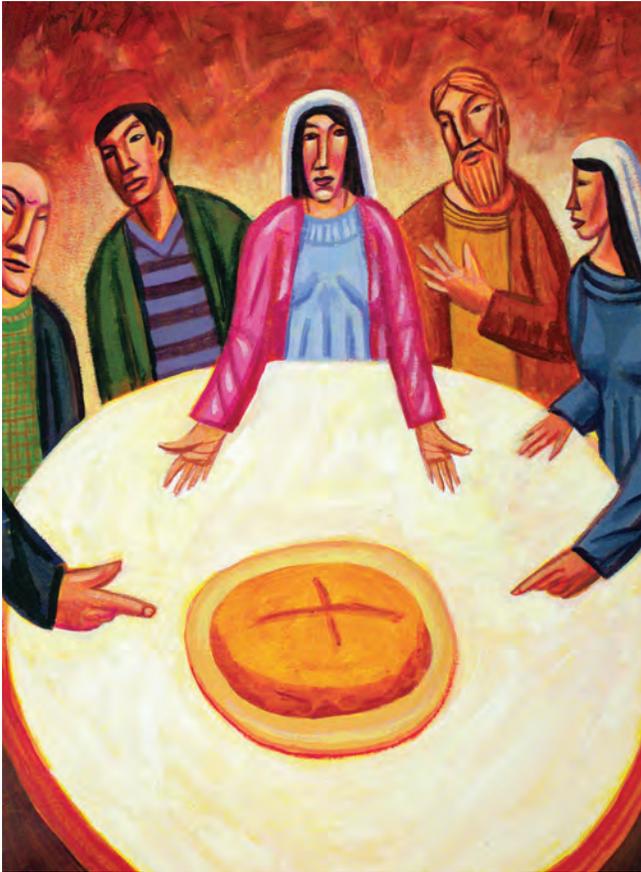


SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY



Gift of Mercy

God of mercy,
you rain down compassion
upon a world in great need of healing
and shower humanity
with unconditional love.

Pour your Holy Spirit into our hearts
today.

Help each of us to receive your
gift of mercy
and allow it to transform our lives.

As we celebrate in Easter joy,
make us instruments of peace
and mercy
in our families, communities,
and Church.

Through Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 16, 2023

Divine Mercy



Today's readings: Acts 2:42–47; Psalm 118:2–4, 13–15, 22–24; 1 Peter 1:3–9; John 20:19–31. During the Jubilee Year of 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized Sr. Faustina Kowalska and declared that the universal Church would henceforth observe the Sunday after Easter as the Sunday of Divine Mercy. As we end the Octave of Easter, we are invited to contemplate the mystery of the resurrection in the light of God's infinite mercy. The richness of God's mercy radiates through today's Scriptures and especially in Jesus' compassionate response toward Thomas' unbelief. The gift of mercy is explicitly given when Jesus commissions his disciples as ministers of divine mercy: "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'" (John 20:22–23). Through entrusting the first disciples with the gift of forgiving sins, Jesus initiated a waterfall of mercy for all of humanity.

Sr. Faustina repeatedly heard a call to proclaim God's mercy to the world. She promoted the chaplet of divine mercy to raise spiritual awareness of God's mercy. Today, many Catholics will visit shrines devoted to divine mercy and pray the chaplet of divine mercy. Our Church announces to the world that God is merciful and that we are invited to rest in his loving embrace. May our hearts grow more aware of the mercy of God in our lives. In turn, may we actively show mercy to those who need it most.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 17

Follow Acts

A reading from Acts is proclaimed on nearly each day of the Easter season. Written as a continuance of his Gospel account, Luke paints the broad strokes of the Church's development from the resurrection of Jesus to Paul's first imprisonment. Luke emphasizes the powerful role of the Holy Spirit in the formation of the Christian community and the spread of the Word of God. Read Acts through to gain a perspective of how this period unfolded. *Today's readings: Acts 4:23–31; Psalm 2:1–3, 4–7a, 7b–9; John 3:1–8.*

Tuesday, April 18

Everyone Had Enough

The early Christian community laid the groundwork for upholding the common good by placing their treasure in a common purse to be shared fairly across the community. As a result, everyone had enough. Religious communities and some other intentional Christian communities follow this practice to this day. The care for the whole community supersedes the wants of the individual. While this ideal may seem radical to our modern way of thinking, there is much to be learned. How can you more intentionally share from our wealth with the most vulnerable in society? *Today's readings: Acts 4:32–37; Psalm 93:1ab, 1cd–2, 5; John 3:7b–15.*

Wednesday, April 19

Walk in the Light

During the Advent season as we await the birth of Christ, the prophet Isaiah announces, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light” (Isaiah 9:1). Jesus himself proclaims, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). In today's Gospel reading, Jesus equates light with the eternal power of good and dark with the power of evil. As Christians, we are invited to walk in the light,

to seek the truth, and to practice goodness. *Today's readings: Acts 5:17–26; Psalm 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9; John 3:16–21.*

Thursday, April 20

Obey God

When confronted by the temple leaders about their bold preaching, Peter and the apostles reply, “We must obey God” (Acts 5:29). The Latin root of the word *obey* means “listen” or “hear.” This is powerful instruction for us today. There are so many loud and competing voices in the world. As Christians, we are charged to listen to the voice of God. Attending carefully to the preaching of the apostles in Acts and the speeches of Jesus in the Gospel of John will strengthen the words of truth in our hearts and help drown out all others. *Today's readings: Acts 5:27–33; Psalm 34:2 and 9, 17–18, 19–20; John 3:31–36.*

Friday, April 21

My Light and My Salvation

Our responsorial psalm for today captures the essence of Easter faith. We keep our eyes glued on the Lord throughout our earthly life with hope that we will rest in the house of the Lord for all of eternity. Carry Psalm 27 in your pocket, tape it on your bathroom mirror, and pray it daily until you have it memorized. It will carve a path to holiness. *Today's readings: Acts 5:34–42; Psalm 27:1, 4, 13–14; John 6:1–15.*

Saturday, April 22

Miracles Abound

We hear of two powerful miracles in today's readings. Acts relates that the number of those in Jerusalem coming to believe in Jesus “increased greatly” (Acts 6:7). John's Gospel recounts how Jesus rejoined the disciples in the boat by walking across the water. Which miracle stirs your heart more: the exponential number of people coming to faith or Jesus walking across the sea? Take it to prayer. *Today's readings: Acts 6:1–7; Psalm 33:1–2, 4–5, 18–19; John 6:16–21.*

