

Homily – Divine Mercy Sunday

How merciful are you?

It's easier in a way to be merciful to those who are merciful to us; but what about to those who have no sense of wrongdoing – no sense of remorse?

In the Gospel today Jesus has his first collective meeting with his apostles and disciples after the resurrection. They were hiding in a locked room in the city of Jerusalem, for fear of the Jews. You could imagine that Jesus could be entitled to be angry and resentful towards his followers – who had, in many cases run away after Gethsemane, or even in Simon Peter's case, denied him three times. They must have felt the universal presence of sin.

But now, in the person of Jesus risen from the dead, a new world has begun, - Jesus sets the tone for the forgiveness of sin. – God's Divine Mercy. The apostles being sent out as instruments of God's mercy. Jesus sets a standard of Mercy that the world has never seen before. The Son of God knows all too well the dangers of revenge, bitterness, anger and recrimination. As St John reminds us in the Second Reading, the victory that overcomes obstacles in life, is our faith. I don't need to remind you how the lack of mercy can so easily divide families and neighbours in a community. A lot of the time it can be argument of money and material things; especially when parents die or other relatives, and it's around the dividing up of the estate. A lack of divine mercy can result in human greed, deceit and betrayal of trust.

Remember that Jesus died on the Cross owning no material possessions and then appeared in his resurrected state showing the treasures of his wounds as a manifestation of Divine Mercy. The prelude to this showing of his wounds, is the pronouncement "Peace Be With You".

St John Paul II, said of this Divine Mercy Sunday, which he promulgated in his glorious papacy. "Humanity must let itself be touched and pervaded by the Spirit given to it by the risen Christ.... It is the Spirit who heals the wounds of the heart, pull down the barriers that separate us from God and divide us from one another.

The best weapon against bitterness and division is Divine Mercy; a sense of magnanimity or greater moral values that does not delight in revenge.

When Pope John Paul II visited Poland in 1979. The same political leaders and secret police, that sought his suppression and persecuted the Catholic Church in Poland, when he was Archbishop of Krakow; the place of the apparition of Jesus to St Faustina, he defeated their power, by Divine Mercy, by promoting and teaching the love of Jesus Christ, by opening their hearts to the possibilities of their own conversion and reconciliation.

It's easy to judge the lack of mercy in others; but what about you and I? do I preach the Gospel of repentance while harbouring a grudge against my brother or sister-in-law. By praying for someone who has wronged us, perhaps very deeply; I begin to heal the wound of resentment and recrimination. By Jesus showing his wounds to his apostles and disciples – he teaches the Church in the world the healing powers of his own wounds.

To heal the world from the wounds of Sin....

I leave you with one parting thought on 'Divine Mercy'

One who does not know how to forgive does not know how to love. One who does not seek how to be forgiven cannot receive love, - Christ is the meeting point between the forgiver and the forgiven.

Amen Alleluia!

St Paul -Colossians

You are the People of God, he loved you and chose you for his own. So, then you must put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Be helpful to one another, and forgive one another, whenever any of you has a complaint against someone else.

God Bless you ALL