

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter/Divine Mercy (A)

April 12, 2026

“Believe”

Near the end of World War II, Allied forces were often found searching farms and houses for snipers. At one abandoned house in Germany, which had been reduced to rubble, searchers found their way into the basement. There, on a crumbling wall, a victim of the Holocaust had scratched the Star of David. Beneath it was written the following: “I believe in the sun, even when it does not shine. I believe in love, even when it is not shown. I believe in God, even when he does not speak.”

Do you believe in God even when he does not speak? This Divine Mercy Sunday is an opportunity to reflect on the gift of faith. Saint John recounts the Lord’s double appearance to the Apostles after the Resurrection. It is Sunday night, “the evening of that first day of the week.” The doors are locked, the Apostles hidden inside, cowering, fearful, uncertain about their future. Jesus arrives, greets them, and shows them his nail scarred hands and side. He then breathes on them, sending the Spirit, and grants the power to absolve from sin.

But each of us is important, and in the spirit of leaving no one behind, Our Lord returns one week later, and greets Thomas with peace, and inviting him to touch his hands and side. Thomas, who now sees, believes. He would go on to take the Gospel all the way to India, where he established a local church and died a martyr for the faith he professed.

My sisters and brothers, we are on the Journey of Faith, walking together, believing together, celebrating together, struggling together, and going forward together. Each of us is in a different place and each of us must walk an individual journey in the Church. But not alone.

Faith is both a gift of God and a human act by which we accept what God reveals and respond with good works (CCC 26, 142). Faith can be compared to a microscope, which enables us to see tiny organisms and a telescope, which enables us to see distant the moon, stars, and even planets. Faith accepts without seeing.

There are four kinds of people. First, there are **doubters**, the doubting Thomases, who must see evidence, or visible proof before they will believe. They

must see the scars of life before accepting redemptive death. They have to see evidence of God at work before they will live as God teaches.

Then there are **deniers**, who deny the faith outright. They can be non-Christians, or even Christians who don't really believe in God anymore. They certainly live as if they didn't believe. They refuse to submit mind and heart to a merciful God who is the Truth itself. These people are often prideful and stubborn, with closed minds and hardened hearts.

Then there are **delayers**. These people want to believe, and want to accept what God reveals about himself, but not yet. They are always putting things off, arguing that there is always another time to believe and live. "Yes, but later . . ." or "Someday I may believe . . ." is their answer to the question, "Do you believe in one God?" They delay, and risk much in the process.

Finally, there are **believers**. These people are baptized, and even confirmed. They received the faith at infancy (or adulthood) and are trying to understand and live it out. They believe in the sun, even when it does not shine, in love, even when it is not shown, and in God, even when he does not speak. The Creed is their belief, and the Church is their spiritual home. A few even become saints, as Thomas did. But most simply try to live out the faith they received and pass it on to their children, grandchildren, friends, neighbors, and others. They confess their sins, defend their beliefs, and live a virtuous life.

Where do you fall this day? Where do I? Are we doubters, deniers, delayers, or believers? We might go back and forth among these types as we struggle with life, like a priest I knew who, on occasion, would wake up on Sunday morning after a long night, and say, "I'm not getting up today. I'm an atheist." Most are not that bad, but most of us struggle on the Journey in Faith.

As we do so, let us remember to seek the gift of deeper faith, rely on each other, and be open to the transformative mercy of a loving God. God bless you.