



Divine Mercy Sunday (2nd Sunday of Easter)

April 8, 2018

GOSPEL [JOHN 20: 19-31](#)

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the

nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.





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True peace gives us happiness, because it is built on trust. The Gospel tells us how Jesus gave his followers peace because they trusted him. In spite of skepticism, he offers us the same peace.

- **When was the last time you felt truly peaceful?**
- **How can you offer the peace of Christ to others in your daily life?**

In the Gospel reading, Thomas did not believe Jesus had risen until he saw it for himself. "I'll believe it when I see and touch it," says Thomas.

You can't blame him. He wasn't there when Jesus made his first visit. He wants firsthand proof that what the others have reported to him is actually true.

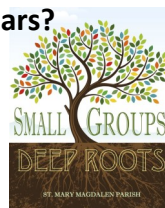
- **Is it hard for you to believe when others around you don't?**
- **Have you ever had to defend your belief to others?**

We have been on a year-long journey to make our lives simpler, happier and holier. We have simplified our lives, physically and spiritually. We are happier to have made time and space for Jesus in our hearts and our daily lives. We are living out our call to holiness. We are called to mission.

- **How has the Parish journey to *Let Go* inspired you to make any changes in your life?**

This week the parish introduced the new message series called Base Camp, a spiritual place to support each other. Church is our Base Camp, a place to refuel, nourish and gear up ... so that we may continue our mission to be disciple makers and spread God's love to the community around us.

- **How can you approach the Celebration of Ministry Festival with a different mindset than other years?**





Third Sunday of Easter

April 15, 2018

GOSPEL LUKE 24:35-48

The two disciples recounted what had taken place on the way, and how Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

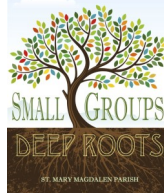
While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have."

And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them.

He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."





Third Sunday of Easter April 15, 2018

Jesus has a call to action for us: "You are witnesses of these things." Recall the word "witnesses", not "bystanders." Bystanders just take things in, then walk away and go about their lives. By contrast, witnesses can't keep quiet and want to share what they discovered.

We have lived the difference of those two words. For example, you discover a great seven-layer dip recipe. That evening, that dominates your conversation at the party and for days afterward. How about when you find a reliable car repair shop, or a great hairdresser, or a family vacation spot, or a great movie or song... the list is endless.

- **What does it take for us to be that excited about Jesus -- about our relationship with Him and what He does for us?**
- **When were you in a situation in which you shared your excitement about Jesus and His presence in your life?**

We are called to action, to share our faith, to be excited about our relationship with Jesus ... to be disciple-makers.

- **Did you visit the Celebration of Ministries Festival on Sunday?**
- **If so, are there any ministries that call to you, any ministries that you will continue to be a part of for another year?**
- **Spend some time discussing the different aspects of ministry each person is involved in, answer questions for new parishioners looking for a ministry.**





Fourth Sunday of Easter April 22, 2018

GOSPEL JOHN 10: 11-18

Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd.

A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them.

This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me,
just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;
and I will lay down my life for the sheep.

I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again.

This command I have received from my Father."





Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 22, 2018

As Jesus freely took on the mission in today's Gospel reading, He sends the Holy Spirit to empower us to continue in His work to change and be agents of change; in short, to be disciple makers.

Listen and pray to the Holy Spirit. When you say yes to the Spirit, you will be the change that He wants to bring to the world.

- **What keeps us from committing ourselves fully to the work of Jesus?**
- **What's the most difficult part of listening to the Holy Spirit?**
- **What does it mean to be a sheep of Jesus' flock?**





Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 29, 2018

GOSPEL JOHN 15: 1-8

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you.

Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."





Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 29, 2018

Each of us is gifted in some unique way. We can bear fruit for God in a way nobody else can. Prayer helps us recognize the fruits, develop them and offer them in the service of God and God's people.

- **How hard (or easy) is it to recognize our own uniqueness as a gift from God, special qualities that He has given us to be able to spread His word?**
- **Do you sometimes feel that God has not given you the right strengths to tackle your daily life? How do you trust that the strengths you have are the ones you need?**

Each of us is gifted in some unique way. We can bear fruit for God in a way nobody else can. Prayer helps us recognize the fruits, develop them and offer them in the service of God and God's people.

- **What are your unique gifts? How do use these gifts to help your friends and family?**

Remember that when we use our gifts, we are being Jesus' branches here on Earth.

