

2nd Sunday of Easter Glorified Wounds – Confirmation

My friends, St. Martin of Tours saw what looked like the Risen Lord before him. The vision was beautiful, with a kingly vestment and a crown. However, St. Martin knew immediately that what he was seeing was not the Risen Lord at all, but a demon in disguised. When asked how he knew, St. Martin responded, “He had no wounds. The Risen Lord has wounds.” This remarkable insight sheds light on our Gospel this weekend. When Jesus appears before the eleven, what do we find? The Risen Lord has wounds, glorified wounds, wounds that no longer hurt, but rather have become a source of strength, able to heal and save the world!

This is why, in our Gospel this weekend, Jesus says, “Peace be with you”. It feels like an incongruous greeting because the disciples had every reason to not to feel peace. They were fugitives. There were mobs looking for them, threatening to take their lives. When Jesus was arrested, they fled. Something happened to cause them to reunite for the sake of the Gospel. That something was the resurrection of the Lord. And when Jesus appears to them, despite everything that had happened, Jesus says, “Peace be with you”. And despite all the dangers, the disciples felt overwhelming joy.

Now many of us can relate with Thomas. He was not present with the other disciples the first time Jesus appeared to them. He therefore told them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” We have all been there. Thomas was a wounded soul. Jesus’ medicine for Thomas was to show him his glorified wounds. Thomas falls on his knees and says, “My Lord and my God.” Jesus’ next words are haunting. They are directed towards us, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.”

How do we see Jesus? How does discipleship and evangelization begin? Jesus gave us a hint in today’s Gospel reading when he says, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me so I send you.” You see, the word “sent” shows up several times in the Gospel of John. Jesus says that he was sent by the Father, “not to do my will, but the will of the one who sent me.” When the man born blind regains his sight, he does so by going to the Pool of Siloam, which means “sent”. Jesus also promised to send the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, to strengthen his disciples and Church. The theology of sending in the Gospel of John has a two-fold meaning.

First, there is the relationship we have to the one sending us from the waters of baptism, giving us spiritual sight to be one with the sender. Second, there is the mission we have been given to the world around us that is at times hostile to the message being sent. (James Mc Polin, S.J. “John” pg. 133) And so, how do we see Jesus? We see Jesus in each other by the measure our lives reflect being sent by Jesus by our baptism into the Body of Christ. Indeed, the word “Apostle” comes from the Greek word that literally means “sent”.

My friends, tonight you will receive the sacrament of confirmation. It is a sacrament of sending forth, but it is also a sacrament of a new beginning. For me, I think the Latin verb for “confirm” is very revealing. The word is *confirmo*, and it literally means, “to strengthen”. The implication here is that when you receive the sacrament of confirmation tonight, the Holy Spirit will strengthen you for the spiritual journey ahead of you. This sacrament will strengthen you in

your discipleship, inviting you into a deeper relationship with Jesus. This sacrament will help you to find the answers you seek in life that the world simply cannot provide you. This sacrament will help you give witness to God's love to the world so desperately hungering for it in a spirit of missionary discipleship. The sacrament of confirmation will strengthen you in the spiritual journey ahead of you because, as much as we don't like to think about these things, the road ahead of you in life will at times be hard.

I imagine that for some of you today, life might be hard right now, in your relationships at home or school perhaps, or with everything that is expected of you, weighing down on you, or how you feel your life is shaping out. We can also at times be weighed down by anxiety about what the future holds for ourselves and even for the world we live in. The seal of the Holy Spirit that God will give you in this sacrament can sometimes be best understood as God's signature on your soul. What does that signature say? It says one thing loud and clear in a very public way for the world to see. It says that God loves you. Even when you fail, God loves you. With all that you are going through right now, God loves you and will always be there for you. The Holy Spirit will help you and he will strengthen you if you let him into your heart.

[Amigos míos, en unos momentos recibirán el sacramento de la confirmación. El verbo latino para la palabra "confirmar" es muy revelador. La palabra literalmente significa "fortalecer". Este sacramento te fortalecerá en tu discipulado, invitándote a una relación más profunda con Jesús. Este sacramento te ayudará a encontrar las respuestas que buscas en la vida, y que el mundo simplemente no puede darte. Este sacramento te ayudará a convertirte en un discípulo misionero, compartiendo el amor de Dios al mundo con el ejemplo de tu vida. El sacramento de la confirmación te fortalecerá en la jornada espiritual que tienes por delante, porque a veces la vida puede ser muy dura.

Durante esos momentos en que la vida puede ser difícil, siempre recuerde que el sello del Espíritu Santo que Dios te da en este sacramento dice una cosa fuerte y clara. Este sacramento dice que: "Dios te ama". En las buenas y en las malas, Dios te ama. Incluso cuando fallas, Dios te ama. Con todo lo que estás pasando en este momento, Dios te ama y siempre estará ahí para ti. El Espíritu Santo te ayudará y si lo dejas entrar en tu corazón.]

Yes, my friends, before sending his disciples out as apostles, Jesus says, "Peace be with you." How do we find peace in life? Like Saint Thomas, we find peace by letting Jesus' glorified wounds into our wounds. Only through Jesus can our wounds be transformed into a source of strength that can then be of service to others. The only way that can happen is if we trust our wounds to Jesus in the first place. What does that look like?

My friends, this weekend we also celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. St. Faustina offered the Church a portrait of Jesus that gives us a remarkable display of what glorified wounds look like. Under the portrait of her vision of Jesus are the words, "Jesus I trust in you". I may not know where my life is going, but Jesus, I trust in you. I may be wracked with infirmity, but Jesus I trust in you. The cross I am carrying at work or at home may feel unbearable, but Jesus I trust in you. My friends, only Jesus can offer us the gift of peace. Indeed, that peace has the power to heal the world, one soul at a time.