

2nd Sunday of Easter - Divine Mercy

Acts 5:12-16
Ps 118:1-4,13-15,22-24
Rev 1:9-13,17-19
John 20:19-31

Monday April 25
St. Mark, Evangelist
1 Peter 5:5b-14
Ps 89:2-3,6-7,16-17
Mark 16:15-20

Tuesday April 26
Acts 4:32-37
Ps 93:1-2,5
John 3:7b-15

Wednesday April 27
Acts 5:17-26
Ps 34:2-3,4-5,6-7,8-9
John 3:16-21

Thursday April 28
Acts 5:27-33
Ps 34:2,9,17-18,19-20
John 3:31-36

Friday April 29
St. Catherine of Siena
Acts 5:34-42
Ps 27:1,4,13-14
John 6:1-15

Saturday April 30
Acts 6:1-7
Ps 33:1-2,4-5,18-19
John 6:16-21

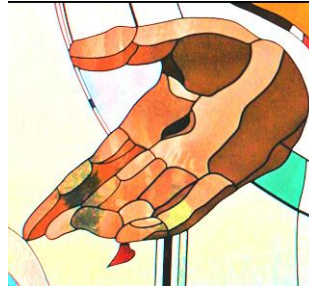
The Gospel reading sets the stage for Pentecost. Prior to giving us the full gift of his Spirit, Jesus provides the gift of peace, the gift of his heart. A supernatural gift, it penetrates deep into our own hearts. It is the calming presence of Christ when we face challenges and difficulties.

Jesus bestowed it upon his first apostles twice in the same meeting shortly after his resurrection. Then he gave them the life-breath of God, the Holy Spirit, and commissioned them with the priesthood of forgiving the sins of others – another gift that brings peace.

This gift of peace has been distributed by Jesus ever since, through the ordained priesthood in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. And to hold us steady in our efforts to remain holy, Jesus gives us the breath of God. This breath,

this life-sustaining presence of God's Spirit, which created the world and keeps us spiritually alive, is the Holy Spirit – God's holiness activating us and dwelling within us.

Whatever is not holy – not of the Spirit – is sinful and destructive. Jesus, who is the embodiment of Divine Mercy, died on the cross and gave us his Spirit so that we could live in the forgiveness of God.



When you pray the "Our Father", do it slowly and intentionally. During the words, "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us," think of people who have irritated you or hurt you without remorse. Consciously forgive them.

Otherwise, your unforgiveness could affect their eternal souls as well as your own, because you're denying them an opportunity to understand God's forgiveness through your example, and you're denying God the opportunity to forgive you for your sin of unforgiveness.

Forgiveness doesn't mean approving of the sin nor forgetting. It means letting go of the desire to retaliate. It means choosing to love whether it's deserved or not. It means entering anew into Christ's gift of peace.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. Who in your life is hardest to forgive? Perhaps yourself! What sins are you retaining by refusing to accept that God has already made his forgiveness available? What are you going to do to let go of the unforgiveness?
2. Name a situation that illustrates the resurrection power of forgiveness. How did the Holy Spirit help make forgiveness easier?
3. What changed when forgiveness was given? How did this bring the kingdom of God to earth?