



# SACRED HEART PARISH MORUYA

## Second Sunday of Easter

### 18-19/4/2020 Year A

#### DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

*"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endure forever (Ps 118)*

*"Rejoice, all you creatures, for you are closer to God in His infinite mercy than a baby to its mother's heart." Diary of Saint Faustina verse 42*

Jesus said to Saint Faustina "I desire that you know more profoundly the love that burns in My Heart for souls, and you will understand this when you meditate upon My passion. Call upon My mercy on behalf of sinners. I desire their salvation. When you say this prayer with a contrite heart and with faith on behalf of some sinner, I will give him the grace of conversion. This is the prayer.:

*"O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of Mercy for us, I trust in You. Diary of Saint Faustina, verse 187*

*The picture contains the message "Jesus, I trust in You!" (Jezu ufam Tobie). The rays streaming out have symbolic meaning: red for the blood of Jesus, which is the life of souls and white for the water which justifies souls. The whole image is symbolic of the mercy, forgiveness and love of God.*

The readings for this Sunday are about mercy, trust and the forgiveness of sins. The opening prayer addresses the Father as "God of Mercy." In the Psalm we repeat several times, "His mercy endures forever." "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever!" (Ps 118). Besides mentioning the word, our readings illustrate mercy in action. How does God reveal His mercy? He does so, first and foremost, by sending His only-begotten Son, to become our Saviour and Lord by his suffering, death and resurrection. Divine mercy is given to us in each celebration of the sacraments. **The first reading** explains how the Risen Lord continued to show his divine mercy to the sick through the healing and preaching ministry of his apostles in the early Church. The Apostles' faith enabled them to minister the Lord's healing love through "signs and wonders." The Book of Revelation was written to comfort and bolster the faith of the persecuted Christians by reassuring them of the presence of the merciful Lord in their lives. The second reading, taken from this book encourages Christians to fight fear with faith, and trepidation about the future with trust and hope. **In today's gospel**, as we recall Jesus' appearance to the disciples on the first Easter evening, we are vividly reminded of the Sacrament of Reconciliation—the power to forgive sins which Our Lord gave to his apostles. "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (Jn 20-23). Today's gospel also emphasizes the importance of faith in all-pervading presence of the Risen Lord of mercy. To believe without having seen in every later Christian's experience. We are invited to receive liberation from doubts and hesitation by surrendering our lives to the risen Lord of mercy. Let us ask God our Father to open our hearts so that we may receive his Mercy in the form of His Holy Spirit

*Fr George Azhakath*

**PRAYER FOR AUSTRALIA:** Lord you place deep in our hearts the love of Mary Help of Christians. Though her prayers grant wisdom to our leaders and integrity to our citizens. Under her protection may Australia, be granted harmony, justice and peace. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son who lives reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen



#### Moruya Sacred Heart Parish.

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Priest: **Fr. George Azhakath.**

Parish Office: 44742024

Parish Secretary: Grace Cirson

Office Hours: 9am—3pm

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday

Email: Moruya@cg.org.au

Web: <http://cg/org/au/Moruya>

**Reconciliation:** 10—10.30am Sat.

**Mass online:**

**Daily Mass 6am:**

Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn [www.catholicvoice.org.au/mass-online/](http://www.catholicvoice.org.au/mass-online/)

**Daily Mass**

Archdiocese of Melbourne: <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>

**Daily Mass: 1.00pm (Mon-Fri)**

**Sunday Mass: 1.00pm**

St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne streamed live and is then available as a recording on demand

Additional Video Resources: [www.catholicvoice.org.au](http://www.catholicvoice.org.au) and [www.cgatholic.org.au](http://www.cgatholic.org.au)

Also U-Tube has many mass choices

#### CARING GROUPS:

Tuross Head: 0497 315 534

Moruya: 0431 354 993

#### SCHOOLS:

St Mary's: 4474 2817

Carroll College: 4471 5600.

