

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY



Loving and Merciful

Eternal Father,
in you we find mercy,
compassion, and love.
May your Spirit work within us,
calming our fears
and opening our hearts
so that we might greet others
with peace.
Grant us wisdom to put aside
our doubts
and like Thomas profess our
belief in you.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 7, 2024
Ever Merciful



Today's readings: Acts 4:32–35; Psalm 118:2–4, 13–15, 22–24; 1 John 5:1–6; John 20:19–31. On this Second Sunday of Easter, the Church also celebrates the Sunday of Divine Mercy. The readings today reveal some of the many facets of God's mercy. The psalm proclaims that "his mercy endures forever," and in the Gospel, Jesus enacts that mercy as he greets the disciples in peace. In a loving manner, Jesus helps the group of disciples overcome doubt about the resurrection. Though his followers do not recognize him, he is gentle, beginning both visits with the greeting, "Peace be with you."

During the homily on the canonization of St. Faustina, Pope John Paul II declared that the Second Sunday of Easter

would be called Divine Mercy Sunday. St. Faustina had shared her visions of Jesus appearing to her dressed in a white garment and with rays of light emanating from his heart. Jesus asked her to share the word of his mercy for a day to celebrate his mercy. St. Faustina trusted her vision.

The disciples to whom Jesus first appeared and whom he showed his wounds also trusted the man standing before them. At the sight of Jesus, these followers surrendered themselves completely to God. Think about your first encounter with Jesus. What was that moment like for you? How has your relationship changed over the stages of your life? Have others come to know Christ through your belief?



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 8 Say Yes!

God loved the world so much that he sent his only Son and chose Mary as his mother. Though Mary was a young girl, she did not waver in her response to God, replying to the angel, “May it be done to me according to your word.” How hard is it for you to say yes to God? Do you need to practice an affirmative response to God? As we continue to celebrate Easter, pause for a moment to acknowledge the opportunities in your life to say yes to God’s will. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 7:10–14, 8–10; Psalm 40:7–8a, 8b–9, 10, 11; Hebrews 10:4–10; Luke 1:26–38.*

Tuesday, April 9 Invitation to Give

Imagine being told you need to rid yourself of all your possessions and give them to those in need. Many saints eschewed lavish lives and gave their wealth to the poor. These men and women stood in solidarity with those in need. God invites us to be in relationship with both him and others. Just as Jesus emptied himself for us, we must empty ourselves in service to others. How can you empty yourself for members of your community? *Today’s readings: Acts 4:32–37; Psalm 93:1ab, 1cd–2, 5; John 3:7b–15.*

Wednesday, April 10 Forgiving Yourself

Not only does God hear the cry of the poor, as the psalm proclaims, but he sent his Son so that all who believe might have eternal life. It is especially heartening to hear that “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn.” Pray to God that he might help you forgive yourself for shortcomings. Should you not show yourself the same forgiveness that God shows you? *Today’s readings: Acts 5:7–26; Psalm 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9; John 3:16–21.*

Thursday, April 11 Power to Speak

“We must obey God rather than men,” Peter tells his persecutors in today’s reading from Acts. On this Memorial of St. Stanislaus, the Church honors a bishop who was not afraid to speak out against the evil in the king’s deeds. As a Christian, are you committed to the work of fighting injustice and asserting the dignity of all people? Are you ready to be pointed out because you speak the truth? Pray to God that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, you are bestowed with strength and courage to denounce injustice and suffering. *Today’s readings: Acts 5:27–33; Psalm 34:2, 9, 17–18, 19–20; John 3:31–36.*

Friday, April 12 Trust in God

Have you ever discovered that you were “fighting against God,” as today’s first reading cautions? Why is it so hard for you to trust in God and let something be? After all, God will more than provide for our needs just as Jesus did when he multiplied the loaves and fish for the people who came to him. Humbly ask God to bestow upon you a gentle heart that listens to his Word and is open to his will. *Today’s readings: Acts 5:34–42; Psalm 27:1, 4, 13–14; John 6:1–15.*

Saturday, April 13 Surrender

“It is I. Do not be afraid,” Jesus says to his disciples. Over and over, Scripture instructs not to be afraid and yet fear keeps a hold on us. God requests his followers to put their complete trust in him. God is always with us. Pause to feel his presence. When feeling alone or afraid, pray that the Holy Spirit fills you with courage to surrender to God. *Today’s readings: Acts 6:1–7, Psalm 33:1–2, 4–5, 18–19; John 6:16–21.*

