

“Unless I see – I will not believe”1st Reading : Acts 2: 42 – 47

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 118:2-4,13-15,22-24

2nd Reading : 1 Peter 1: 3 – 9

Gospel: John : 20: 19 – 31

Gospel Reading : Jn 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 nail marks 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

Meditation: Do you know the joy of the resurrection? The Risen Lord Jesus revealed the glory of his resurrection to his disciples gradually and over a period of time. Even after the apostles saw the empty tomb and heard the reports of Jesus' appearance to the women, they were still weak in faith and fearful of being arrested by the Jewish authorities. When Jesus appeared to them he offered proofs of his resurrection by showing them the wounds of his passion, his pierced hands and side. He calmed their fears and brought them peace, the peace which reconciles sinners and makes us friends of God.

Live and proclaim the Gospel of mercy in the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus did something which only love and trust can do. He commissioned his weak and timid apostles to bring the good news of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. This sending out of the disciples is parallel to the sending out of Jesus by his heavenly Father. Jesus fulfilled his mission through his perfect love and obedience to the will of his Father. He called his first disciples and he now calls each one of us to do the same. Just as he gave his first disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, so he breathes on each of us the same Holy Spirit who equips us with new life, power, joy, and courage to live each day as followers of the Risen Lord.

The last apostle to meet the resurrected Lord was the first to go with him to Jerusalem at Passover time. The apostle Thomas was a natural pessimist. When Jesus proposed that they visit Lazarus after receiving news of his illness, Thomas said to the disciples: "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11:16). While Thomas deeply loved the Lord, he lacked the courage to stand with Jesus in his passion and crucifixion. After Jesus' death, Thomas made the mistake of withdrawing from the other apostles. He sought loneliness rather than fellowship in his time of trial and adversity. He doubted the women who saw the resurrected Jesus and he doubted his own fellow apostles.

Through the gift of faith we recognize the Risen Lord and receive new life. When Thomas finally had the courage to re-join the other apostles, the Lord Jesus made his presence known to him and reassured him that he had indeed overcome death and risen again. When Thomas recognized his Master, he believed and exclaimed that Jesus was truly Lord and truly God! Through the gift of faith we, too, proclaim that Jesus is our personal Lord and our God. He died and rose that we, too, might have new life in him. The Lord offers each of us new life in his Holy Spirit that we may know him personally and walk in this new way of life through the power of his resurrection. Do you believe in the good news of the Gospel and in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring you new life, hope, and joy?

Questions for Community Faith Sharing:

- 1) How do you believe and recognize the Risen Lord and receive new life?
- 2) Jesus fulfilled his mission through his perfect love and obedience to the will of his Father. How will you obey and do the will of God the Father?
- 3) How can you live and proclaim the Gospel of Mercy in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring hope and joy?

"Lord Jesus Christ, through your victory over sin and death you have overcome all the powers of sin and darkness. Help me to draw near to you and to trust in your life-giving word. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and strengthen my faith in your promises and my hope in the power of your resurrection."