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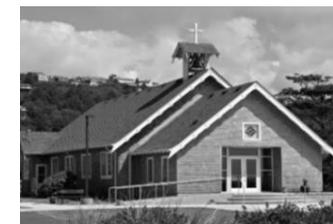
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April 11, 2021

We are a loving, supportive, and vibrant Catholic community committed to being a welcoming parish family by spreading the Love of Jesus Christ throughout our community and into the world.



POINTS TO NOTE ON DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

We need to accept God's invitation to celebrate and practice mercy in our Christian lives: One way the Church celebrates God's mercy throughout the year is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Finding time for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is another good way to receive and give thanks for Divine Mercy. But it is mainly through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy that we practice mercy in our daily lives and become eligible for God's merciful judgment.

Let us ask God for the Faith that culminates in self-surrender to God and that leads us to serve those we encounter with love. Living Faith enables us to see the risen Lord in everyone and gives us the willingness to render to each one our loving service. We must come to know Jesus personally and intimately by our daily and meditative reading of the Bible. We must strengthen our Faith through our personal and community prayer. Also, we must share in the Divine Life of Jesus by frequenting the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa) presents it this way: "If we pray, we will believe; if we believe, we will love; if we love, we will serve. Only then do we put our love of God into action."

We need to meet the challenge for a transparent Christian life — "I will not believe unless I see" (Jn 20:25). This "seeing" is what others demand of us. They ask that we reflect Jesus, the Risen Lord, in our lives - by our selfless love, unconditional forgiveness, and humble service. The integrity of our lives bears a fundamental witness to others who want to see the Risen Lord, alive and active, working in us. Christ's mercy shines forth from us whenever we reach out to the poor, the needy and the marginalized. His mercy shines forth as we remain open to those who struggle in Faith, as did the Apostle Thomas in today's Gospel. We should be able to appreciate the presence of Jesus, crucified and raised, in our own suffering and in our suffering brothers and sisters; thus recognizing the glorified wounds of the Risen Lord in the suffering of others.

Like St. Thomas, let us use our skepticism to help us grow in Faith. It is our genuine doubts about the doctrines of our religion that encourage us to study these doctrines more closely and, thus, to grow in our Faith. This will naturally lead us to a personal encounter with Jesus through our prayer, study of the Word of God, and frequenting of the Sacraments. However, we must never forget that our Faith is not of our own doing but is a gift from God. Hence, we need to augment our Faith every day by prayer so that we may join St. Thomas in his proclamation: "My Lord and my God" (Jn 20:28).

Let us have the courage of our Christian convictions to share our Faith as St. Thomas did. Let us not keep the gift of Faith locked in our hearts, but share it with our children, our families and our neighbors, always remembering the words of Pope St. John XXIII: "Every believer in this world must become a spark of Christ's light."

We can all find ourselves in the situation of those first disciples, locked in their hiding place. Any combination of the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" can water down our commitment to following the Lord. Like the disciples in today's gospel, we can be tempted to give up on our faith journey. The will to self-preservation can prevent us from doing what we are capable of doing with the Lord's help. The wounds we carry from earlier, failed initiatives make us hesitate to try again.

Even when someone seems full of enthusiasm and hope like a Mary Magdalene, we shrug it off. We let them get on with it, while we hold back and stay safe. The gospel today suggests a way out of our self-imposed confinement. If Magdalene makes no impact on us, the Lord will find another way to enter our lives and to fill us with new life and energy for his service.

No locked doors, nor even locked hearts, can keep him out. The Lord finds a way to enter the space where we have chosen to retreat and he empowers us to resist what is holding us back. He does require some openness - at the least some desire on our part - to become what he is calling us to be. The risen Lord never ceases to re-create us and to renew us in his love. Easter is the season to celebrate the good news. May God fill our lives with Easter blessings...Amen In Christ, Father Akuti