His mercy endures: Sunday of Divine Mercy

April 23, 2017

Readings:

Acts 2, 42-47

Psalm 118: 2-4: 13-15: 22-24

1 Peter 1, 3-9

John 20: 19-31

We are children of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. His Father, through this marvelous sign of his great mercy, has given us a new birth, as we hear in today's epistle.

The first reading of this day outlines the "family life" of our first ancestors in the family of God (1 Peter 4:17). We see them doing what we still do: dedicate ourselves to the teaching of the apostles, meet daily to pray and celebrate "the breaking of the bread."

The Apostles saw the Lord. He stood in their midst and showed them his hands and his side. They heard his blessing and received from him a command: to extend the mercy of the Father to all peoples by the power and the Spirit which he gave them.

We must walk by faith and not by sight; we must believe and love what we have not seen (2 Corinthians 5, 7). However, the invisible realities are made present through the traditions that the Apostles transmitted to us.

It is notorious that the experience of the risen Lord who describes the Gospel today evokes Holy Mass.

The two apparitions narrated there take place on a Sunday. The Lord comes to be with his disciples. They rejoice, hear their word, and receive the gift of their forgiveness and peace. He presents the wounds of his body in remembrance of his Passion. They, for their part, recognize and worship Him as their God and Lord.

Thomas' confession is a vow of faith in the new covenant. As promised long ago, in the blood of Jesus we can now recognize the Lord as our God, and be recognized as His people (Hosea 2: 20-25).

This confession is sung in the heavenly liturgy (Revelation 4, 11). And at every Mass on earth, we renew our covenant and receive the blessings that Jesus promised to those who have believed without having seen.

At Mass the mercy of God remains forever, as we sing in the psalm of today. This is the day the Lord has made, when the victory of the Passover again becomes marvelous before our eyes.