

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Apr 7th 2024

We are on the Sunday of the Divine Mercy! Renowned Italian Biblical Scholar, Fr. Fernando Armellini- has a beautiful explanation for the apparition scene of Jesus, as mentioned in the Gospel passage today. Jesus appears before the frightened disciples and greets them Peace! And then shows them his hands and feet. Why hands and feet? We identify a person by looking at his or her face and not at the hands and feet.

Jesus shows his hands and feet as identification marks! What was so unique about his hands and feet? These hands and feet carried the marks of love. His woundedness, his brokenness was his identification marks. The hands - that did good to others, healed the sick, raised the dead and embraced the children – were on display: and he tells the disciples – look at these! It's me! The disciples had abandoned him, even denied the Master, but the Risen One does not rebuke them, instead gives them his peace. When we present ourselves on the Lord's day with all our weaknesses, we receive no rebuke. The greeting is always peace. "I give you peace."

Jesus tells Thomas: Look at my hands and touch my wounds; reach out and feel my side. It is not a reproach to Thomas who doubted his resurrection. Jesus fulfils the desire that Thomas had, to touch, to see his hands and his wound that has left his side open. It is the invitation to Thomas to always have his gaze fixed in Jesus' hands and on his side.

It is exactly the invitation that is made to us on the Lord's day, to contemplate his hands and his side because if we always have before us what those hands have done, when we leave the Church, during the week, we will always have the mission in mind that the Risen One has given us: show everyone the hands of Jesus through our hands; do the works which Jesus wants to do in the world.

How can we keep our eyes fixed on those hands and that side of the One who has given his body and blood, all his life? We have the answer in the Eucharist, in the Eucharistic bread. There we can touch him, feel him and experience him within us

Today the Gospel invites us to desire for and meet Jesus. Not the Jesus we imagine but with the real Jesus of the Gospels. We are obliged to read them in detail. To commit ourselves to follow him, because he is alive, he is around! To believe in his resurrection means nothing can remain the same in us. We commit ourselves to live as Jesus lived.

Bible Claret