# LITURGY OF THE WORD

## FIRST READING

### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

**This is the Word of the Lord.**

**R. Thanks be to God**

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

**R. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
his love is everlasting.**

1. Let the sons of Israel say:  
'His love has no end.'  
Let the sons of Aaron say:  
'His love has no end.'  
Let those who fear the Lord say:  
'His love has no end.' **R**
2. I was thrust, thrust down and falling  
but the Lord was my helper.  
The Lord is my strength and my song;  
he was my saviour.  
There are shouts of joy and victory  
in the tents of the just. **R**
3. The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.  
This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.  
This day was made by the Lord;  
we rejoice and are glad. **R**

## SECOND READING

### A reading from the first letter of St Peter, the Apostle

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is

revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

**This is the Word of the Lord.**

**R. Thanks be to God**

## Gospel Acclamation

### **Alleluia, alleluia!**

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me; happy those who have not seen me but still believe!

**Alleluia!**

## Gospel

### A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you. 'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.' Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.' There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

**This is the Gospel of the Lord.**

**R. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

## THE WORD AND LIFE this week ....

1. **An invitation to celebrate and practice mercy:** One way the Church celebrates God's mercy throughout the year is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Finding time for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is another good way to observe Divine Mercy. The gospel command, "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful," demands that we show mercy to our fellow human beings always and everywhere. We radiate God's mercy to others by our actions, our words, and our prayers. It is mainly through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy that we practice mercy in our daily lives and become eligible for God's merciful judgement.
2. **Faith, culminating in self-surrender to God,** leads us to the service of our fellow human beings. Living faith enables us to see the risen Lord in everyone and gives us the willingness to render to each one our loving service. ("Faith without good works is dead" James 2:17). It was this faith in the Lord and obedience to his missionary command that prompted St. Thomas to travel to India to preach the gospel among the Hindus, establish seven Christian communities (known later as "St. Thomas Christians") and eventually face martyrdom. The Fathers of the Church prescribe the following traditional means to grow in the living and dynamic faith of St. Thomas the Apostle: A) We must come to know Jesus personally and intimately by the daily and meditative reading of the bible. B) We must strengthen our faith by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal and community prayer. C) We must share in the divine life of Jesus by frequenting the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. Mother Teresa presents it this way: *"If we pray, we will believe; if we believe, we will love; if we love, we will serve. Only then we put our love of God into action."*
3. **A challenge for a transparent Christian life** - "I will not believe unless I see." This "seeing" is what others demand of us. They ask that we reflect Jesus, the Risen Lord, in our lives, by selfless love, unconditional forgiveness and humble service. The integrity of our lives is a fundamental witness to others, who want to see the Risen Lord alive and active and working in our lives. Christ's mercy shines forth from us whenever we reach out to the poor, the needy and the marginalized, as Mother Teresa did. His mercy shines forth as we remain open to those who struggle in faith, as did the Apostle Thomas in today's Gospel. We should be able to appreciate the presence of Jesus, crucified and raised, in our own suffering and in our suffering brothers and sisters, thus recognizing the glorified wounds of the Risen Lord in the suffering of others.
4. **Like St. Thomas let us use our scepticism to help us grow in faith.** It is our genuine doubts about the doctrines of our religion that encourage us to study these doctrines more closely and thus to grow in our faith. This will naturally lead us to a personal encounter with Jesus through prayer, study of the Word of God, and frequenting of the sacraments. However, we must never forget the fact that our faith is not our own doing, but a gift from God. Hence we need to augment our faith every day by prayer so that we may join St. Thomas in his proclamation: "My Lord and my God".
5. **Let us have the courage of our convictions to share our faith as St. Thomas did.** We are not to keep the gift of faith locked in our hearts, but to share it with our children, our families and our neighbours, always remembering the words of Pope John XXIII: "Every believer in this world must become a spark of Christ's light."

