

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 16, 2023

Gospel: (John 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 said this, he breathed on them and said, *"Receive the Holy Spirit."* A week later...Jesus 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."*

Reflection:

The disciples were gathered behind locked doors because of fear, then the Risen Jesus stands in their midst and they are then filled with joy as Jesus speaks words of peace and forgiveness. Peace and forgiveness open up the spaciousness of salvation, shattering the confines of locked doors and doubt. But Thomas does not believe the witness of the other disciples; he wants tangible evidence. When Jesus offers his hands and side, Thomas rather than touching only utters a profound profession of faith. (Living Liturgy, p.118)

Vincentian Mediation:

"... the poor we see with the eyes of flesh; they are there and we can put finger and hand in their wounds and the scars of the crown of thorns are visible on their foreheads; and at this point incredulity no longer has place and we should fall at their feet and say with the Apostle, *Tu est Dominus et Deus meus (You are my Lord and my God!)*. You are our masters, and we will be your servants. You are for us the sacred images of that God whom we do not see, and not knowing how to love Him otherwise shall we not love Him in your person? (Ramson, Praying with Frederic, p.98)

Discussion: (*Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

How do we have the eyes of faith, like Frederic, to see the Risen Jesus whose scars and nailprints the poor and suffering bear on their bodies?

Closing Prayer:

O Lord, give us the grace to live the **Corporal works of Mercy**:
To feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those in prison, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and bury the dead.

And may our lives reflect the **Spiritual works of Mercy**:
To admonish the sinner, instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, bear wrongs patiently, forgive all injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead. Amen

