

**Second Sunday of Easter  
(Divine Mercy Sunday) Homily  
April 19, 2020 Year A  
Acts 2:42-47 / 1 Pt. 1:3-9 / Jn. 20:19-31  
Fr. Paul Attah-Nsiah**

**“Peace be with you”**

**“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases:  
his mercies never come to an end.  
They are new every morning” (Lam. 3:22)**

On this Divine Mercy Sunday, we remember and celebrate that Jesus does come through our locked doors and is reaching out to us in our isolation! How perfectly poised is this gospel for our life today. The apostles were locked down...we are locked down. Homes, businesses, gyms, parks – we're locked down.

Fear locked their doors, not faith... fear locks us down; fear that we might catch or give this deadly virus. Fear that we could be quarantined even from those within our locked down space, in even greater solitude and isolation – like all those in assisted living and nursing homes.

And in the middle of all this, Jesus' love breaks through – our locked everything - and says, not once, but three times – PEACE BE WITH YOU. In the sacrifices, discipline, and generosity of today, Jesus' great mercy cries out: “PEACE BE WITH YOU.” I am here, right here. Yes, true peace, profound peace comes from the experience of God's mercy!

For many of us, these days are beyond difficult. The mental and emotional strain is a great burden, a heavy cross. My friends, I ask you to pray! Unite your struggle with the wounds of Jesus. Create for yourselves a “Go To” plan when you feel overwhelmed. Take a step back; take a deep breath, close your eyes and imagine, you are in that locked upper room: and HEAR Jesus say to YOU: “Peace be with you.”

We cannot take our frustration out in one another. BE that presence of Jesus for someone else in your home. Build some hopefulness and kindness between you. Take a few moments everyday to say a prayer together. Maybe say the Divine Mercy chaplet or a decade of the rosary together one day, and two decades the next day... Bake together. Clean and reorganize a room together. Build a routine that helps everyone. Lead the way with YOUR own “peace be with you” – with the others in your home. Commit to saying something kind to each one within your home everyday. Build a tree of gratitude that you put one thankful leaf on every day.

The second time Jesus offers His great resurrection gift of “Peace be with you” to his apostles, He gave them His Holy Spirit to carry them, to lift them up and send them. Yes, Jesus' peace is not just a greeting, but a gift from the Risen Lord. Take that peace with you to those in your home; bring it to yourself! Today, He is sending US to one another, the few we do touch right at home and those in our essential work places, and the few we reach through some technology or just the old-fashioned note or phone. **We are offering God's Spirit and healing mercy to others when we reach out.**

And, we're told, Thomas was not with them – doubting Thomas, who brashly proclaimed: ...” Unless I see the wounds...” **Jesus can't possibly be in this** – Thomas says with all the conviction of his limitations. We too ask: **'How can God be in this?'** And then, seeing the wounds reveals to Thomas that Jesus IS ALIVE! Our wounds too (that we don't fully understand), reveal that Jesus IS alive and

with us. Our isolation and suffering so often hide the presence and mercy of Jesus, and our hearts filled with doubt.

And then we hear a third time, “Peace be with you” as Jesus came through the locked doors yet again to Thomas. **Jesus is always coming through our locked down places.** Maybe that locked door place for us is our thinking, or our heart, or our illness, that refuses to believe that Jesus can be in the midst of this – with me – right here! My friends: believe it! Jesus IS with us in these difficult days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Seek Jesus in this time so that you, like Thomas, can say your own: “My Lord and my God”. “Peace be with you.”

Today’s celebration calls us to be INSTRUMENTS of God’s MERCY and PEACE. Please join me in saying the Peace Prayer we know so well.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen.