

**WE ARE AN EASTER PEOPLE!  
ALLELUIA IS OUR SONG!**

*Divine*  
**Mercy** *Sunday*

*San Ignacio de Loyola Parish*

*April 12, 2015*



## REFLECTION ON THE WORD

**I**t's only been three days since the disciples have seen Jesus alive. But it must seem like an eternity to them. They are gathered behind locked doors. They are afraid. They are confused about what to do. So they stay put. They've lost the sense of confidence they had when Jesus was with them.



On Easter evening, the risen Jesus appears and shows the disciples "his hands and his side". It is Jesus who makes the first convincing move to enable the disciples to believe that he has truly risen from the dead. Whether we see clearly like the disciples gathered around the risen Jesus, or only through doubting like Thomas, the risen Jesus is always present in our midst removing all obstacles to belief.

Going from disbelief to belief is not a mental exercise. It is encountering the risen Lord in the people and circumstances around us. Believing is living faithfully the risen Life Jesus gives us.

**Words to reflect upon: the risen Jesus is always present in our midst**

Where there is fear I can allay,  
where there is pain I can heal,  
where there are wounds I can bind  
and hunger I can fill:  
Lord, grant me courage;  
Lord grant me strength;  
Lord grant me compassion,  
that I may be your heart today. Amen

**There are Easter people** among us today whose faithfulness inspires our own. They are the ones who trust the Spirit's presence, even in the midst of adversity. They are the ones who quietly feed the hungry, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless and teach their children to do the same. They are also the ones who gather their families all over the Middle East in the face of approaching death and remind them that they are an Easter people.

**We are all Easter people** who believe that the cross transformed all suffering and pain, and the Resurrection secured the promise of eternal life. It is this paschal mystery, **this Easter faith**, that we are called to live each day.



God works through us. God brings about salvation through us. His Mercy must be our mercy.

**TODAY IS DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY**, the Second Sunday of the **Easter Season**, the Sunday of renewed encounter with the Resurrected Christ's mercy. Proclaimed by blessed John Paul II in 2000, this **Feast of Mercy** reminds us that we are not simply called to ask for God's mercy, we are also called to be merciful. So let us practice a mercy that is forgiving and true, forgiving our enemies and caring for the weary and vulnerable of our community wherever we encounter them in thanksgiving for the Divine Mercy we have received from the Risen Lord.



*Easter* is an invitation to radical change. Why?  
**Because We Are An Easter People, that's why.**

What then does it look like to be an **Easter people**?



How are we to live?  
When we start at the very beginning and search the Acts accounts of the **Easter season**

Scriptures, we learn how that very first community of Jesus' followers began to shape their priorities and create a way of life.

1. Within the early community, **"there was no needy person among them"** (Acts 4:34). Those who had more property and wealth liquidated their assets and gave the money to the apostles to distribute to those in need...startling news to our 21st century selves, but true nonetheless.
2. **The Spirit was at work among them** and they came to believe that radical change is the sure sign of the work of the Spirit of Jesus. (Acts 9:27)
3. They understood that God truly shows no partiality among humankind. **(Acts 10:34) All are equal in the sight of God.**
4. Finally, there was a clear message on that Ascension day that **Easter people** do not dawdle looking up at the sky but **must live as active witnesses to faith** wherever they are. (Acts 1:11)

The laborers in the Lord's vineyard would have one foot on the ground and the other raised to proceed on their journey.  
— Ignatius of Loyola

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,*  
1 Timothy 2:1

**LET US PRAY TOGETHER TODAY FOR** the chronically ill: Sylvia Tasner, Fr. Vega, Jerry and Albert Vega, **Maggie Maziarz**, Rudy & Sonia Méndez, and Peter Fiorito. **Let us pray as a community this week of Divine Mercy for all those suffering from chronic illnesses, that God's love may abide with them and give them the insight and courage they need to continue to share their gifts and talents with their communities.**



## SOME THOUGHTS ON MERCY

Jesus taught that the second greatest commandment is *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself"*. He also said *"blessed are the merciful for they shall be shown mercy"*.

**God works through us. God brings about salvation through us. His mercy must be our mercy.**

**Faith without works is not faith at all, but a simple lack of obedience to God...** — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Mercy and forgiveness must be free and unmerited to the wrongdoer. If the wrongdoer has to do something to merit it, then it isn't mercy, but forgiveness always comes at a cost to the one granting the forgiveness. — Timothy Keller

## Praying with Scripture

*First Reading Acts 4:32-35*



Who are the needy in your immediate life? Can you take care of at least some of their needs? What, if anything, can you do about the needs of people in your extended world? If you joined forces with another person or group could you do something to alleviate some needs of these people?

*Gospel John 20:19-31*

What is the significance of Jesus' breath when he gave the disciples the Holy Spirit? Do you receive the same Holy Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation? Does the Holy Spirit act differently in you than in them? Jesus empowered his disciples with his Spirit so they could pass the gift of peace on to others. Is peace related to forgiveness of sins? How?

## The Only Sin I Know

If someone sits with me  
And we talk about the Beloved,  
If I cannot give his heart comfort,  
If I cannot make him feel better  
About himself and this world,  
Then, Hafiz,  
Quickly run to the mosque and pray—  
For you have just committed  
The only sin I know.

— Hafiz

*Parish News:*

**There will be a meeting of proclaimers at 9:00am,  
Saturday, April 25 - in the temple**