

Divine Mercy Sunday Homily

Pope Francis

As the world slowly recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a risk it will be struck by an even worse virus, that of selfish indifference, Pope Francis said. This dangerous virus is "spread by the thought that life is better if it is better for me and that everything will be fine if it is fine for me," he said in his homily at a Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 19. "It begins there and ends up selecting one person over another, discarding the poor and sacrificing those left behind on the altar of progress." The current pandemic instead must compel people to prepare for a "collective future" that sees the whole human family as one and holds all of the earth's gifts in common in order to be shared justly with those in need, he said. "This is not some ideology: It is Christianity,"

"Let us show mercy to those who are most vulnerable; for only in this way will we build a new world."

and it mirrors the way the early Christian community lived, the pope said at the Mass, celebrated privately at Rome's Church of the Holy Spirit, which houses a shrine dedicated to Divine Mercy. The Mass was celebrated on the 20th anniversary of St. John Paul II's declaration that the Sunday after Easter would be celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday. Pope Francis spoke in Italian; a Vatican translation of his homily follows, copyright © 2020 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

Last Sunday we celebrated the Lord's resurrection; today we witness the resurrection of his disciple. It has already been a week, a week since the disciples had seen the risen Lord, but in spite of this they remained fearful, cringing behind "closed doors" (Jn 20:26), unable even to convince Thomas, the only one absent, of the resurrection.

What does Jesus do in the face of this timorous lack of belief? He returns and, standing in the same place, "in the midst" of the disciples, he repeats his greeting, "Peace be with you!" (Jn 20:19, 26). He starts all over.

The resurrection of his disciple begins here, from this *faithful and patient* mercy, from the discovery that God never tires of reaching out to lift us up when we fall. He wants us to see him not as a taskmaster with whom we have to settle accounts but as our Father who always raises us up. In life we go forward tentatively, uncertainly, like a toddler who takes a few steps and falls, a few steps more and falls again; yet each

continued on page 2

2249A



contents

- 1 Divine Mercy Sunday Homily
by Pope Francis
- 3 Care for Our Common Home: Jews, Christians and Muslims Confront Climate Change
by Father Patrick J. Ryan, SJ
- 10 Judaism and the Environment
by Claudia Setzer
- 13 Islam, Nature and Climate Change
by Muhammad U. Faruque
- 16 Datebook
- 16 On File

April 30, 2020
Volume 50
Number 1