

Divine Mercy Sunday 2020

My beloved Ones: no doubt, all of us are feeling wearied and stressed by the shut-down of day to day normal activities. No doubt, we wonder: “Is there ever going to be a return to normalcy, (although, not everything that was “normal”, was good”). Most of us are tired of all of the bad news and the darkness that seems to still swirl around us, mocking us. Many are very afraid. All of these feelings are normal during a time of crises; nevertheless, very disturbing and wearisome! Such was the case with the Apostles and disciples gathered in the upper room after the death of Jesus. Even after some of them had experienced the Resurrected Lord, nonetheless, all of them were very afraid that the ordeal of Jesus would be asked of them!

It was into the midst of their fear and anguish that Jesus appears to them, the Resurrected Lord, with His now glorious wounds, and the first greeting to them was: “Shalom!” It is a Hebrew word that means more than peace, (which simply means an absence of violence, and the presence of calm). It means the deep sense of God’s Divine Presence with them.

Immediately after greeting them, Jesus says to them again: “Shalom! As the Father has sent me, so I send you!”, and then He breathes out **the breath of life, The Holy Spirit**, upon them, and imparts to them the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit He pours out upon them is for a singular purpose: It is for the power to forgive sins. There is so much that Jesus wants to say to us on this Sunday we call: Divine Mercy Sunday!

Even though they had abandoned Him in His agony, He did not abandon them— He will never abandon us! He passes through all of the barriers we raise in our lives, including all of our fears, regret, shame, guilt and doubt, and reassures us that He will never, never turn His back on us. He will never, never give up on us. He brings us the Shalom that only God in His infinite Divine Love, which is His infinite Divine Mercy can give us! He reassures us, sinner all, that He continues His mission of Shalom, Mercy and Peace, through us: “As the Father has sent me; so also, I send you!”

Secondly, The Glorious, Risen Lord, the Son of God, does not return to crush us in revenge; rather, He has come to tell us, and the whole sinful world, the same world that has crucified its God in the flesh, we can be redeemed; God has not condemned us! He has come back to announce His readiness to forgive and restore us to His Divine Friendship and to the Divine embrace!

Thirdly, He sends out His first priests and bishops with His own Divine authority to forgive sins and to reconcile us to God. This is the explicit institution of the Sacrament of Divine Mercy- Confession, which is the outpouring of the Infinite Divine Mercy of God upon us, and through us, upon the whole world!

The feast of the Divine Mercy is meant to bear the fruit of Mercy in our lives and in the world. These are the fundamentals Jesus asks of us on this Feast: **Ask for mercy**. The best and foremost way to do this is through the Sacrament of Confession. When we are all able to come back to this Sacrament, come with confidence in the infinite Divine Mercy that is waiting for you. Jesus says to us in His revelation of Divine Mercy: “When you approach the confessional, know this, that I myself am waiting for you...I am only hidden by the priest, but I myself act in your soul...Herein the misery of the soul meets the God of Mercy!”

Be Merciful. Jesus says to us: “I demand from you deeds of mercy... You are to show deeds of mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere...” This does not require great heroics; even the smallest kindness in union with the hearts of Jesus and Mary, is elevated to the infinite Mercy of God Himself!

Finally, **trust in Mercy!** This, I believe is the hardest; and yet, trust requires that **I will** to place my trust in Him, Who is Mercy itself. Do not be afraid to show Jesus the worst of things in your life! When you do so, you are putting your trust in His infinite Divine Mercy for you. He Himself reminds us, that there is nothing that pleases Him more!