

# Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Brothers and Sisters,

Last Sunday we celebrated Easter. We remembered and reflected on how Easter changed and transformed the disciples of Jesus. Changed by the Easter event, the first believers maintained a healthy unity and harmony among themselves despite differences. The first reading of today's mass from the Acts of the Apostles says, "the community of believers was of one mind and one heart." "All who believed were held together and had all things in common" and shared their possessions "according to each one's need."

In our second reading today, Peter tells us that the Love of God has made us his children, reborn through his mercy and loving kindness. This is the gift of Easter. To help us with this radical change that Easter calls forth, we are also gifted with the Holy Spirit...this too is the gift of Easter. The spirit helps us to grow beyond doubt into personal faith, as we see in the case of Thomas in the Gospel reading of today (John 20:19-31). Thomas stands out in today's Gospel as a source of encouragement for all believers. As a questioning person, Thomas moved from skepticism and disbelief to a firm and committed faith.

Today is also Mercy Sunday. Our Scriptures are full of the revelations of the mercy of our God. The responsorial Psalm of today (Psalm 118) is an all-embracing, universal, missionary Psalm inviting all people to thank God and proclaim His steadfast love and mercy. The Psalmist calls all people of God, even all the gentiles to praise and proclaim God's enduring love and mercy.

It was mercy that Jesus revealed when he met Mathew the tax collector, Zacchaeus the wealthy man on the tree, the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, the woman caught in adultery and many others as he made his way through Galilee and surroundings. It was mercy that he cried out when he said from the cross, "Father forgive them." It was in mercy that Jesus came to Peter after Peter had denied him three times. It was in mercy that Jesus came to Thomas and asked to "Put your finger here; see my hands.... stop doubting and believe," after he refused to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. It was mercy that brought Jesus to the frightened men behind closed door to proclaim, "Peace be with you" as we read in today's Gospel.

The Gospel according to Luke tells us the story of four friends bringing their paralyzed friend to see Jesus so he could be healed (Luke 5:17-26). They tried to bring him to Jesus but could not reach him because of the crowd. So went up to the roof and let him down in front of Jesus through the tiles. Jesus healed the man. What an amazing act of mercy! The many acts of

kindness from bringing the paralyzed man to Jesus, going up the roof, lowering the mat, facing the crowd – all of these acts of kindness made healing possible.

Mercy is at the heart of Christian life. Mercy is the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to a hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness. Pope Francis remind us, “Mercy is the very foundation of the Church’s life.” Mercy Sunday calls us to be merciful as the father is merciful. Let us strive to be peacemakers and channels of the mercy of our God for those around us.

At every Eucharist, we cry out, “Lord have mercy...Christ, have mercy...Lord, have mercy” and the priest prays, “May almighty God have mercy on us...” Just before communion, we cry out again, “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us...” We, as individuals and as community open ourselves to the mercy of God as we gather in prayer and worship. The Lord remind us often, “It is mercy that I desire, not sacrifice.” (Mathew 12:7)

James and John requested important places, at the right and left of their master, in the kingdom. They were not given positions of importance. Neither was the Virgin Mother given any important position – one would expect a little bit of honor for one’s mother!!! But Peter was chosen...the man who denied his master, the man who wept bitter tears...even the community gave him the honor of leadership!!!

Could it be that Peter knew what it meant to fail, what it meant to be vulnerable, what it meant to reject his master and what it meant to really feel sorrow and cry for mercy? Legend tells us that he wept so much that even his cheeks became furrowed with tears!!!! The Lord chose Peter who had a firsthand experience of failure and sorrow and an in-depth experience of mercy and forgiveness and healing.

How great our world would be if all of us strived to be merciful and loving. How wonderful our world will be if we learned to forgive our hurts and heal our brokenness and reach out to others to offer forgiveness and healing! Mercy is that virtue that enables us to forgive failures, overlook shortfalls, heal brokenness, create harmony, and bring peace. Mercy is being strength for the broken, the hopeless and the weak.

Mercy Sunday calls us to be merciful as the father is merciful. The gift of mercy flows from the depth of the heart of our God and moves us to show mercy to ourselves and to our brothers and sisters. Mercy of God calls us to show mercy even to the unmerciful! Let us be grateful for the mercy and loving kindness of our God and strive to be channels of His mercy for those around us. Let us show mercy by loving those who cannot love in return and loving those who cannot love the way we have learned to love.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Scroll down to read the reflections on the Scripture readings of today’s mass....**

# Second Sunday of Easter

April 12, 2026

**Let us be renewed by God's mercy and let us become agents of this mercy,  
channels through which God can water the earth,  
protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish.  
(Pope Francis)**

## Collect

God of everlasting mercy,  
who in the very recurrence of the paschal feast,  
kindle the faith of the people you have made your own,  
increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed,  
that all may grasp and rightly understand  
in what font they have been washed,  
by whose Spirit they have been reborn,  
by whose Blood they have been redeemed.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

## Liturgy of the Word

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

## Second Sunday of Easter – Sunday of Diving Mercy

April 12, 2026

**Serenity is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of inner peace.**

## Acts 2:42-47

Changed by the Easter event, the first believers maintained a healthy unity, harmony among themselves despite differences, 'community of believers was of one mind and one heart'. "All who believed were held together and had all things in common" and shared their possessions "according to each one's need". Distinctions as regards gender, race, ethnic background, socio-

economic status, etc. were causes of friction and separation among them...but Easter changed everything! Belongingness to the saving cross and the death and resurrection of Christ changed them radically. They were a new people, and they were one, unified, harmonious group...they became a community in Christ!

