

As we journey forward to renew our parish spiritually, I ask for you to give me three minutes a day. One minute in the morning, one minute in the afternoon and one minute in the evening. Spend each of those moments considering the following. Many thanks, Fr Henry

Sunday, April 28, 2019. Morning. Divine Mercy Sunday. “Jesus, I trust in you.” Having spent several days considering “trust” some weeks ago, let us make that commitment to fully trust Jesus.

Afternoon. Mercy. Forgiveness. Let us live out mercy in our lives — forgiving those who have sinned against us, and accepting forgiveness for the times that we have sinned.

Evening. On this Divine Mercy Sunday, we focus on how the Divine Floodgates from Heaven are open wide and Jesus offers us total forgiveness.

Monday, April 29, 2019. Morning. Yesterday’s Gospel reading for Divine Mercy Sunday finds the Apostles locked in the upper room in fear. When we find ourselves hiding in fear, let us turn to Jesus in faith and trust, and say with Saint Faustina, “Jesus, I trust in you.” And let us consider all of the definitions and connotations of that word *trust*. I believe in you. I rely on you. I depend on you. I find my conviction in you. I have confidence in you.

Afternoon. Easier said than done. We cannot trust without having the courage to trust. From yesterday’s Gospel reading of Divine Mercy Sunday, Jesus breathed on the Apostles. The Biblical scholars among us will recall that Adam and Eve were lifeless beings until God “blew into their nostrils the breath of life.” (Genesis 2:7). Similarly Jesus breathes on the Apostles and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Evening. In receiving the Holy Spirit at Confirmation, we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, one of which is Fortitude or Courage or the strength to follow through on our commitment to trust Jesus.

Tuesday, April 30, 2019. Morning. From the Gospel reading for Divine Mercy Sunday, Jesus breathed on the Apostles and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”

Afternoon. Two-thousand years ago, Jesus gave the power and authority to the Apostles and so that power and authority has passed on down through the centuries from generation to generation, to this day when we find ourselves holding the awesome responsibility. We tremble at the thought that our generation now holds the power to forgive. And the question remains, will we forgive.

Evening. This need for us to forgive is such an important message that Joseph and his brothers get a full 25% of the first book of the Bible — more screen time than Adam and Eve, more screen time than Noah or Abraham. The journey from his brothers doing him wrong until Joseph forgiving them takes up much of the latter portion of the book of Genesis. This act of Joseph forgiving his brothers can be seen as an important climactic event of that book.

Wednesday, May 1, 2019. Morning. As we considered a month ago, the best-known of Jesus’ parables calls us to focus on a two-fold forgiveness. (1) That of the father (God) forgiving the prodigal son. As well as (2) That of the elder brother called to forgive his younger (the prodigal) brother. And so are we both called to be forgiven, as well as to forgive.

Afternoon. “Jesus, I trust in you.” The words most often associated with Divine Mercy Sunday. At times, forgiving another, will require us to first have tremendous belief and trust in Jesus.

Evening. As Saint Peter was overcome with fear and therefore could not express his belief and trust in Jesus and thereby denied him, so might we find ourselves caving into fear. As did Saint Thomas in the Gospel reading for this past Divine Mercy Sunday, we refuse to have faith and

believe without physical proof, an oxymoron in itself, since faith is believing in that for which we have no proof.

Thursday, May 2, 2019. Morning. Whether, as did Saint Paul, we had a past bent on harming, imprisoning, and in his extreme case, killing people by stoning, whether, as did Saint Augustine, we had a past that did not involve living out a moral life as the church spells it out, or whatever of the saints in their initial sinful period we imitated, let us come to Jesus and his forgiveness as did Saint Peter, as did Saint Thomas, as did Saint Paul, as did Saint Augustine. And in response to and in imitation of the forgiveness that Jesus shows to us, let us find our strength and conviction to trust in Jesus' call for us to forgive others.

Afternoon. Knowing that some of the great Saints (Peter, Paul, Augustine) needed to receive forgiveness, so let us not fall under the misguided preconception that one must be without sin to respond to Jesus' call. Jesus himself challenged and corrected the religious leaders of his day when they made that claim.

Evening. This past Sunday was Divine Mercy, with Jesus in the Gospel reading of that day breathing out the Holy Spirit and speaking of forgiveness of sin. He did not simply die on the cross, as we recently celebrated on Good Friday, but he died AND rose from the dead, conquering sin and death. He is the boss of sin. No matter what hold it might have over us, no matter how guilty we might feel over our sins, let us look to Jesus and his Divine Mercy.

Friday, May 3, 2019. Morning. Let us, in response to and in imitation of Jesus, forgive others who have sinned against us. Let us believe in the power of Divine Mercy Sunday. In the words of Saint Faustina, let us say, "Jesus, I trust in you."

Afternoon. An immediate knee-jerk reaction we have when presented with Mercy is "what about justice?" Let us commit ourselves to a multi-day-long journey from an *either-or* mindset (Mercy or Justice) to a *both-and* mindset (Mercy and Justice).

Evening. We find ourselves holding one concept in our mind and heart at a time. Earlier in the day, we might find ourselves in solidarity with immigrants attempting to cross the border into a country. Later in the same day, we might find ourselves caught up with how a town or city or state or nation would be able to handle a sudden influx of immigrants. But it is rare that we hold both thoughts in our minds or hearts simultaneously.

Saturday, May 4, 2019. Morning. As individuals, as a group of believers, as generations of people over a period of centuries, we approach our faith journey with a mind and heart that wants to consider one concept at a time. Our faith calls us to stretch our minds and hearts to embrace two concepts simultaneously. Our knee-jerk reaction is "impossible!"

Afternoon. How can the Bible call us to embrace weakness and strength simultaneously, as well as foolishness and wisdom? "When I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Cor 12:10). "Let him become a fool so as to become wise." (1 Cor 3:18). And these are relatively easy concepts to unite when considering the magnitude of Jesus himself being both human and divine.

Evening. We are called to stretch our minds and hearts to embrace that Jesus himself is both human and divine. Something that the early Church had to fight tirelessly to maintain for centuries after Jesus ascended up into heaven. An overemphasis on his divinity and a downplaying of his humanity (Apollinarianism). A downplaying of Jesus' divinity (Arianism). The pendulum swings back and forth.

Sunday, May 5, 2019. Morning. Bishops would convene in councils (Nicea in the year 325) and (Chalcedon in the year 451) to affirm Jesus' humanity and divinity. As did the early church have to fight for centuries to affirm the call to embrace Jesus as both human and divine, so will we find it a challenge to embrace what we at first consider to be opposites.