



INTRODUCTION

Talk about experience of being forgiven by someone.
 How do you know that you had done something wrong to someone?
 How did you feel?
 What did you do?
 What did the person tell you?

(Stress the importance of asking and receiving forgiveness. Something good for one's wellbeing and others is experienced through forgiveness of faults done.

On this Second Sunday of Easter, let us listen see what the Risen Christ tells us about forgiveness.



OPENING PRAYER

Easter Prayer

O Lord,
 Risen, alive and full of grace.
 You paid such a price that we may live in freedom today.
 We worship your holy name and give thanks for your redeeming grace.

Heavenly Father,
 May we drink in your tender love so that we can pour this love out to others.
 Come reign in our hearts, minds and spirits.

Holy Spirit,
 We welcome you to blow through our every word, action and thought.
 Come transform us on the inside so that each day we become more like our risen Lord. Amen.

<https://www.prayerscapes.com/>



PHASE ONE REMEMBER THE STORY OF JESUS

1.1 Proclamation of the Gospel Story John 20: 19-31

A moment of prayerful silence

We will not be able to understand the Word of God unless God himself opens our hearts. Let us now welcome Jesus as he speaks to us through his Word

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia! Natoo ka ha akon, Tomas, kay kinita ka ha akon. Malipayon adton waray kumita ha akon kundi natoo la gihapon. Alleluia.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. John



19 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood

among them and said, "Peace be with you." 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me,

so I send you." 22 When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

24 But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

26 A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." 28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

All reply: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

1.2 Brief Guided Silent Meditation / Personal Prayer

What did Jesus tell his disciples when he appeared to them after his resurrection?

If you were one of the disciples, what would you do and say, knowing that Jesus is dead but has come to life?

1.3 Text in Context

1. Why were the disciples afraid? If you were one of them would you feel and do after hearing all about Jesus is alive
2. What surprised all of them that same evening? Describe the scene when they saw Jesus before them? Jesus stood among them and said to them "Peace be with you", showing them the wounds in his hands and side.
3. Why do you think Jesus repeated this greeting to them: "Peace be with you"
4. What did Jesus breathe on his disciples?
5. What mission did he ask them to do?
6. What was the reaction of Thomas, who was absent that evening, when he heard the other disciples telling, *we have seen the Lord?*

PHASE II REFLECT the Story of the Church (Teachings of the Church)



What a fearful tension that Good Friday when Jesus was crucified in in the city of Jerusalem in 30 A.D. Jesus' friends and disciples must have been frightened and hard-pressed over the death of Jesus. In spite of their great affliction, they stayed in Jerusalem for three days. While it was true that most of them abandoned Jesus on the time of his suffering on the cross, they did not go back to their homes in Galilee. Perhaps, one reason was to do some traditional rituals over the beloved dead. So, we find them gathered together in locked room, afraid of the Jewish leaders. Their fear and grief overpowered the big news on the third day of Jesus' death. Mary Magdalene must be saying out loud:

The tomb is empty. Jesus' body disappears [that was early in the morning]

I have seen the Lord. Jesus will meet you in Galilee. [that was a bit later on the same day]

Reflection 1

Imagine yourself with the disciples in that locked room early on a Sunday morning after the death of Jesus. How would you feel. What are you afraid of? Hearing the news of Mary Magdalene, what would you say or do? Share your answer with someone.

What two things did Jesus do as he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection?

First, Jesus greeted them, "Peace be with you" or "Shalom"

Jesus knows very well that the disciples are confused and their faith is shaken. He assures them of his accepting them as they are. He does not come for vengeance or blaming them for deserting and running away from him. But now he comes to give peace to their troubled hearts. Peace is all that Jesus wants to give them. He wants to bring them back to God's love. In God's great mercy, Jesus is sent to us to forgive our sins. He is true to his name. The name *Jesus* means "Savior." *He saves His people from their sins.*

As the disciples receive his peace, Jesus, told them: "*As the Father has sent me, even so I send you*". After saying this, he makes the gesture of breathing on them and adds: "*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven*".

Jesus is the person of mercy. On the day of his resurrection, the disciples who rejoice being forgiven is now invited to announce forgiveness of sins to others.

