

[Readings: Acts 2:42-47; 5:12-16; Ps. 118; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31]

Last Sunday we celebrated the Lord's Resurrection; today we witness the spiritual resurrection of His disciples. It has already been a week since the disciples had seen the Risen Lord, but in spite of this, they remained fearful, cringing behind "closed doors" (Jn 20:26). What does Jesus do in the face of this fearful lack of belief?

He returns and, standing in the same place, "in the midst" of the disciples, He repeats His greeting: "Peace be with you!" (Jn 20:19, 26). He starts all over. The resurrection of His disciples begins here, from this faithful and patient mercy, from the discovery that God never tires of reaching out to lift us up when we fall. He wants us to see Him, not as a taskmaster with whom we have to settle accounts, but as our Father who always raises us up. In life, we go forward tentatively, uncertainly, like a toddler who takes a few steps and falls; a few steps more and falls again, yet each time his father puts him back on his feet. The hand that always puts us back on our feet is mercy: God knows that without mercy we will remain flat on the ground, that in order to keep walking, we need to be put back on our feet.

You may object: "But I keep falling!" The Lord knows this and He is always ready to raise you up. He does not want us to keep thinking about our failings; rather, He wants us to look to Him. For when we fall, He sees children needing to be put back on their feet; in our failings, He sees children in need of His merciful love. Today, on this Sunday that Saint John Paul II dedicated to Divine Mercy twenty-two years ago, we confidently welcome this message. Jesus said to Saint Faustina: "I am love and mercy itself; there is no human misery that could measure up to my mercy."

At one time, Faustina, with satisfaction, told Jesus that she had offered Him all of her life and all that she had. But Jesus' answer stuns her: "You have not offered me the thing that is truly yours." What had that holy nun kept for herself? Jesus says to her with kindness: "My daughter, give me your failings" (10 October 1937). We too can ask ourselves: "Have I given my failings to the Lord? Have I let Him see me fall so that He can raise me up?" Or is there something I still keep inside me? A sin, a regret from the past, a wound that I have inside, a grudge against someone, an idea about a particular person... The Lord waits for us to offer Him our failings so that He can help us experience his mercy.

We too, like Thomas, with our fears and our doubts, have experienced our frailty. We need the Lord, who sees beyond that frailty an irrepressible beauty. With Him we rediscover how precious we are even in our vulnerability. We discover that we are like beautiful crystals, fragile and at the same time precious. And if, like crystal, we are transparent before Him, His light – the light of mercy – will shine in us and through us into the world.

In 1991 in the Archdiocese of New York, Cardinal John O'Connor founded a new order of women religious called the Sisters of Life. In 2018, one of the Sisters of Life wrote a prayer, The Litany of Trust. I invite you to pray it with me:

The Litany of Trust

From the belief that I have to earn Your love, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear that I am unlovable, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the false security that I have what it takes, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear that trusting You will leave me more destitute, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From all suspicion of Your words and promises, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the rebellion against childlike dependency on You, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From refusals and reluctances in accepting Your will, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From anxiety about the future, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From resentment or excessive preoccupation with the past, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From restless self-seeking in the present moment, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From disbelief in Your love and presence, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being asked to give more than I have, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the belief that my life has no meaning or worth, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of what love demands, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From discouragement, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

That You are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That Your love goes deeper than my sins and failings, and transforms me,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on You,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That you are with me in my suffering,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That my suffering, united to Your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You will not leave me orphan, that You are present in Your Church,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That Your plan is better than anything else,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You always hear me and in Your goodness always respond to me,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That my life is a gift, **Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You will teach me to trust You, **Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You are my Lord and my God, **Jesus, I trust in you.**

That I am Your beloved one, **Jesus, I trust in you. AMEN!**

[Provided by the Sisters of Life]