

~ Our Pastor's Message ~

Happy Easter to all of you!

Yes! He is resurrected, more powerfully present to us than ever before—not because he needs us—but because we need him to show us how to live our lives differently in this unique time. I am feeling very thankful on this Easter Tuesday morning. Our Easter services were unusual but prayerful and moving. We prayed and thought about you all throughout the celebrations of the Holy Triduum and Easter Sunday.

With the stillness of the city, the quietness that surrounds and time that is not filled with demands, we have time to reflect on that which is ultimately of value. Not so easily able to surround ourselves with things that distract, we are left to ponder the essentials: family, friends, love, our relationship with God, and caring for each other. We can't go out shopping for non-essentials, looking to fill our hearts with desire. We find ourselves challenged even to get groceries. We are left thinking: isn't this better to have only what I need, to feel satisfied, with what I have rather than desiring what I don't have?

When I watch PBS news, I am reminded that some people are struggling to have money to buy food: a single mother with children and no job; a family with children, no home, no food, living in their van. Please don't forget to support our local shelters and food bank. There are precious lives to be saved.

Thanks to so many of you who have been sending in your donations. Many have switched to on-line giving and that is helpful. Of course, any way you choose to support, we are thankful: online, by mail, or drop off. We need to keep our employees on the payroll just as I hope that all of you are receiving compensation for working at home or unemployment insurance.

Let us all continue to be safe, sheltering in our home and keeping distance when we have to be out. God bless you all and know that God is good all the time, all the time God is good.



Warren J. Broussard, SJ

Fr. Warren J. Broussard, SJ, Pastor

SUNDAY CONNECTION FROM LOYOLA PRESS
Second Sunday of Easter or Sunday of Divine Mercy
~ April 19 ~

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 2: 42-47

The first community of Christians grows as its members meet to pray and break bread.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 118: 2-4, 13-15, 22-24

God's love is everlasting.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1: 3-9

We have new hope because of Jesus' Resurrection.

Gospel Reading: John 20: 19-31

Thomas believes because he sees Jesus.

Background on the Gospel Reading: The Gospels tell us that Jesus appeared to the disciples on several occasions after they discovered that his tomb was empty. Part of the mystery of Jesus' Resurrection is that he appeared to his disciples not as a spirit but in bodily form. The bodily form was not one that the disciples recognized though. In John's Gospel, Mary of Magdala does not recognize that the figure standing before her is Jesus until he speaks to her. In Luke's Gospel the disciples who meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus do not recognize him until he breaks bread with them. The resurrected Jesus had a physical presence, but the disciples couldn't recognize Jesus unless he allowed them to. His resurrected body, nonetheless, showed the marks of his crucifixion.

From readings such as today's Gospel, we also see that in his resurrected body, Jesus seems to be free of physical constraints. He appears to the disciples despite the fact that the doors were locked.



Jesus greets his disciples with the gift of peace and the gift of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, Jesus commissions his disciples to continue the work that he has begun: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." During the meeting, Jesus also shows the integral connection between forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The story of Thomas illustrates our Christian experience today: We are called to believe without seeing. In fact, all Christians after the first witnesses have been called to believe without seeing. Thomas's doubt is hardly surprising; the news of Jesus' appearance was incredible to the disciples who had seen him crucified and buried. Thomas's human nature compelled him to want hard evidence that the Jesus who appeared to the disciples after his death was indeed the same Jesus who had been crucified.

~Continued on the next page.

SUNDAY CONNECTION FROM LOYOLA PRESS

The 2nd Sunday of Easter ~ April 19 ~ continued

Thomas is given the opportunity to act on that desire. He is our witness that Jesus is really risen.

Our faith is based on the witness of the Church that has preceded us, beginning with Thomas and the first disciples. Through Baptism we receive the same Holy Spirit that Jesus brought to the first disciples. We are among those who are “blessed” because we believe without having seen.

FAMILY CONNECTION FROM LOYOLA PRESS

The 2nd Sunday of Easter ~ April 19 ~

Many of us can relate to Thomas’s response to the news that the disciples had seen Jesus. We want to see for ourselves too, but we grow in faith, trusting the experience and knowledge of others.

Many of us have heard the saying “Seeing is believing.” As your family gathers, take some time to consider what

that saying means. What are some things we believe because we see them? Is there anything we believe without seeing? Today’s Gospel reminds us that faith sometimes asks us to believe things we cannot see with our eyes. Read today’s Gospel, John 19:19-31, with your family. Think about Thomas’s response to the reports about the risen Lord. Is Thomas’s doubt reasonable? How does Jesus respond to Thomas? Jesus grants Thomas the evidence that Thomas needs to believe, but Jesus also affirms the faith of those who will be called upon to believe without first-hand experience. We are among those whom Jesus calls blessed. Discuss with your family the basis of each member’s faith in Jesus—the witness of the first disciples, the Gospels, the continuing activity of the Holy Spirit, the community of the Church.

Pray together that your faith in Jesus will be strong. Pray an ACT OF FAITH together:

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches, because you have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

MY LORD and MY GOD

*Online Resources:*

[America Magazine](#) | [The Jesuit Review](#)

Where you can live-stream Jesuit Masses every day of the week: <https://www.americamagazine.org/fait/2020/03/24/here-are-jesuit-parishes-and-ministries-live-streaming-mass-every-day-week>

Sadly we will not be able to have our annual DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY DEVOTION SERVICE this year.

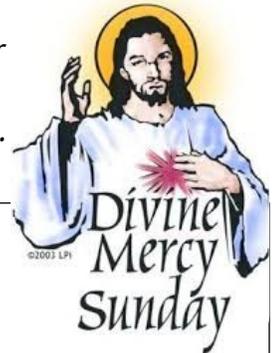
However, the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception will have full coverage of the services and prayers from the National Shrine in Stockbridge, Massachusetts via their website at <https://www.shrineofdivinemercury.org>.

The EWTN Eternal Word television station will also have live coverage.

As a parish family, let us pray for healing and ever greater love and devotion to our Lord and his Mother the Immaculate Conception.

Jesus, Divine Mercy, we Trust in You.

Deacon Don Roseborough

AN EXPERIENCE OF GOD’S MERCY

In the busyness of everyday life, we do not always set aside time for an examination of conscience in order to order our lives in harmony with God. We should do this to give thanks to God, but also to let him heal the wounds, left by sin, that we accumulate in us and that gradually separate us from him.

During his pontificate, Pope Francis has insisted on emphasizing how God is a merciful Father who loves unconditionally, is always waiting for his children and willing to forgive us and renew our lives.

Pope Francis continually reminds us of the importance of taking the time to review our habits and to encounter the merciful Father. It is his hope that we will be led to an intimate encounter with Christ, the face of the Father’s Mercy.

As the Church celebrates Divine Mercy Sunday, Pope Francis challenges us to find time each day to encounter the Lord, embrace the sacrament of Reconciliation and let yourself be immersed in the merciful embrace of God, which welcomes everyone. May we live this moment well and experience the mercy of the Lord, who has boundless love for us.

Leo Geovane Pereira de Meira (Collaborator of the Youth Eucharistic Movement – Brazil)