

## Read

Acts 2:42-47

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

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

## Second Sunday of Easter / Sunday of Divine Mercy

April 12, 2026



### REFLECTION

Although we are very familiar now with the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection, imagine how it must have been for his disciples. Nothing like what Jesus did had ever happened before (nor has it happened since). In this Sunday's Gospel, we hear of the apostles' first encounter with the risen Lord. Jesus appears to his apostles, breathes on them, and shows them his wounds from his crucifixion. Thomas famously was not there for this event and claimed that he would not believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead until he saw Jesus in person, just like the other apostles got to. Jesus appears again and Thomas believes. Jesus' words reach out to us today when he commends those of us who were not present at his resurrection, but still believe in him.

The reading goes on with further comments for future believers (us!). John, the Gospel's author, notes that he wrote this account of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection so that all who read it will come to believe that Jesus truly is the Messiah. We are left to make our own choice based on what we have read: Do we believe?



### ACTION

When Catholics gather on Sunday for Mass, we recite together the Nicene Creed (though the Apostles' Creed is sometimes recited instead). The Nicene Creed was formulated in AD 325 and further refined in 381. It articulates some of the main tenets of our faith. Read through the creed this week (<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/nicene-creed>) and take some time to reflect on the beliefs that guide your life. Would you include some of the same proclamations that we make in the Nicene Creed? Create your own personal creed of statements which you believe to be true and that shape your life.



Learn more about  
the Nicene Creed and what  
it means:

<https://youtu.be/aBaiMWrX9v4>

### QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What are some fundamental principles that you believe in and live your life by?
- ❖ Do you consider yourself to be someone who believes things easily?  
Why or why not?



April 12, 2026

# SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER / SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY

## LECTIONARY #43A

Acts 2:42–47

Psalms 118:2–4, 13–15, 22–24

1 Peter 1:3–9

John 20:19–31

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

After Jesus' death, the disciples feared for their own lives. In today's Gospel reading, the disciples, except Thomas, were gathered behind locked doors because of their fears. Jesus appeared to them and offered them peace. Thomas, hearing of the events, does not believe in their stories. A week later, the disciples are still locked in the room and Jesus again appeared to them. This time, Thomas was there and he, like the other disciples, believes upon seeing Jesus. This story highlights the fears and doubts of the disciples, as well as Jesus' gift of peace. It reminds us that we are called to believe without seeing. While we can witness the faith of those who have preceded us, we are still among the "blessed" who have not seen but believed.

**Q FOCUS:** *Faith asks that we believe without seeing.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

The Second Sunday of Easter is part of the octave, or eight days, of Easter—the observance of Easter is so important that we continue living in the liturgical time of Easter Sunday for eight days! In 2000, Pope John Paul II declared that the Second Sunday of Easter would be celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday. This devotion to the Divine Mercy began with a young Polish nun named St. Faustina Kowalska (1905–1938). She received visions from Jesus,

instructing her in the ways of praying in the spirit of God's divine mercy and the importance of this attribute of God for the salvation of the world. On this Sunday of Divine Mercy, we are called to reflect on the mercies of Jesus poured out upon us through his life, death, and resurrection.

### Church Teaching Connection

"In the midst of our own crises and our difficulties, divine mercy often makes us aware of the sufferings of our neighbor. We think that we are experiencing unbearable pain and situations of suffering, and we suddenly discover that others around us are silently enduring even worse things. If we care for the wounds of our neighbor and pour upon them the balm of mercy, we find being reborn within us a hope that comforts us in our weariness. . . . For whenever we do these things, we encounter Jesus" (Pope Francis, Homily, April 24, 2022).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

Alleluia, alleluia.

### Gospel

John 20:19–31

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

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 nailmarks 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.

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

After Jesus' death, the disciples were afraid and confused. Their beloved teacher and Messiah had died a horrible death on the cross. They most likely feared their own persecution for being Jesus' friends

and followers. For example, we see in Luke's Gospel that Peter followed Jesus' arrest from a distance and denied knowing Jesus three times (Luke 22:54–62). He was afraid of being associated with Jesus, for fear the crowds would turn on him and he would also be sentenced to death. This fear hung over the disciples in the days following Jesus' death. They had no idea how to move forward from his death and had no assurances of their own safety.

► **Has fear ever limited or prevented you from doing something? Have you ever felt paralyzed with fear?**

It is into this atmosphere of fear that Jesus appears to the disciples as they are hiding behind locked doors. Jesus offers them peace. This gift reassures the disciples, and they rejoice in his presence. Jesus then breathed on them and gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit to forgive sins. Just as in his life, Jesus' ministry in death and resurrection was focused on mercy.

► **How does the peace of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit reassure you in times when you are afraid?**

► **How do you think the disciples felt after Jesus was once again with them?**

Thomas was not with the disciples during this visit and, understandably, did not believe them. When Jesus again appeared to the disciples (they were still locked inside the room), Thomas was present. As he had done before, Jesus extended his peace to them. Then Jesus offered his wounds as a sign that it was truly him, and Thomas made a profound exclamation of faith: "My Lord and my God!"

Sometimes when we doubt and worry, we also have crises of faith. Jesus is patient with us, coming to us again and again in prayer and in the sacraments, confirming his presence in our lives and transforming us with joy.

► **Does it make Thomas a bad disciple because he didn't believe what the others told him about their encounter with Jesus?**

► **What are some things that might cause young people to experience doubts along their journey of faith?**

Today, as post-ascension Christians, we are not able to see the resurrected Jesus to confirm that our faith is not misguided. We trust and believe and are blessed as “those who have not seen and have believed.” Through Scripture, the legacy of faith left for us through the communion of saints, the teachings of the Church, and the gift of the sacraments, we are supported in our faith and become witnesses of it for others. When we worry, doubt, and struggle, we are reminded of the struggles of those first disciples and pray for the renewal of faith and the peace of Jesus to fill our hearts once again.

## Wrapping It Up

*Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the “Church Teaching Connection” on page 172.*

**Jesus brings us peace in the midst of our doubts and fears.**

**The Holy Spirit is a gift of the resurrected Jesus and is with us in our daily living.**

**We encounter Jesus when we share our faith with one another.**

## Act on the Word

### Discovering the Saints

*For this activity, you will need phones or computers, paper, and pens.*

Our Church today is a communion of all those who have believed but not seen. We are post-ascension believers that do not have the personal experience of physically walking side by side with Jesus like the disciples did in the Gospels. We encounter Jesus in different ways: in the sacraments, in prayer, and in one another. The witnesses of the saints give us examples of how to walk as disciples, without having the benefit of being present with Christ in this life.

Divide the teens into pairs and have each group choose a saint to research. After they select their saint, have them write the saint’s name on the board so no one else picks the same one.

Give the pairs time to research their chosen saint. Ask them to find basic information, like who that person was, where he or she lived, and so on, but also to dig deeper and try to learn how the saint prayed to God, modeled his or her life on Jesus, Bible verses or prayers he or she often reflected on, and more.

Once the teens have researched their saints, have the pairs put together an interview skit. Have one partner be the interviewer and the other, pretending to be the saint, be the interviewee. Have them come up with their own questions and answers using the information they just found. Give them time to create a skit, and then ask them to perform it in front of the group.

After all the pairs have presented, invite the teens to share any new or interesting facts they learned and how knowing about these saints can help them be faithful followers of Christ.

## Closing Prayer

*O God of enduring mercy and love,  
as we rejoice in the everlasting peace  
of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
grant that we may be worthy witnesses  
to his presence in the world  
and bearers of that same peace in all that  
we say and do.*

*Through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

## For Next Sunday

*To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.*