

Sunday April 11th, 2021  
**Second Sunday of Easter**  
**Divine Mercy Parishioner Reflection**  
*By: Janice Lahti*

*...for whatever is born of God conquers the world.*

Jesus, born of God conquered, and transcended our worldly tendency to misuse all forms of power. It's a deadly stance we can be trapped in - believing that power and control of both small and large aspects of our lives will keep us safe, save us from death. Human consciousness is a great gift but with it we have to acknowledge the truth of our existence – our individual life on earth is brief, a flash of light within cosmic time. And so while here, Jesus directs us *To Love*, to abandon ourselves completely to this most sacred of life purposes. Every form and demonstration of love is God present and at work, through us, transforming this world into a garden of peace and harmony.

*Receive the Holy Spirit.*

And the Apostles did. They received Jesus' invitation and rejoiced in the Resurrection. There is truly life after death. Thomas was absent on this occasion and his friends were anxious to share their incredible news.

*We have seen the Lord.*  
*Unless I see....., I will not believe.*

This tale from the Apostles is unbelievable, stunning to Thomas. It's unheard of, rising from the dead! It's hard to fault Thomas for being skeptical. Yet interestingly, Thomas doesn't wash his hands of this nonsense or abandon his friends. He stays because...

*Eight days later, Thomas is with them.*

Why? Because, alongside his doubt, Thomas held a glimmer of hope. He saw his friends filled with the Holy Spirit, filled to overflowing with a Joy and Love so powerful it could conquer the world! It was surely a compelling witness to something extraordinary and Thomas wanted to be part of it.

The Holy Spirit works with our hope, the slight glimmer of energy that keeps us open, searching and thirsting. The Holy Spirit waters our mustard seed of hope. Doubts tinged

with hope – I think I failed the exam, but I hope, hope, hope.... I doubt I'll ever be pregnant, yet I hope, hope, hope. I doubt I can heal, but I hope, hope, hope.... We are strengthened to rise and continue despite our discouragement.

*Do not doubt but believe.*

Jesus' loving acceptance of Thomas' burden of doubt was merciful. He did not give up on Thomas. Jesus' love continued to flow out to Thomas. He was merciful, forgiving, accepting. Jesus conquered doubt with Love.

On occasion I haven't felt accepted or received when sharing news or sharing my views. Others look on doubtfully or argue the veracity of my claims. I watch them retreat and I feel their rejection or their triumph and smugness in the rightness of their views. And how do I respond? - rarely with love, tolerance or forgiveness. But Christ, the Risen One is our example - meeting doubt with love and transcending divisions through accepting each of us exactly where we are. If open to receive, Christ encourages us on our journey of faith and mercy.

*His steadfast love endures forever.*

My own doubts of the power of Love, of Resurrection overwhelm me sometimes. But the Christ of Resurrection just brushes these doubts aside, ignores my judgements of self and others and eagerly pulls me into the Circle of Everything, the fountain of overflowing, lifegiving Eternal and Infinite Love. If open to receive, the overwhelming generosity of Love Given flows in us.

None of my doubts, circular arguments, reluctance, or reticence have an impact on God's love. Abundant Love never wavers. It endures regardless of what I believe, think or do. And when I die to my doubts, my disbelief – I rise into the knowledge that God has never given up on me and never will. We are God's children, the work of his hands. This is good news! Alleluia!

*Peace be with you.*

Allow this good news of Resurrected Life to sink deeply into your being and abandon yourself to the peace of Christ. Our doubting selves are precious and loved. This is indeed good news. Peace be with you. Alleluia! Alleluia!