

**Homily for II (2) Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy) Year C 24-04-2022 by Fr. Lubem Waya, osj.**

**First Reading: Acts 5:12-16**

**Psalm: Psalm 117:2-4, 22-27**

**Second Reading: Revelation 1:9-11.12-13.17-19**

**Gospel: John 20:19-31.**

### **CAN I DO GREATER THINGS THAN CHRIST?**

Yes, before suffering His fate, Christ made a daunting promise to His disciples in John 14:12, thus, “very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.” These same words are also words of comfort because in them Jesus assures His followers of all ages that, no matter what happens, God’s work will continue in the world. Even after Jesus’ earthly ministry ended, His work would go on. The followers of Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, would continue to help and heal people and the good news of the kingdom would have a worldwide impact. Though, not without crosses surely.

Undoubtedly, today we begin to witness the fulfillment of this promise manifested in the life of the early Christian community where the same signs and wonders worked by Jesus are also being worked by His apostles, most especially Peter. This means that like the apostles, by placing our faith in Him, we become filled with His Spirit to continue His work and live His life so that in our lives the power of the Risen Christ who remains with us perpetually would be made manifest. It does not however mean that Christ’s followers would do things greater *in power* than Christ. After all, the disciple is not superior to his teacher. So, no one including the apostles has ever exceeded the power of Jesus’ miracles like raising Lazarus who had been in the tomb for four days from the dead. What this means then is that the works of Jesus’ followers would be greater not in power but *in extent*. As Jesus’ earthly ministry had been largely limited geographically to Galilee and Judea, His disciples, however, are going to extend the frontiers of His ministry to the uttermost parts of the earth. That is why when Jesus ascended to heaven, His followers who were numbering in their hundreds would only forty days later in response to the pedagogy of the apostles, leap into their thousands (cf. Acts 2:41). And by the end of Acts, the gospel had made its way into the imperial pagan capital city of Rome. Today the gospel has found its way to all the continents of the world. But how are we living out the gospel message in our lives?

As God’s people, when we pray with faith in Jesus’ name, answers come, not by our making but by His power. Because He promised that where two or three gather in His name, He is in their midst. By His name, therefore, miracles will continue to happen, and the greatest of these is the miracle of the spiritual transformation of a sinful heart by the power of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of reconciliation where we encounter His mercy and become purified and renewed again for His glory. This is what Christ institutes today and confers on His Church the divine power to forgive sins in the gospel where He commissions the apostles to be emissaries of peace through the forgiveness of sins.

Like the apostles, we all are commissioned to spread peace and forgiveness everywhere we find ourselves. This is the sign of the presence of God’s Spirit with us. Priests exercise this special ministry in a sacramental manner through the grace of sacred orders, where, in the name of God and His Church they are able to forgive the sins of the sons and daughters of the Church and the whole world. They do this only in the sacramental forum where they act *in persona Christi capitis* revealing the merciful face of God in a broken world. Therefore, cut off from Christ, the priest as a man cannot absolve even the sins of animals. But enabled by God’s grace, He brings to us the merciful face of the Father who forgives us all our sins as long as we come to Him truly contrite for the wrongs we have done. As He forgives us, He expects us also to be merciful to others. That is the only sign that we have God’s Spirit with us. May God’s Spirit which we have received, enable us also to be merciful to others like the Father. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.