

OUR GOD IS KIND AND MERCIFUL,
SLOW TO ANGER AND
ABOUNDING IN MERCY!

iMercy!

Divine Mercy Sunday

San Ignacio de Loyola Parish

April 3, 2016



REFLECTION ON THE WORD

Today's Gospel shows us why the resurrection makes all the difference in the world. The Lord comes to the disciples a first time on that first Easter Sunday evening when Thomas is not present. When the disciples tell Thomas about seeing the Lord, Thomas makes known quite clearly that for him to believe that Jesus is alive he will have to encounter, see, touch, put his finger in Jesus' wounds. A week later when Thomas is present, Jesus



appears to the disciples again and responds to Thomas's unbelief simply inviting him to see, touch and believe.

Perhaps we unfairly fault Thomas. Perhaps he is a good model for us of authentic seeing-believing. Our believing cannot stand on hearsay, on blind acceptance of what others have seen and believe. Rather, our believing must be grounded in personal encounter with the risen Christ, in ongoing conversation with him that leads to conscious choice, and in expressing our belief in him by the way we reach out to others. Here is where the resurrection and the Life it brings becomes very concrete and practical for our daily living. Christ's risen Life within us enables us to choose to live the Gospel he preached. His risen Life within us prompts us to set aside fear and doubt and embrace forgiveness and peace. Resurrection does make all the difference—for us, for all of creation!

Words to reflect upon: Resurrection does make all the difference!

TRY PRAYING "LORD, HAVE MERCY ON _____"
WHEN YOU NOTICE PEOPLE'S WEAKNESSES. IT IS SO
MUCH BETTER THAN BEING JUDGMENTAL OR CRITICAL.

Reflection for **Mercy Sunday**

in the **Jubilee Year of Mercy**

God does not abandon us. Over and over God has spoken the voice of merciful love to invite a return to obedience. Pope Francis has repeated this message from the day he took possession of the chair as Bishop of Rome: "Dear brothers and sisters, let us be enveloped by the mercy of God; let us trust in his patience, which always gives us more time. Let us find the courage to return to his house, to dwell in his loving wounds, allowing ourselves to be loved by him and to encounter his mercy in the sacraments. We will feel his wonderful tenderness, we will feel his embrace, and we too will become more capable of mercy, patience, forgiveness and love".

Together we have the opportunity to make this year a transformative year for the community, a year when the encounter with divine mercy moved us to be the face of mercy and love to the world around us.

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.



**Where there is hate I can confront,
Where there are yokes I can release,
Where there are captives I can free
And anger I can appease:
Lord, grant me courage,
Lord, grant me strength,
Grant me compassion
That I may be your heart today.**

LIVING YOUR EASTER LIFE

BE NOT LAX IN CELEBRATING.

BE NOT LAZY IN THE FESTIVE SERVICE OF GOD.

BE ABLAZE WITH ENTHUSIASM!

*Let us be an alive, burning offering
before the altar of God! — Holy Hildegard of Bingen*

Joy, humor and laughter are underappreciated virtues in the spiritual life and represent an essential element in one's own relationship with God.



It's not clear why humor and laughter have been deemed as inappropriate in so many religious settings. But I'm sure you've met people who seem to think that being religious means being deadly serious all the time. But, as the saying goes, when you're deadly serious, you're probably seriously dead. In Christian circles these people are known as the "frozen chosen".

"Joy is not incidental to spiritual quest. It is vital." That's not me talking, that's the Hasidic Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, writing in the 18th century. The Book of Isaiah says "The Lord takes delight in his people".

So can you imagine God delighting in you? If that doesn't work, how about this: How many times have you heard "God loves you"? You think, "Yeah, whatever. That's just what God does." It's like wallpaper. But how about this: God likes you. That has a different energy to it, doesn't it? Can you imagine God liking you?

Words to reflect upon: joy, humor and laughter are underappreciated virtues

May we not succumb to thoughts of violence and revenge today, but rather to thoughts of mercy and compassion. We are to love our enemies that they might be returned to their right minds.

— Marianne Williamson

*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, Don and Maggie Maziarz, and Rudy & Sonia Méndez.



Let us pray together as a community for the most vulnerable of peoples among us: the children, the poor, the ignorant, refugees, immigrants, and all the other "others" that the heart of humanity will overflow with compassion and wisdom to protect and sustain them.

BE MERCIFUL AS YOUR FATHER IS MERCIFUL

PrimA quote from Pope Francis:

"No child chooses to live on the streets. Sadly, even in our modern, globalized world, many children continue to be robbed of their childhood, their rights and their future. Lack of legal protection and adequate structures only aggravates their state of deprivation: they have no real family or access to education or health care. Every child abandoned or forced to live on the streets, at the mercy of criminal organizations, is a cry rising up to God, Who created man and woman in His own image. It is an indictment of a social system which we have criticized for decades, but which we find hard to change in conformity with criteria of justice." Audience with International Symposium on the Pastoral Care of the Street, Sept. 17, 2015

Reflection: How does this apply to Puerto Rico? To us?

MERCY-ING

- Lead with a kind comment with friends as well as strangers.
- Can you play the piano or any other instrument? Can you recite poetry? Give free "concerts" to the forgotten people in nursing homes and assisted living centers.
- When conversations devolve into the "dark joy" of gossip, help change the subject.

Praying with Scripture

Mantra: By the tender mercy of God the morning sun will rise upon us. (Luke 1:78)



Response: I will accept the invitation of Pope Francis to be a channel through which God can water the earth, protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish by: _____

Tomorrow, April 4th, is the anniversary of the death of



Dr. Martin Luther King, killed for his defense of civil rights in the United States. In his memory, let us rededicate ourselves to his dream of liberty, justice, equality and opportunity for all peoples.