

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY



Peace Be with You

God our Father,
you sent your Son to give us life,
and to bless us with his peace.
Your Son breathed his Spirit on his disciples
and on us today,
filling us with his mercy and forgiveness,
his peace and his grace.
May we be filled with the Spirit,
and take that Spirit into the world,
filling the world with your peace.
May we be empowered by the Spirit,
so that others may grow in holiness
and love,
and your grace might flow beyond
our grasp.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

April 23, 2017

The Communal Life



Today's Readings: Acts 2:42–47; Psalm 118:2–4, 13–15, 22–24; 1 Peter 1:3–9; John 20:19–31. The Acts of the Apostles describes the strength of the first Christian communities. Today's First Reading shows that those early Christians did *all things in common*. They gathered to learn the teachings of the Apostles. They shared food and other goods. They prayed at the temple and in their homes—together. Life in Christ is best served when it becomes life in Christ together, life in Christ in common with other believers.

On this Second Sunday in the Easter season, our communities of faith should be proclaimed as our sources of life in Christ lived daily. When we suffer, our community prays for us, shares food, and seeks ways to help us. When we share good news, our community proclaims that joy ever

more loudly, and promises continued support and prayer as.

Look around your church community today. Here is your faith fan club. Empowered by the Spirit, renewed by the Risen Christ, and graced by the continued presence of the Father, our communities of faith assemble and share what breaking bread together means. Rediscover the sincerity of heart within your parish. You will find that the peace of Christ, which is proclaimed in the Gospel as Christ's greeting, will rest more deeply when voiced and named clearly and with sincerity. You will find that the faith that is more precious than gold, as St. Peter writes in today's Second Reading, is more powerful when the assembly proclaims it together by word, in action, and for one another. The joy of the resurrection is palpable in the community of faith.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 24

Boldly Speaking God's Word

In today's reading from the Acts of the Apostles, those earliest Christians were empowered by the Spirit over and over again. That empowerment was manifested by speaking the Word of God with boldness. In the light of the Resurrection and its meaning affecting all avenues of one's life, speaking the Word of God boldly can be less daunting. Has Easter helped you to reflect on how boldly you apply the Word of God to your life? *Today's Readings: Acts 4:23–31; Psalm 2:1–3, 4–7a, 7b–9; John 3:1–8.*

Tuesday, April 25

St. Mark, Evangelist

The writer of the oldest Gospel, St. Mark, was not one of the Twelve. His Gospel is the shortest, and was used as a source for both Matthew and Luke. Take some time today to read from this straightforward account of Jesus, perhaps focusing on his presentation of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection. Consider the succinct ending to the Gospel and his emphasis on faith. *Today's Readings: 1 Peter 5:5b–14; Psalm 89:2–3, 6–7, 15–17; Mark 16:15–20.*

Wednesday, April 26

God So Loved the World

The opening lines of today's Gospel capture both Incarnation and redemption. God so loved the world, so loves us, that he gave his Only Begotten Son that we might have eternal life. How much love do we have within us that we show others? We have many chances to show our love in the world, but do not always accept those opportunities. Today can be the day to accept one of those opportunities and demonstrate our love, which is God's love, to the world. *Today's Readings: Acts 5:17–26; Psalm 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9; John 3:16–21.*

Thursday, April 27

Easter Joy

After six weeks of Lent, we have this wonderful season of Easter, which stretches even longer. However, it seems almost too much to remain joyful and ready to sing alleluia for that long. Pope Francis has reminded us that, as Christians, we have a calling to be joyful. The joy of the Resurrection is found in rediscovering Christ here and now, in one another and in daily experiences. Don't let go of that joy. *Today's Readings: Acts 5:27–33; Psalm 34:2, 9, 17–18, 19–20; John 3:31–36.*

Friday, April 28

Loaves and Fish and Fragments

The Gospel of the multiplication of the loaves and fish helps us contemplate the many ways that Jesus shares himself with us and feeds us. In this story, Jesus is aware of the crowd's need for physical as well as spiritual nourishment. What do you do with your leftovers? How do you share your loaves, your food, your mealtimes? Sharing Jesus Christ with others is simpler than you might think. We might be more inclined to participate in that sharing if we take time to realize the many ways Christ has shared himself with us. *Today's Readings: Acts 5:34–42; Psalm 27:1, 4, 13–14; John 6:1–15.*

Saturday, April 29

St. Catherine of Siena

One of the great mystics and spiritual writers of the Church, Catherine of Siena suffered from the stigmata, the wounds of Christ. However, her wounds were not visible to the world until her deathbed. Instead, her joy in the Passion of the Lord was paramount. She sought, with great integrity, to unify a divided Church and to draw all peoples to the Cross as the one means of achieving salvation. *Today's Readings: 1 John 1:5–2:2; Psalm 103:1–2, 3–4, 8–9, 13–14, 17–18; Matthew 11:25–30.*

