

Divine Mercy Sunday
April 27-28, 2019

My Lord and My God

Readings: Acts 5:12-16; Revelation 1:9-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31

During this joyous season of Easter, our Christian faith is most visibly manifest in our proclamation of the bodily resurrection of Christ from the dead. How sad it is then when people who should know better deny the necessity of the physical resurrection of Jesus. I read an interview of the Rector of a major inter-denominational theological graduate school in New York City. When asked about Easter, the PhD. Theologian responded: *“For Christians for whom the physical resurrection becomes a sort of obsession, that seems to me to be a pretty wobbly faith.”*¹

There will always be those who doubt, and even people of faith have questions to which there seem to be only difficult answers. Being a person of faith does not mean that all questions are put aside as irrelevant or bordering on blasphemy. Perhaps the shock of the Passion of Christ was so strong that some of the disciples did not at once believe that He was truly risen. They were demoralized, as evidenced in the person of Thomas. But their questions are answered through reassurances of faith.

His act of doubt should not be held against him forever, because it did not persist indefinitely. He spent his life spreading the Good News of the resurrection, and while his example should remind us all of the problem of doubt and disbelief, his entire life should be viewed from the perspective of heroic faith and apostolic zeal.

Questions persist for many people today. But these questions are situated within the larger context of a lived faith that is beyond ourselves, our generation, or even our century. The Christian faith and the Catholic Tradition encompass centuries of guidance by the Holy Spirit. We are part of the self-revelation of God’s Love that includes the gift of His Church, His instrument on earth for our sanctification.

¹ *New York Times* 20 April 2019 with the Rector of Union Theological Seminary, Rev. Dr. Serene Jones.

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ as the absolute cornerstone of our Catholic faith. The apostles remain the foundation stones of His Church as the primary witnesses to the resurrection. Their witness is crystal clear as to the nature of the resurrection. Our Catechism teaches: “Given all these testimonies, Christ's Resurrection cannot be interpreted as something outside the physical order, and it is impossible not to acknowledge it as an historical fact.”²

The mystery of Christ’s resurrection is a real event, with manifestations that were historically verified, and Jesus’ resurrection has been deemed to be “the crowning truth of our faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian community; (and) handed on as fundamental by Tradition.”³ The fundamental problem with the interview I cited earlier is that there is no authority in that denomination to establish that such belief is outside of orthodoxy.

Today, we must be the witnesses, following in the apostolic faith handed onto us. The resurrection above all constitutes the confirmation of all Christ’s works and teachings. As witnesses, we experience the power of His resurrection by our lives of faith, by showing mercy to one another, by gratefully accepting this divine mercy in our own hearts. We also fearlessly proclaim the reality of His resurrection and defend with vigor the truth against all attacks.

The Divine Mercy of our Savior makes the fullness of life possible for all who believe. Let us not be troubled by those who minimize or worse yet, actually deny the resurrection. Rather, let us re-commit ourselves to being its strongest witnesses by means of our joy. Let us too cry out, “My Lord and My God,” marveling that He indeed is risen and in our midst.

² Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph #643

³ Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph #638