

# Read

Acts 5:12-16

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

Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13,  
17-19

John 20:19-31

# Second Sunday of Easter / Sunday of Divine Mercy

## April 27, 2025



### REFLECTION

There are many obstacles to believing in God and in the life and promises of Jesus. We ask important questions, pose hypotheticals, and even make definitive statements such as “I won’t believe unless . . . (fill in the blank).” Thomas believed because he was able to see the wounds of Jesus up close. He needed to touch the hands and side of Christ to know he had truly risen from the dead.

In order to touch someone’s hand or side, they would need to be very close. Are you willing to be this close to Jesus? Do you dare to reach out and touch his wounds? Being this close, would you allow him to see and touch your wounds as well?

How can you gain this type of intimacy with the Lord? One way is through serving your neighbors: get out into your community, see their wounds, and touch their lives. Allow yourself the opportunity to walk with others and not just view their lives from a distance. This what Jesus does for us. He meets us where we are and calls us into relationship. Through this encounter we believe, and because we believe, we seek more encounters with him.

### QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today’s readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ How can you draw closer to Jesus this week?
- ❖ What scars and wounds are you willing to show Jesus?

### ACTION

Jesus loves those on the margins. Countless organizations acting in the name of Christ serve marginalized communities locally and around the globe. Schedule a time to serve your community and experience firsthand the love Christ has for his people through service and advocacy for those in need.



Find local and national volunteer opportunities through the Catholic Volunteer Network. <https://catholicvolunteernetwork.org/>





April 27, 2025

# SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER / SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY

## LECTIONARY #45C

Acts 5:12-16

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

Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

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

The reading today from the Gospel of John is used in each of our three Sunday lectionary cycles (Years A, B, and C). This alerts us to the significance of this reading in our celebration of Easter Time. In the first scene, Jesus comes to the disciples who are behind locked doors and shows them his wounds. He gives them the gift of the Holy Spirit and gives them the gift of forgiving others in his name. In the second scene, Thomas, who was not there the first time and didn't believe what the others were saying, witnesses Jesus for himself. This story of love, mercy, discipleship, and belief is still relevant to our lives today as we struggle with questions and doubts and live our discipleship in a world where Jesus is no longer physically with us.

**Q FOCUS:** *Jesus brings peace to our hearts and sends us out to share it with others.*

## Liturgical Calendar Connection

On the Second Sunday after Easter, our Church concludes the Easter Octave by celebrating the Sunday of Divine Mercy. This focus on God's mercy is connected with the visions that St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun, had of Jesus in which he communicated a desire for a devotion to the Divine Mercy to be spread throughout the world. In her visions, Jesus expressed his desire to bring humanity

into his loving and merciful embrace. This Sunday, we celebrate the divine compassion and mercy of Jesus. In his paschal mystery, Jesus freely expressed his unconditional love to the world and continues to share it with us today.

## Church Teaching Connection

"In faith, Christ is not simply the one in whom we believe, the supreme manifestation of God's love; he is also the one with whom we are united precisely in order to believe. Faith does not merely gaze at Jesus, but sees things as Jesus himself sees them, with his own eyes: it is a participation in his way of seeing. . . . Jesus, the Son of God, is the one who makes God known to us (cf. Jn 1:18). Christ's life, his way of knowing the Father and living in complete and constant relationship with him, opens up new and inviting vistas for human experience" (Pope Francis, *Lumen fidei*, 18).

## 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:*

Jesus' disciples were afraid after all they had witnessed in Jesus' arrest, torture, and execution. They saw the crowd taunting and jeering at Jesus. As his disciples, they feared the crowd would come after

them, so they locked themselves behind closed doors. The disciples had witnessed Jesus perform many miracles and healings and could attest to his power, but then Good Friday came, and Jesus was crucified and died on a cross. How could this be? Why did he not save himself?

► **Imagine you are one of the disciples. What must have been going through your head after Jesus' death? How might you have reacted if you were in their place?**

► **What are some things that cause people to be afraid? How do people act when they are afraid?**

In that place of uncertainty and fear, Jesus appears to the disciples and offers them peace and comfort. He showed them his wounds so they would believe that he had risen from the dead. They rejoiced that he was once again with them. Unfortunately, Thomas was not there when Jesus came the first time. He did not have the benefit of seeing Jesus and receiving his peace. Therefore, when the other disciples told him about it, he remained as they were before they saw Jesus—unbelieving. When Jesus comes again, the disciples are still in the locked room. He patiently brings his peace again to this situation and reveals himself to Thomas.

► **Do you ever have doubts in your faith? What are some ways that you can overcome these doubts or learn more about your faith?**

Many of us would probably have reacted the same way Thomas did when he was first told about the resurrection. We still deal with doubts in our faith life today. When Thomas saw Jesus' wounds, he trusted and believed and responded with a clear statement of Jesus' divinity, calling him "My Lord and my God!" Sometimes in our faith journey, it takes time to believe. We often doubt, like Thomas. It is a natural progression in our own growth as disciples. Perhaps Thomas would not have been so bold and clear in his profession of faith if he had not gone through a phase of doubt. Perhaps our faith, as we work through our doubts and questions, will come out stronger than ever when we overcome them.

In the midst of the disciples rejoicing that Jesus was with them once again, Jesus tells them that they still have work to do. Their discipleship did not end just because he was no longer with them. He gives



them the power to forgive the sins of others. He strengthens them through the Holy Spirit and sends them out to share God's merciful love with the world. We, too, are called to share our faith with the world and proclaim Christ as "my Lord and my God."

## 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 184.

**Jesus appeared to the disciples and calmed their fears and worry.**

**Thomas proclaimed his faith in Jesus.**

**The work of Jesus did not end with his death.**

## Act on the Word

### Welcoming Neophytes

For this activity, you will need blank cards or cardstock, art supplies, and the names of the neophytes in your parish or at neighboring parishes (you can contact your parish office to find this information).

Share with the teens that last week at the Easter Vigil, we welcomed newly baptized adults into our faith community. Even if there were not any at our parish, thousands of people around the world were baptized on that night. These new members are called neophytes (from the Greek for "newly planted"). These men and women had been inspired by the Good News of Jesus to receive baptism and enter into a relationship with God. During Lent, they entered into a time of intense spiritual preparation and then received baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. Sacraments transform the entire community of faith and as baptized members of that community, we are called

to actively participate in the life of the community. We are called to share in the joys and sorrows of others and build up one another on our journey of discipleship.

Have the young people discuss in a large group how they can welcome these new members of the faith. Brainstorm ideas of ways to make them feel welcomed into your community or into the Church as whole if there were not any baptized in your parish. Is there something in particular that your group of young people can do? After completing a list, make a plan to put some of the items into action.

Then, using cardstock and art supplies, have the teens create cards welcoming the neophytes. Give each teen the name of a neophyte they should address the card to. Make sure they write a thoughtful and creative welcome card. Ask that the teens introduce themselves and hand them out at Mass next week. If they are unable to, or if the neophytes are from another parish, coordinate with the parish secretary or a catechist to deliver the cards.

### Closing Prayer

*God of tenderness and mercy,*

*you call us to share our belief in you*

*and minister to those in need of your care.*

*Guide our efforts of evangelization*

*so that we may bring others*

*to know of your love for them.*

*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.