

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Grace and Peace!



to

On Divine Mercy Sunday, our readings sweep us up into God's immense capacity for mercy which today, supernaturally pours out upon our souls. Through this grace, and through the liturgy, we are commissioned to go and proclaim it to others, exercising that compassion of our Lord. After the resurrection of Christ, we observed how the early Christians witnessed to this truth and mystery in numerous ways. This inspires me to invite you to experience the Risen Lord daily at each Mass and come to spend at least one hour with him every Friday.

In Our First Reading, we see how the Risen Lord continued show His Divine Mercy to the sick through the healing and preaching ministry of the early Church. The Apostles' newly augmented faith enabled them to minister to the people, giving them the Lord's healing love in "*signs and wonders.*" In the Second Reading, St. John assures the early persecuted Christians of the presence of the merciful Lord in their lives. With John's beautiful vision of '*one like of a son of man,*' today's passage from *Revelations* encourages Christians to fight fear with faith and trepidation about the future with trust and hope.

In our Gospel of John today, and through the poignant Celebration of Mercy, we may enter into the early joy experienced by the disciples upon receiving Jesus. Can you imagine their profound delight as they dwelt fearfully in their little community behind locked doors? The Gospel vibrantly reminds us then of how Jesus the Risen Lord instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a Sacrament of Divine Mercy, giving his Apostles the newfound power to forgive sins, saying, "*Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained*" (Jn 20: 19-23). This electrifying event was the ultimate game changer for the disciples. Later, upon presenting the doubting Thomas' famous profession of faith, "*My Lord and my God,*" the Gospel illustrated Jesus' tender display of mercy not only to the doubting Apostle, but also to those of us who "*have not seen and have believed.*"

In addition to Divine Mercy Sunday, the other essential way to receive God's mercy any time of the year is through the blessed Sacrament of Reconciliation. Being available for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is such a virtuous way to celebrate and give thanks for His Divine Mercy. In our daily lives, it is chiefly through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy that we realize how it takes precedence over other virtues. For the countless gifts of God's merciful graces, we can recognize our ongoing encounter with the risen Christ.

Joyful Divine Mercy Sunday!