



“NO GREATER LOVE” (John 15:13)

“There is no greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

By Camille Herr

The Resurrection of Jesus is the greatest event to happen over the course of all human history. It is the reason for our faith. Just as Jesus rose from the dead, so will we. Death no longer has a meaningless ending. Instead, it has a meaningful beginning. Jesus’ Resurrection proves that God’s love is stronger than death! Alleluia!

Today’s ***Gospel from John 20:24-29***, is one of my favorites. It tells about the Apostle Thomas who refuses to believe that Jesus has risen from the dead, unless Jesus appears to him and shows him the wounds from Jesus’ crucifixion and probes the nail marks and puts his hand into his side. Wow! Talk about being demanding! But Jesus knew what was really going on with Thomas. He understood that there was hurt behind those words. That Thomas was suffering from shock, fear, disappointment, uncertainty about the future and grief. What really touches me is Jesus’ response, He comes back to The Upper Room just for Thomas. This tells me that Jesus will do the same for us. Jesus, likewise, knows our hurts and what we need to heal our wounds, and He will go out of His way to meet us wherever we are. For our part, we need only to open the door and let Him in.

This Gospel story about Thomas is one of many examples of the great love of God. It has been said that the Bible can be likened to a love story between God and his children. A love affair that began with the creation of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. It never ceases to amaze me that God created man and woman in his own image and likeness. What love he must have for all mankind to be called children of God! Unfortunately, God’s original plan did not work out. Sin and death entered the picture and destroyed the beautiful relationship that Adam and Eve had with God. But that did not mean that God stopped loving them for even a second. Or continue to find ways to bring them back to him.

I have discovered that when I took a wider view of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, that there is one thread that runs throughout the Scriptures, and that one thread is God's love. Time and time again, I read about God's children failing to love him, and sinning against him. Yet God, being like the relentless "Hound of Heaven" never gives up. Over and over again, he patiently waits for us to turn back to him. Much like the father of the prodigal son in **Luke 15:11-32**, where he waited for his son's return and when saw him coming back, ran to meet him and threw his arms around him and kissed him. This is the same kind of love that God has for you and me. It matters not what we have done or failed to do. God's love is greater than any sin. He wants to forgive us, all we need to do is ask for his forgiveness and our sins will be thrown out to the farthest and deepest part of the sea, never to be seen again. Such is God's love.

Which brings me to today's **Celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday**. This particular Devotion to Divine Mercy is very dear to my heart. I have been devoted to it since that first day I found a pamphlet explaining how a young Polish nun, who is now **Saint Faustina**, had revelations given to her by Jesus and had instructed her to have an image painted as she had seen Him, with the inscription below, **Jesus, I Trust in You**. Jesus' appearance to St. Faustina, reminded me of Jesus appearing to Thomas in the Upper Room. The Image is similar to what Thomas might have seen. It is the Risen Jesus whose hands and feet bear the marks of the crucifixion. Our Lord is clothed in a white garment with His right hand raised in a blessing. His left hand touching the area of His heart. From His heart, come forth two rays, one red and the other pale. Jesus is shown to be walking toward the viewer from out of the darkness. Jesus is the Light. Everything about this Image speaks of the Risen Christ coming to seek out lost souls in their darkness.

I would like to give you the words of Jesus to St. Faustina to all of us on the Feast of Divine Mercy:

"My daughter, tell the whole world about My inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day are open all the divine floodgates through which graces flow. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it man or angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity. Everything that exists has come forth from the very depths of My mercy. Every soul in its relation to Me will contemplate My love and mercy throughout eternity. The Feast of Mercy emerged from the depths of tenderness. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy."

So, let us unlock the doors of our own Upper Room and let Jesus come into our hearts, bless & heal our wounds.



Camille Herr has been a member of Catholic Women of Zion from its grass roots beginning 32 years ago to its present day. She serves as recording secretary to the Executive Board and is the wife of our late Deacon and CWOZ advisor, Ed Herr. Camille is a member of St. Dorothea's Church in Eatontown where she currently serves as a Lector, Special Liturgy Coordinator and speaker for the RCIA Process. Camille has served as the Coordinator for the St. Dorothea Pastoral Care Committee and Visitation of the Sick Program and has been a speaker at CWOZ luncheons and retreats, Parish Missions, and at a Deacon's Convocation with her husband Ed. Camille is the mother of a married daughter and grandmother of one grandson.