**Easter transformed their life and gave them new sense of belongingness in community!**

## **Psalm 118**

This is an all-embracing, universal, missionary Psalm inviting all people to thank God and proclaim His steadfast love. The Psalmist calls Israel (the people of God), the house of Aaron (the priestly class) and those who fear the Lord (the Gentile converts) – all people, including the Gentiles (heathens) to praise and proclaim God’s enduring love. The Church has been singing this Psalm at Easter as it is an all-inclusive Psalm, inviting all people, including the Gentile proselytes to praise God.

**Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
For his mercy endures forever.  
Let the house of Israel say,  
His mercy endures forever...**

## **1 Peter 1:3-9**

In this excerpt some of the great fundamental Christian truths come together: Calling God as Father (not a distant God); idea of being reborn (radical change) by an act (of mercy) of God (begotten by God); rebirth (recreated) by the Spirit of God, not by man’s effort; reborn to a living hope; reborn to eternal life; reborn to victory over sin and death; reborn to an eternal, imperishable inheritance which is full of joy and so on.

At the heart of this excerpt is the truth that because the Christian is possessed by God, he has the inheritance which is “imperishable and unfading”. The inheritance of the Christian is fullness of joy in God, which is waiting for him in heaven. Peter says, on this journey through this world to eternity, to this inheritance, the Christian is protected by the power of God through faith.

The Love of God has made us his children, reborn through the loving kindness of God. This is the gift of Easter. To help us with this radical change (rebirth) that Easter calls forth, we are also gifted with the Holy Spirit...this too is the gift of Easter.

**The spirit helps us to grow beyond doubt into personal faith, as we see in the case of Thomas in the Gospel of today. May the Holy Spirit empower us to fulfill our mission in life.**

## **John 20:19-31**

The early Christians had new insights into all the things Jesus said and did while he was among them when they recognized that Jesus had risen from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus was an act of love by which God had transformed everyone and everything. This enabled them to understand the meaning of the cross and why Jesus had to die.

The resurrection of Jesus offered new possibilities of forgiveness, peace, faith, hope, love and all that is of God and from God. Even the reality of doubt has gained a new meaning and value. The reality of doubt began to be seen as an integral part of our journey of faith. Thomas stands out in today's Gospel as a source of encouragement for all believers. As a questioning person, Thomas moved from skepticism and disbelief to a firm and committed faith.

**May the Holy Spirit bless and transform your disbelief and all your doubts and all your fears and empower you to respond to God's call in faithfulness and love!**

Easter changed everything! Men and women experienced transformation of their lives. Frightened men became fearless proclaimers of the good news of Jesus and ministers of God's forgiving and healing presence among his people. Denials were turned to affirmations of love and dedicated service as in the case of Peter and doubts were changed to confession of faith as in the case of Thomas. Men who were hiding in fear were empowered to move freely and proclaim their joy in the risen Lord.

**Easter did change everything! Transformation of people did happen! Be open to the transforming power of the resurrection of Jesus!**

**Saint of the Day, April 12 - St. Teresa of Los Andes and 11 other saints are remembered this day.**

Juana Fernández Solar was born on July 13, 1900 in Santiago, Chile. She received her education in a college managed by French nuns from the Sacred Heart order. In 1914, she decided to consecrate herself to the Lord and become a Discalced Carmelite. On December 8, 1915, she made a vow to remain chaste and she renewed it on a regular basis.

On May 7, 1919 she entered the novitiate of the Discalced Carmelites in Los Andes, received the religious name "Teresa of Jesus" and the habit of the Carmelites. Toward the end of her short life the new nun began an apostolate of letter-writing in which she shared her thoughts on the spiritual life. But she soon contracted typhus that was diagnosed as fatal. However, some historians have suggested that she might have contracted Spanish flu, which was devastating Chile at this time. In any case, her condition grew worse on April 2, 1920 - Good Friday. She was still three months short of turning 20 and had six months to complete her canonical novitiate so as to make her religious vows. But she nevertheless was allowed to

profess her vows "in danger of death" on April 7, 1920. She died on April 12, 1920, in Los Andes, Chile one week after Easter.

Known as the "Flower of the Andes," Teresa remains popular with the estimated 100,000 pilgrims who visit her shrine in Los Andes each year. Canonized in 1993 by Pope John Paul II, she is Chile's first saint.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Mercy is not a doctrine.  
It is the deepest and most meaningful expression  
of our love and concern for others.**

