

Scripture Reflection

Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! On this Second Sunday of Easter, as we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday, we are reminded of God's limitless love and forgiveness, and our call to be *Messengers of Hope*.

Imagine how the disciples felt after Jesus was crucified. The leader in whom they had had so much hope was dead; they had abandoned Him as He predicted; and now they feared that the Jews would come after them, too. They were huddled together and afraid.

In today's Gospel, Jesus appears to the disciples and offers them His peace. Then, he breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (**Jn 20:23**), empowering them to be instruments of His mercy.

Thomas doubts until he touches Jesus's wounds, but Jesus doesn't rebuke him. He meets Thomas in his doubts and gives him what he needs to believe. He demonstrates mercy in action.

There are many in our communities who need someone to reach out and encourage them to believe in God's love. We are called to be *Messengers of Hope*, sharing Christ's mercy through our words and actions, offering peace, kindness, and compassion.

Each year, the *Annual Catholic Appeal* allows us to come together as a family in Christ to share the Good News and reach out to the suffering, the doubting, and the weary throughout the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Our gifts become hope and healing for the most vulnerable and spread His boundless love and mercy.

Today, let's embrace our call to be *Messengers of Hope*. Please give to the *Appeal* <<date and place>> or visit aca.archstl.org to learn more about the impact of your generosity.

Bulletin/Pulpit Announcement

Christ's boundless mercy compels us to act. The *Annual Catholic Appeal* provides us an opportunity to be *Messengers of Hope* throughout the Archdiocese of St. Louis and support the mission of the Church, sharing Christ's love with those who need it most. This week, we are launching the *Appeal* in our parish.

Please consider supporting the *Annual Catholic Appeal* this year. You can pick up your pledge card after Mass or make a gift online at aca.archstl.org.