As Jesus' mission on earth is accomplished, he entrusted to the apostles and to their successors the power to forgive sins through the Church. Thus, Jesus makes the disciples missionaries of forgiveness and mercy by giving them the Holy Spirit.

This is the Good News: there is no sin that cannot be forgiven because Jesus has conquered sin and death. No one should be deprived of harmony within oneself and with others to enjoy fullness of life from the Resurrected Jesus.

Second, Jesus showed his wounds.

Thomas was not present with the disciples, when Jesus appeared. He said he would only believe if he could touch Jesus' wounds with his finger

But Jesus was able to wait for Thomas to show him his wounds. He is not a ghost but with flesh and bones. The risen body of Jesus is real with marks of wounds that have now turned into concrete signs of love and mercy.

Each time we sin, we cause the wounds of Jesus to bleed again and again. But the same wounds tell us: *these wounds are for your forgiveness.*

As we celebrate the Feast of Divine Mercy today, let us beg the Risen and Crucified Lord to give us new life and new hope. In these dark months of the pandemic, let us repeat prayerfully the words of Thomas; My Lord, and my God.

Reflection 2

Recall the time when you feel discouraged because of your many failures. Take to heart the words of Pope Francis: *Go to Jesus: he likes you to tell him these things! [sins]" He forgets; he has a very special capacity for forgetting. He forgets, he kisses you, he embraces you... Let us go back to the Lord. The Lord never tires of forgiving; never! It is we who tire of asking his forgiveness. Let us ask for the grace not to tire of asking forgiveness, because he never tires of forgiving. Let us ask for this grace.*

PHASE THREE RESPOND – with/ in my personal faith /community faith story

-The Pope grants a plenary indulgence to those who will visit any of the 500 "Jubilee Churches" across the Philippines for the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity from April 4, 2021, to April 22, 2022. Let us consider this period as the year of mercy.

-Plenary indulgence is a special blessing for us. It totally removes God's punishment for sins that have already been forgiven. We may obtain a plenary indulgence by visiting any of the Jubilee Church, and fulfilling 3 conditions; sacramental confession, receiving communion, and praying for the intentions of the Holy Father (Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, The Creed).

These three conditions must be met within a few days before or after the work done for the indulgence. We may receive indulgences again and again as we visit every jubilee church if it is applied to the souls in purgatory, but only once when applied to self.

Below is the list of Jubilee Churches in the Archdiocese of Palo

1. Sto. Nino Parish (Tacloban)
2. Mother of Perpetual Help Parish (Tacloban)
3. Transfiguration of Our Lord's Cathedral (Palo)
4. St. Francis Xavier Parish (Abuyog)
5. Immaculate Conception Parish (Burauen)
6. St. Joseph Parish (Dagami)
7. Assumption of Our Lady Parish (Tanauan)
8. Most Holy Trinity Parish (Alangalang)
9. St. Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist Parish (Jaro, Leyte)
10. St. Joseph Parish (Barugo)
11. Holy Cross Parish (Carigara, Leyte)
12. Holy Child Parish (Isabel, Leyte)
13. Sts. Peter and Paul Parish (Ormoc, Leyte)
14. St. Francis Xavier Parish (Palompon, Leyte)
15. Our Lady of Refuge Parish (Dulag, Leyte)



CLOSING PRAYER

Divine Mercy Prayer (or Novena)

I fly to Your Mercy, Compassionate God, who alone are good. Although my misery is great and my offenses are many, I trust in Your Mercy because You are the God of Mercy, and it has never been heard of in all ages, nor do Heaven or Earth remember, that a soul trusting in Your Mercy has been disappointed.

(State your intentions)

Jesus, Friend of a lonely heart, You are my haven.

You are my peace.

You are my salvation.

You are my serenity in moments of struggle and amidst an ocean of doubts.

Amen. <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/>

BACKGROUND FOR THE CATECHIST

CCC 982 There is no offense, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive. "There is no one, however wicked and guilty, who may not confidently hope for forgiveness, provided his repentance is honest.⁵²⁹ Christ who died for all men desires that in his Church the gates of forgiveness should always be open to anyone who turns away from sin.⁵³⁰

CCC 983 Catechesis strives to awaken and nourish in the faithful faith in the incomparable greatness of the risen Christ's gift to his Church: the mission and the power to forgive sins through the ministry of the apostles and their successors: ...