

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

FIRST READING

Acts 2:42-47

The believers devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the Apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the Temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they shared their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

*Ps 118(117):2-4. 13-15b.
22-24. R 1*

R Give praise to the Lord, for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.

Let the house of Israel say, 'His mercy endures for ever.'
Let the house of Aaron say, 'His mercy endures for ever.'
Let those who fear the Lord say, 'His mercy endures for ever.' R

They pushed me, pushed me hard to knock me down, but the Lord was my helper. The Lord is my strength and my song; he was my saviour. There are shouts of joy and salvation in the tents of the righteous. R

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the Lord has this been done, a marvel in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice in it and be glad. R

SECOND READING

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been

grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith — more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire — may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia...

You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord.

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. **Alleluia...**

GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.

PTO

Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.'

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord'. But he said to them, 'Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.'

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

When Jesus, standing in the midst of His disciples, had said: Peace be to you, He breathed on them and said: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Let me remark that Holy Scripture speaks of two occasions only on which the Holy Ghost was given by our Redeemer: the first, when He was still on earth, and the second when He was already reigning in heaven.

On the first occasion, as it is seen in this Gospel, He breathed on His disciples, and on the second the Holy Ghost came down from heaven upon them in the form of fiery tongues. Now, should we wish to know the reason why the Holy Ghost was imparted at two different times, and under different circumstances, we must consider that charity contains two

commandments, namely, the love of God and the love of our neighbour. It seems, therefore, that the Holy Ghost was given on earth to move us to fulfill the duty of loving our neighbour; whereas He was sent from heaven to inflame our hearts with true love for God. But, since the two commandments spring forth from charity, which is one and the same, so was the one and the same Holy Ghost given by our Redeemer on two occasions to wit, the first time when He was still on earth, and the second after His Ascension into heaven, giving us to understand that the love for our neighbour serves like steps leading us up to the love for God, according to the words of His beloved disciple: If anyone say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, Whom he seeth not (1 John 4:20).

Pope St Gregory the Great's
Homily on John 20:19-31