



## Lectio Divina: Second Sunday of Easter, Year B

*Bogotá (Colombia), Sr. Mary Plata Cordero, April 11th 2021.- The joy of faith in the Easter community*

### GOSPEL

**Jn 20: 19 - 31.**

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, *“Peace be with you.”* When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, *“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”* And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, *“Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”*

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So, the other disciples said to 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 into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”*

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, *“Peace be with you.”* Then he said to Thomas, *“Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.”* Thomas answered and said to him, *“My Lord and my God!”* Jesus said to him, *“Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.”*

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

## WHAT DOES THE TEXT TELL ME?

Easter is a time to understand profoundly the marvelous gift of the Resurrection of Jesus. On this Second Sunday, the Church makes us reflect on the gift that Jesus came to bring us: Peace.

The experience of the Risen Lord takes place in the heart of the Community. This is the first time that He manifests Himself as the Risen Lord to His disciples. Then, the Journey of Faith in the Resurrection begins in their midst.

In this encounter there are two important moments: Jesus reveals Himself as the Risen Lord and shares with them His own mission, life and power to forgive sins. The reaction of the disciples does not take long. They *“rejoiced when they saw the Lord.”* The presence of the Risen Jesus brings peace and joy, these are the two great gifts from the Risen Lord.

## MEDITATION

The initial state in which the Community finds itself was one of fear, *“the doors were locked.”* They still have the fear for the tomb and they are still in the tomb of fear and do not partake of His risen life. Jesus comes and with His Words, restores their confidence: **“Peace be with you.”** According to the narrative, the first thing that Jesus introduces in His Community is His peace, no reproaches or complaints for abandoning Him, only peace and joy. And the peace of Jesus is fullness of life, serenity and love. The first gift of a risen life is always peace that destroys fears, that opens to dialogue and witness, because it comes from a power that transforms us, the power of the Spirit and the Risen Lord! He breathes on them and tells them: *“Receive the Holy Spirit.”*

On the day of the Lord, when our Community is united together also receives the gift of the Spirit, the breath of Risen Jesus who renews our life and gives us joy and peace.

Thomas was not with them in his Community on the day of Easter and wants to “see the Lord.” Like Thomas, none of us was present at the manifestation of the Risen Lord, but today also, in the face of our doubts, the Word of Jesus tells us: **“Do not be unbelieving, but believe.”** And in Community we are given the occasion to proclaim in an act of faith the greatest confession that a disciple can make to the Risen Lord: **“My Lord and my God!”** It is an expression of a personal faith but also is a community faith. After Easter, the community returns to its daily activities, to give witness to a fraternal life expressed in solidarity, prayer, praise, celebration of the Eucharist and the witness of a permanent joy and happiness, capable of attracting others to the Lord. This is how today’s first reading describes it: *“With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all.”*

A real Easter experience enables us to be born again; like the disciples we feel His creative breath and our lives are transformed, impelled by His Spirit.

As we celebrate the 325<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of our Congregation, we must experience in our Communities a rebirth through the living presence of Jesus among us. Just as He is the center of the Church, He must be at the center of our Communities and our groups for apostolate. Only He can inspire communion and renew our hearts.

It is Jesus who can bring about the change in our apostolic perspectives, freedom from fear and anxiety and new climate of peace and serenity that we need so much to open the doors so that Risen Jesus may become present and that we may be able to share the Gospel with the men and women of our time.

*May we move from...*

- Fear to joy...
- Hearing to experiencing...
- Seeing to believing...
- Receiving to giving...
- Believing to witnessing...
- Selfishness to commitment and generosity...

This is the growth that the meditation on these apparitions of the Risen Jesus enables us to attain.

## **PRAYER**

“Lord, I wait for you at sunset, at the end of my days, in the silence of the descending evening. It does not matter that my doors are closed. You come in! Show yourself to me; let me see your radiant face and give me, as on that day to your disciples, the precious gift of *peace*. I also, like them, desire to see your hands and side. I want to see your love turned into hands and heart pierced for me.

Jesus, I find within me much of the doubting Thomas in need of your presence. My weak faith also makes it a daily struggle to come to You, to be with You and to feel Your presence in me. Lord, I need your love and presence that can understand my weakness. I need that at the touch of my hand in your hand and your side, your love overcomes me and that I throw myself with infinite tenderness into your arms, confessing that I am yours and that You are mine: “My Lord and my God.” Amen

## **CONTEMPLATION**

Lord, give us FAITH, even if it is small like a mustard seed so that we may be witnesses of your Spirit in this society in which we live.

- Let us thank the Lord for the FAITH we received at Baptism. Let us feel being “blessed for having believed.”

- Let us repeat frequently during the week: *Lord, increase my faith, increase our faith.*
- Let us present to the Lord specific persons who need to strengthen their faith as it seems to you. Pray for them.
- Let us strive to transmit the **peace** and **joy** of the Resurrection to the persons around you.

*LET US CONCLUDE DWELLING ON THE WORD OF GOD by praying to our Mother Foundress to make us...*

*Firm in Faith, unwavering in hope and generous in charity.*