

APRIL 23, 2017



SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER (OR SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY)



ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2:42-47

1 PETER 1:3-9

PSALM 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

JOHN 20:19-31

REFLECTION

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3). This opening verse from today’s Second Reading focuses in on a theme of mercy that is central to today’s celebration. Today’s Responsorial Psalm also connects with this theme of mercy. Thus, it was quite fitting that on the Second Sunday of Easter in 2000, at the Mass celebrating the canonization of St. Faustina Kowalska, Pope John Paul II inaugurated what is now known as Divine Mercy Sunday, celebrated every year on the Second Sunday of Easter. Throughout these fifty days of Easter Time, we rejoice heartily in proclaiming Jesus’ Resurrection from the dead. This is at the heart of the Christian understanding of mercy: that death and despair have no power over the “living hope” of the Resurrection. We sacramentally celebrate this lived experience of mercy every time we gather for Eucharist and in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which Christ instituted in today’s Gospel reading.

ACTION

The Church identifies seven Corporal Works of Mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. Spend some time this week learning about each of the Works of Mercy. Examine your life and see which of these Works of Mercy you can make a part of your life as a Catholic Christian. Some may be integrated into your daily life relatively easily. Others may require more intentional effort. Select one of the Corporal Works of Mercy that you may not have yet done and go out and do it! Take a risk! Make a difference!

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

● Which of the Corporal Works of Mercy do you feel would be the biggest challenge for you to make a part of your life? Take this challenge to prayer and reflect upon how you can become an agent of mercy through making it a focus in your life.