



Christ in Our Neighborhood

Commentary

Eternal Father, as we celebrate the Resurrection of Your Son, fill us with the joys of Your Divine Mercy upon us.

May we who are baptized remain faithful to You, who live and reign with Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Acts 4:32-35

There isn't a person on Earth who can take what they have with them to the next life.

Those of us who claim to be Christian take this thought a step further. We cannot claim to hold anything as our own, even in this life. In reality, all that we hold is only borrowed. Our land, clothes, toys, and – yes – even our loved ones are not ours to claim.

The early disciples, after the resurrection of Christ, understood this and began distributing their goods to one another. The First Reading tells us that these disciples “held everything in common” and placing their goods at the Apostles’ feet, the goods were distributed to each according to their need.”

These disciples witnessed a crucified Christ empty Himself on the cross and on the third day be raised to glory. They understood that a spiritual and physical emptiness opened oneself to the power of the Risen Christ working in them.

Question

In what way did the spiritual discipline of Lent help you to empty yourself in order to celebrate the joys of the Risen Christ this Easter?

2nd Reading: 1 John 5:1-6

At the Easter Vigil, many men, women, and children came into the Church and were “begotten” by God through the waters of Baptism.

John 1 reminds us that a Christian is not born naturally, but through faith in Christ Jesus. This is confirmed in the first chapter of the Gospel of John where disciples of Christ are born again not by generation but by regeneration.

Second Sunday of Easter

Divine Mercy Sunday

Regeneration means that we are a new creature and we have a new name: Christian. We are no longer merely human. Our nature is human, but by grace we have a share in the divinity of Christ who humbled Himself to share in our humanity. Only by grace through regeneration do we share in Christ's nature.

Through faith and Baptism we are “victors of the world.”

Our victory is through, with, and in Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord. He is the first to conquer sin and death and all who follow him in faith enjoy the benefits of resurrection as well.

This still requires something of us who place our faith in Him. Those who abide in the “Spirit of Truth,” and “keep His commandments” are called sons and daughters of God. When we love others who are begotten by God, we honor the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Question

How do you celebrate the grace of being Christian?

How are you different from those who have never been baptized?

In what way are you inviting others to place their faith in the Risen Lord?

Commentary

Gospel: John 20:19-31

Pope St. John Paul II, responding to a devotion he had to the spiritual apparition of Saint Faustina, designated the Second Sunday of Easter as “Divine Mercy Sunday.”

On this day, Catholics are invited to reflect on the absolute Mercy of God upon us who are sinners. This mercy was fulfilled through Jesus Christ who suffered and died for us and rose from the dead.

God’s mercy was recognized by the Apostles in the upper room when Jesus said, “Peace be with you!”

Jewish sacrifices, according to the Book of Leviticus, were offered for the guilt and sins of the people. They were also offered as means to give thanks to God. Finally, sacrifices were made as peace offerings to seal covenants and contracts.

Jesus’ words, “Peace be with you,” seal the new covenant with all who have faith in the Lord. The benefit of this new covenant is the grace of the Holy Spirit who is breathed upon the Apostles in the upper room.

The Divine Mercy of God was sealed by Christ!

Question

How have you celebrated the Mercy of God in your life?

This Week’s Task

At 3:00 p.m., Catholics gather on Divine Mercy Sunday (and any day) to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

The chaplet is a selfless prayer, offering Jesus to the Father for the sins of the world.

Consider offering this prayer for the world.

Prayer

The leader invites the gathering to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. See the page on how to pray the Divine Chaplet. If time does not permit, the leader may have the gathering say together:

“Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.”

A Divine Mercy Image may be placed on a table as a point for reflection.

The leader will then guide the group in praying Psalm 118: 2-4, 13-15, 22-24.

Psalm

Response:

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

Let the house of Israel say,
“His mercy endures forever.”

Let the house of Aaron say,

“His mercy endures forever.”

Let those who fear the LORD say,
“His mercy endures forever.”

Response

I was hard pressed and was falling,
but the LORD helped me.
My strength and my courage is the LORD,
and he has been my savior.
The joyful shout of victory
in the tents of the just:

Response

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.
This is the day the LORD has made;
let us be glad and rejoice in it.

Response

Conclude with an OUR FATHER

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Using the rosary ...

1. Make the Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

2. Our Father: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

3. Hail Mary: Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

4. The Apostle's Creed: I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

5. (Large Bead) Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

6. (On the Ten Small Beads of Each Decade) For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

7. Repeat for the remaining decadesSaying the “Eternal Father” (5) on the large bead and then 10 “For the sake of His sorrowful Passion” (6) on the following small beads.

8. Conclude with the following (Repeat three times): Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

9. (Optional - repeat three time): Jesus I trust in you!