## THE 10TH APPLE EFFECT

Hey Everyone. Let me share with you a short story. A hunter once lost his way deep inside the jungle while hunting for deer. He used all his navigation skills but neither did he find any way out of the jungle, nor could he find any food to eat for three days at a stretch. He lost all hope. He thought he will die out of hunger and that is exactly when an apple tree caught his sight, he was so happy. He collected a bag full of apples to feed himself for the rest of his stretch. As he ate the first apple his joy knows no bounds and he just couldn't stop feeling grateful and blessed. He thanked God. He could not believe his luck when he ate the first apple but he was less grateful while having the second apple and even lesser grateful when he had the 5th apple. Somehow with each passing apple the joy kept on reducing drastically. He just could not enjoy the 10th apple. He even started throwing apples away which were not tasting good or looking good and started complaining. He had already taken for granted the providence of having found an apple tree in the middle of the forest with fruit on it after three days of wandering with hunger. In economics this is called the Law of Diminishing Marginal Utility. It is actually the law of diminishing gratitude: in simple words taking things for granted or lets just call it the 10th Apple Effect . Our lack of appreciation and gratitude for the gift of life and those gifts in life.

The Hunter represents all of us and the apple represents the gifts that life gave us . The 10th Apple is as sweet as the first apple. If the 10th apple fails to give you as much satisfaction as the first one, there is nothing wrong with the apple but with the person enjoying the fruit.

The reason I shared this story is that we were having the 10th Apple Effect in our world for some time. Abundance of everything but far from being happy and content and we started complaining. We complained about people, job, Government, traffic , food, weather ..... everything , but until during this lockdown. I am sure most of you started appreciating a lot of things in life which you took for granted, even small things like: Oh it is so nice to talk to a human being, glad that we got vegetables today, thank God I am healthy and safe, things like that. We never had these thoughts a few months back. We struggled through a hard time of severe drought and devastating bushfire season into a complete lockdown to stop the deadly Corona-virus. We are left contemplating the grim realities of life and what really matters in life. The present situation is shaking us and showing us that we are dependent on something bigger than what we think and we have to be grateful for all the blessings. We started appreciating the luxury we lived in: abundance of food, products, freedom, health, good old days. Now we are realizing that we were taking it for granted. Right now all of us have two choices. Be grateful or be stressful. And it is our choice.

I want to share with you an incident on this regard. I don't know whether it is true or fiction. I got it as a forward but a very powerful one. A seventy three year old man in Italy got better in the hospital recently. He was told to pay for the ventilator for one day and the man started crying. The doctor advised him not to cry over the bill, if not able to pay. But what the old man said made all the hospital staff cry. "I am not crying because of the bill, I have money to pay the bill. I can't stop crying because I have been breathing God's air for seventy three years and I never paid for it. It takes 5000 Euros to use a ventilator in a Hospital for one day, if then, do you know how much I owe God. I didn't thank God for that before." The words of the old man are worth our reflection. When we breath the air freely without any pain, no one takes the air seriously. Only when we enter the hospital we realize that even breathing oxygen with a ventilator costs money.

When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change. Gratitude is a strong, powerful and empowering attitude, some times one has to bring more awareness and be more grateful for the gifts in life . Gratitude supports the immune system which makes a person strong. Ingratitude and stress makes him weak. One thing I have experienced in life is that gratefulness is prayer, spirituality and expressions of our dependency towards God. If you are grateful you can't be fearful.

Be aware of your state of mind and start counting your blessings. 'Thank you God' is the best prayer you can chant all day long. We are reminded that when you are grateful for things you have in life, you will have more things to be grateful for. I repeat, **when you are grateful for the things you have in life you will have more things to be grateful for.** Never let the 10th Apple Effect make you take things for granted. Never let your gratitude for life fade. Stay happy, stay healthy. God bless you all.  
Fr George Azhakath

**Letter from Frank Testa - Order of Malta** Dear Fr. George and the parishioners of Moruya, I pray that you are all well, and that this terrible Corona virus has not affected your community. It is with a sad heart that I have to inform you that my brothers and I from the Order of Malta won't be able to visit in this and the upcoming months as planned due to the government restrictions in travel. We have become very attached to your community and we look forward to visiting you each month to catch up with you all. Please be assured that you are all in our prayers and that we are thinking of you all. We look forward to returning as soon as we are able to. Wishing you all a Holy Easter and the best of health. Sincerely, Frank Testa KMG (ob)