

# HOMILY ~ SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

### APRIL 6/7, 2024

What do you think your glorified body will be like? The Catholic Church teaches that our immortal soul will be reunited with our glorified body at the end of the world. When I hear glorified body, I think I would like to be about 6'10" with an athletic build, very handsome and forever 25. The only problem with that is no one will recognize me in heaven. How superficial of me! Actually, we will not have a physical body like we have today. I am not sure exactly what it will be like, but the way it looks will probably not be important.

After his Resurrection, Jesus was joined with his glorified body. When he made his post Resurrection appearances, he had to appear in a way that people we could see. Jesus retained his scars in his glorified body. That is what Thomas wanted to see. It was by Jesus' scars that he could be identified. I think we need to retain all of our scars in our glorified body because, in many cases, it is our scars that make us who we are. Our scars frequently represent our greatest accomplishments. I think we need to embrace where we are in our lives.

Our culture puts great value on the young and the beautiful, but that leaves most of the population out. As I get older, I have more and more lines in my face; and I look older. I could try BOTOX to try and get rid of the wrinkles; but, at my age, I should have lines in my face. Maybe we should see these lines as evidence of the wisdom I have gained over the years. I think we should accept ourselves as we are at the moment, scars and all. Once we accept who we are, we can embrace the things that we cannot change and work on changing the things that we can. Accepting ourselves as we are is the first step to making changes.

We frequently call Thomas in the Gospel Reading today, "*Doubting Thomas*." I think it would be more appropriate to call him, "*Disillusioned Thomas*" or "*Disappointed Thomas*." Remember, he had been following Jesus for three years and hoped that he was the Messiah that they had awaited for years. Then he watched Jesus suffer and die on the cross. His hopes were dashed, but notice he did not give up. He

continued to meet in the upper room with his community. He still had faith, otherwise he would have left, but he did not. He stayed with his community; and they figured it out as they went along together, even though what was happening with Jesus was not what they expected to happen. Before Jesus' appearance to them, they were hiding away in fear. Their situation did not change after Jesus' appearance. They were still in grave danger, but they were able to leave the upper room and continue to spread the Gospel because they knew Jesus was with them, helping them, and would never leave them. They were arrested, and they were persecuted. Remember all of the apostles were martyred except John.

I sometimes think we are disillusioned or disappointed by Jesus. We sometimes pray for what we want and do not get it. We cannot all get what we want. Sometimes what I am praying for is directly opposite to what someone else is praying for. I think many of the difficulties we face we have caused ourselves or were caused by someone else. God does not cause the difficulties in our lives, but he allows them. We were created in the image and likeness of God and having free will is very basic to our nature, so God allows us to exercise our free will. We need the difficulties in our lives to find purpose and meaning. I am glad there is some predictability in the world and things are not just random. However, we do not always know why things happen; but when we cannot change them, we need to cooperate with God in making something good happen from the difficulties. It is through our difficulties that we learn and grow.

I think we need to embrace who we are right now, scars and all. Our scars make us who we are. In the process of life, sometimes we are disillusioned or disappointed in God; but sometimes we just need to accept that God is God, and we are not. Do not leave the faith community that can help you. We do not always understand why things happen, but we can be assured that God will be with us to work through the difficult times, just as he did with the apostles. We have no reason to doubt God. He loves us just the way we are and will never leave us.

Love and Peace,

Fr. Jim