

Divine Mercy Sunday
April 24, 2022
“Corruption: Being Spiritually Blind”

Acts 5:12-16
Rev 1:3...19
Jn 20:19-31

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

No one likes or admires a person who lives a double life. People who live double lives present only one side of themselves to us. This side usually makes a favorable impression upon others. However, there is that other side of them that completely contradicts who we think they are. They hide that side of themselves, because they know we would see them for who they truly are. Thus, they would lose our approval – and, probably, our friendship.

If we are honest, most of us would admit that there are things for which we are ashamed – especially in our past. This is because we are all sinful and have made selfish mistakes. Hopefully, however, we have repented of these sins. There came a time when we rejected those things which were harmful to our life as Christians.

However, the person who leads a double life has become unaffected by the wrong they do. Because they have persisted in this behavior for so long – they have become corrupt. Moreover, they are beyond change, because they have completely justified their behavior to themselves!

Those with power, wealth, and position are especially vulnerable to this condition. For there are few, if any, who will correct them. The reason is that they, themselves, have come to rely upon the corrupt person for their own power, wealth, and position. The great tragedy about corruption is that it cannot be forgiven. It can't be forgiven because forgiveness requires awareness of our sins and, then, our repentance. Repentance means sorrow for the sin, and a sincere resolve to do better. It also includes the restoration of any injustice to others.

Today, we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. Today, we praise, honor, and thank God for the mercy that He extends to us and to the world. God created us, knowing we would sin. Nevertheless, He uses our sinfulness to help us understand our absolute need for Him and our reliance upon Him.

I suspect that if it were not for God's mercy and love, many, if not most, of us would fall into despair. But, fortunately, God sent Jesus. Jesus came to testify to our worth and value – to teach us of the God whom we cannot see – to make tangible the forgiveness that God extends to us in His mercy! Jesus proved the love with which God embraces us. He proved this by refusing to acquiesce to what the corrupt Jewish religious leadership demanded.

And so, he was put to death. Jesus died because he refused to compromise his mission of truth, mercy, and love! Nevertheless, he rose to assure us of all that we could ever hope for or dream.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus appears to the disciples and brings them peace and forgiveness. Peace always comes with forgiveness. Then, Jesus commissions them to bring that same forgiveness and peace to everyone – throughout the world!

Moreover, Jesus is marvelously patient with Thomas. He offers undeniable evidence that it is really himself who has risen and stands before them. And Thomas proclaims, for the first time, that Jesus is not only the Risen Lord, but also God!

Brothers and Sisters, those of us who come to Mass every week must continually search our own hearts for any corruption in our lives. Certainly, we know and confess our personal sins. But we must look deeper for any corruption. How does my life really square with the Gospel? What are the things of the Gospel that I overlook – or make excuses for myself?

What about the Corporal Works of Mercy:

- to feed the hungry –
- to give drink to the thirsty –
- to clothe the naked –
- to shelter the homeless –
- to visit the sick or the imprisoned –
- to bury the dead?

What about the Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- to instruct the ignorant –
- to counsel the doubtful –
- to comfort the afflicted –
- to admonish the sinner –
- to forgive injuries and offenses –
- to bear wrongs patiently –
- to pray for the living and the dead?

Being an authentic Christian disciple is an on-going journey with Jesus. It will take our whole lifetime. So, let us pray for God's grace and power – May we truly recognize our sins – And may we never become corrupt by denying the truth about ourselves!

Amen.

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Msgr. Russell G. Terra