

Wounds of Christ

Second Sunday of Easter – Divine Mercy Sunday

April 3, 2016

John 20:19-31

“Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe (John 20:25).”

The request of Thomas was a bit strange. To recognize the risen Lord, Thomas demanded that he would be able to touch the wounds of Christ. But, why did Thomas look for the wounds of Jesus? He could have asked to see Jesus' face, or to touch Jesus' nose. He had been Jesus' disciple for some years, and surely, Thomas would not have any difficulty to recognize Jesus. Why wounds?

I guess one of the reason is that Thomas looked for the wounds because he could identify himself with that very wounds that Jesus bore. Thomas was searching for himself as much as for Jesus. Deep inside his being, Thomas admitted that he is the wounds of Christ, indeed all of the disciples. Thomas who once said, “Let us go to die with Him (John 11:16)!” ran away when Jesus was arrested. Peter, the leader, denied Jesus three times. Judas sold Him for a price of slave. The rest were leaving Him alone to the hand of His murderers. The stories of disciples are the stories of failure, cowardice and betrayal. They have crucified Jesus. They were the wounds of Christ.

We are also the wounds of Christ. Ours are the stories of failure, selfish ambition and unfaithfulness. Some of us might have betrayed our friends just to gain certain personal benefits. Some of us might have do violence even to our beloved ones. Some of us might have told lies to protect our good reputation and cover up our mistakes. In his book, *Blood and Earth*, Kevin Bales wrote on how our desire for cheaper goods encourages the modern day of human slavery in the third world countries. Who knows that our cellular phone we use to read this reflection are, to certain extent, the products of people working in subhuman conditions in Africa and Asia. And who knows our choice of food has damaged the million acres of soil and hurt the mother earth.

Just like the disciples, we are weak, broken and wounded. We have crucified Jesus and we recognize the wounds of Jesus as ourselves. Yet, we must not miss the point of Easter. Yes, we are the wounds, but we are the wounds of the Risen Christ. Yes, we are weak, frail and sinful, but we do not lose hope because we do not carry our broken selves alone. Jesus is carrying us, and all our imperfection, and transforms

them in His resurrection. When in January 2015, Pope Francis visited Tacloban city, Philippines that was devastated by the typhoon Yolanda, he was deeply saddened by the destruction that it brought and thousand lives that it had destroyed. In this face of utter destruction, Pope Francis pointed his hands to the crucified Lord, and said to survivors,

“So many of you have lost everything. I don’t know what to say to you. But the Lord does know what to say to you. Some of you have lost part of your families. All I can do is keep silence and walk with you all with my silent heart. Many of you have asked the Lord – why lord? And to each of you, to your heart, Christ responds with his heart from the cross. I have no more words for you. Let us look to Christ. He is the Lord. He understands us because he underwent all the trials that we, that you, have experienced.”

Thomas focused only on the wounds, but when he began to touch Jesus and saw the Risen Lord, he exclaimed, *“My Lord and My God.”* Christian are not to escape from the sufferings of this world nor to be in despair, but we are to face the trials of life and hopeful even if we are weak, because Jesus who has embraced the worst of this world, finally rose and brought us together in his body.

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Source: bayuop.blogspot.com