meant death and yet he ran away. He needed to be reconciled with the one whom he deserted before he could repair his relationship with the others.

Spiritual Questions:

1. How can seeking and receiving God's forgiveness help you reconcile with others?
2. Do you think Jesus' resurrected body keep its wounds?
3. How can you touch the wounds of Christ today?
4. Describe how you think the apostles reacted being pardoned by Christ?
5. How would a god (like Zeus) from another religion have acted if he had been crucified and resurrected?

ST. MATTHEW



ST. MARK



2013