Second Sunday of Easter - Divine Mercy Sunday

April 24, 2022

First Reading: Acts 5:12-16
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
Second Reading: Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19
Gospel: John 20:19-31
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“You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me.
Blessed are those who have not seen me and still believe.” (Jn. 20:29)

As a child in Catholic school, it was not uncommon to be called a “Doubting Thomas” if one expressed misgivings or questioned something said by a teacher. But, did Thomas really doubt?

When Jesus appeared to the disciples after his crucifixion, he found them huddled together in a locked room, fearful and despondent. Upon seeing Jesus alive in bodily form, they were overcome with joy. Thomas, absent for this first appearance, continued to grieve and was reluctant to believe. Immediately upon seeing Jesus and his wounds, Thomas made the highest confession of faith recorded in John’s Gospel: “My Lord and my God!” (Jn. 20:28).

As Jesus’ followers encountered the Risen Lord and heard his assurance “Peace be with you” (Jn. 20:19) fear gave way to rejoicing, despair to bold confidence. The Apostles were empowered to proclaim Jesus and to perform many signs and wonders in his name (Acts. 5:12). As a result of these actions, great numbers of men and women were added to the Lord (Acts. 5:14). And, countless numbers have been added, generation after generation, through the witness of those believers who came before us.

As human beings, experience enables us to change our views, to accept new information, to see a different reality. When we are open to change, our lives can be transformed.

What makes us believe in something or someone? Much of what we believe, we can’t directly prove for ourselves, so we take things on faith, on the testimony of others. Think of the laws of nature, of scientific discovery and human history. We believe because we trust the source of the information, the messenger.

Why do you believe what you believe? Whose voices do you listen to?
Do they lead you toward greater love or to fear?

Although little is certain about his life, tradition holds that Thomas was the first to evangelize India and died a martyr’s death in Madras in the mid-first century. Thomas saw signs and believed. We see signs in the lives of faithful witnesses and we believe. We are likewise called to be witnesses to those who will come after us.

As we celebrate the centenary of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart, we give thanks for the “Long Grey Line” of faithful women upon whose shoulders we stand. Our foremothers exemplified loving service and compassionate presence as believers in Jesus and St. Marguerite. We who follow have been privileged to share our lives with God’s people over these 100 years. We have been gifted, enriched and blessed by those we served, near and far.

May the joy of the Resurrection renew our desire to bring the love of Christ to others as Sisters, Associates, Colleagues and Friends. Together, we live St. Marguerite’s legacy, Creating a Compassionate World.