28th April 2019 - Divine Mercy Sunday

From the Desk of the Pastor ....

St. John’s gospel begins by telling us that the apostles were frightened and had gathered, in an upper room with locked doors. There is an element of fear and anguish. How do you think Peter and his friends felt having deserted and denied Jesus during his Passion? ... It must have been a pretty tense and embarrassing moment...Jesus breaks into the story slowly.

The Resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit both take place on ‘the first day of the week.’ Jesus appears in the room and gently offers them peace. The Risen Jesus ‘breathed on them’ as he conferred the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The book of Genesis recounts the story of creation, where the breath of God is described as a life force that hovered over the waters of the primordial chaos. In the scene described in the Gospel today, that same breath of God comes upon the interior chaos of frightened disciples hiding out in the upper room. There is certainly excitement, relief, joy, and tears of understanding as the miracle continues to unfold and make sense. Jesus breathes new life into them and brings “shalom”, peace, upon them and all the earth. Thomas answered and said, ‘My lord and My God’.

He commissioned the Apostles to go out and tell the story of His resurrection and the Good news he brought to the world. Many people believed the words, signs, and wonders of Jesus’ followers. Together they broke bread, prayed, shared faith filled stories and supported one another. Many sold their possessions and used the proceeds to help the less fortunate.

As the concluding words of today’s Gospel indicate, this story is told for us, to bring us to faith in Jesus as Risen Lord so that “through this belief you may live in his name”.

And guess what, unbelievably, there was this subtle and a dramatic change brought about in them: these weak men turned into passionate preachers, teachers, healers and martyrs for their Lord.

EASTER SEASON - PENTECOST

We have from now until Pentecost to celebrate different aspects of the Paschal mystery. It is amazing to find how much more there is to learn about our faith and our liturgy. We embark upon a faith filled journey to celebrate God’s love for us and our love for God and our hope in his promises.

There are obvious differences in worship during this Easter season. The Church presents the Easter Candle lit in the sanctuary, (New candle lit from the new fire blessed at Easter Vigil), the priests and deacons vest in white throughout this season to resemble the new ness that Jesus has brought about in our lives. The first reading, which almost always is taken from the Old Testament for the rest of the year, comes from the New Testament, from the Acts of the Apostles. The Church directs us to reflect on the beginnings of the Early Church, through ‘Acts of the Apostles’.

PARISH COMMUNITY NEWS

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PEACE BE WITH YOU...Our Gospel reading today depicts the disciples in a terrifying moment. They have locked their doors, huddling together in safety at a time when the Lord has transformed the entire course of human events. Jesus has risen from the dead. He has destroyed death and unlocked eternal life. Jesus visits his frightened friends. His appearance must have been shocking, since he says to them ‘Peace be with you not once, but twice. He brings with him the eternal peace of God, that he shares with us all.