**Homily for 2nd Sunday of Easter**(Divine Mercy Sunday, 4/28/2019)

Rev. Francis Kim

 Peace be with you, everyone! When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His death and Resurrection, His first words were: “Peace be with you.”

 What is peace that Jesus announces and brings? Peace usually means ‘the absence of conflict or problem’ or ‘the freedom from struggles.’ But, we still have a lot of problems in our life, even if we believe in Jesus Christ. You know? Jesus doesn’t necessarily remove all our problems when we become believers. Instead, He has promised to be with us and help us and encourage us in the midst of those problems in our lives.

 Which is better, facing life’s problems and hurts without Christ or facing them with Him? Which are you choosing today?

 In the Gospel today, the true meaning for peace and faith surfaces in the conversation between Jesus and Thomas. What a normal human being Thomas is! Thomas is called as ‘Doubting Thomas.’ He saw Jesus died, and he refused to accept His Resurrection unless he saw the proof for himself. He said, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands and put my finger into His side, I will not believe.”

 What do you think your reaction would be if someone told you that a deceased friend has risen from the dead and now is being seen by many people? This would be a troubling thought for many of us, and was for Thomas as well. People may say, “I suppose I’d believe in life after death, if I ever met someone who had gone there, and then came back to tell about it.”

 But, that is exactly what Jesus did when He died and then came back to life. In the midst of the shock of Jesus’ suddenly showing up, Jesus offered Thomas and the disciples exactly what they asked for. Thomas wasn’t expecting actually to touch Jesus’ nail holes in order to believe. He simply had been expressing his frustration and his need to see Jesus for himself.

 The disciples thought that everything had finished in tragedy, and none of them were expecting to see the Risen Lord. They were very depressed and scared of the Jews. They locked the door and stayed in the dark room. Then, Jesus appeared and said to them, “Do not be afraid and peace be with you.”

 Jesus gave His people the ultimate peace they need, to escape the frustration and chaos of the world around them. It was His promise. His promise to the disciples is still true to us; “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” He says.

 How is it possible to experience this kind of peace?

 The faith makes it possible. It is possible to have peace in our lives when we believe in the Risen Christ. So, Jesus says, “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.” Remember. We are never alone if we believe in Christ. So, rest in Him and do not worry about what lies ahead. Jesus Christ has already taken care of tomorrow. This belief brings us peace.

 The Risen Lord has promised, “I am with you all the days, all day long.” That means we can count on His presence not only every day, but every moment of every day in our life. The eternal peace can be found only in one place, from one source, and that is the Risen Christ.

 This peace is also possible because the Holy Spirit gives us patience and joy even in the midst of life’s difficulties. And, peace is possible because we know our problems are only temporary. Someday, they will all come to an end.

 Although, we cannot see Jesus Christ, He is here. He is with us in the Sacraments of the Church, in the community of faith, and every moment in our daily lives.

 Where there is Jesus Christ, there is peace. In the midst of a world filled with danger, hatred, and war, He still says to all who believe in Him, “Peace be with you! Do not be afraid. I am with you always.”

 Life sometimes takes us through hard places. But, even in the midst of them, Christ is with us, and nothing can happen to us that is beyond His ability to help. No matter what trials we face, Christ never leaves us alone. He is with us every step of the way! Keep this promise before you today and always.

 His Resurrection makes all the difference, now and forever! Peace be with you!