

2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER



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 readings reveal some of the many facets of God's mercy. The psalm proclaims that "God's 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."

Today we encounter the Thomas in all of us who asks for more. And yet the gift we have received that somehow Thomas and others had not was that we have not seen as they did, through God's mercy we still believe.

The disciples to whom Jesus first appeared and whom he showed his wounds 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!

Mary gave birth to Jesus and with the love she taught him watched him give himself to the world. When 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 7:8–14; Psalm 40:7–11; Hebrews 10:4–10; Luke 1:26–38.*

Tuesday, April 9

Invitation to give

Imagine being told to give all your possessions to those in need. Many of our forebears eschewed lavish lives and gave their wealth to the poor. These men and women stood in solidarity with those in need. We are invited to be in relationship with both God and others through our shared baptism into Jesus’ death and resurrection. As Jesus emptied himself for us, we empty ourselves to others. How can you empty yourself for members of your community? *Today’s readings: Acts 4:32–37; Psalm 93:1–5; John 3:7b–15.*

Wednesday, April 10

Forgiving yourself

Not only does God hear the cry of the poor, as the psalm proclaims, but God sent the Son so that all might have eternal life. It is especially heartening to hear that “God did not send the Son into the world to condemn.” Pray that God 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 34:2–9; John 3:16–21.*

Thursday, April 11

Power to speak

“We must obey God rather than people,” Peter tells his persecutors in today’s reading from Acts. Bishop Stanislaus, who the Church remembers today as an exemplar of faith, was not afraid to speak out against the evil in a 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, 17–20; 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 God’s word and is open to God’s 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 us not to be afraid and yet fear keeps a hold on us. God asks us for our complete trust. God is always with us. Pause to feel God’s 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 33:1–5, 18–19; John 6:16–21.*