

*April 21, 2016, 10:30 a.m. – Saint Joseph of Cupertino – Reading
Annual Morning of Prayer for Lay Ecclesial Ministers*

LIVING CHRIST'S MERCIFUL MISSION AS A LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTER

**A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.
If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin,
while the spirit lives because of justice.**

**If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you,
then he who raised Jesus from the dead
will bring your mortal bodies to life also,
through his Spirit dwelling in you.
The word of the Lord.**

Spirit dwelling in you, wow, how awesome is that!

And that is why we are FULL OF JOY this Easter Season with 25 days of our 50 to still celebrate! So, how have you celebrated your last 25 days of the Easter season? Celebrating this Good News that Spirit is dwelling in you! We put so much time into our 40 day Lenten do we do the same to plan our Easter celebrations!!! To tired to celebrate? Too much to do? 1st Communions, Confirmations, Pentecost Celebrations, Graduations, ok, we've got the same calendar

***Too busy? I do not use that word anymore, it means excessively occupied...seems we can compete on who's the busiest! why? to make sure others know we are busy? Do we find our self- worth in what we do instead of who are? God's child! I use the word, FULL, my day is very full...full of love, new life, people, the moment, grace, God's goodness!**

**So #1 in living as a merciful minister, be first...merciful to yourself! Find that mystical balance between doing and being. I am reminded of an East Indian Quantum physicist, Awit Goswami, who said, you American's would do well to listen to your famous singer Frank Sinatra to learn this balance of "to do" and "to be" when he sang, Do Be Do Be Do, we sisters, 7 of us at St. Simon will remind each other in that way, when we are off kilter with ministry, we just walk by and say, dobedobe....
....so we are not too tired to celebrate,
Spirit dwelling in you,**

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Looking at this painting of The Merciful Gentle Jesus that I was inspired to paint this YEAR OF MERCY, awakens in me something I do not think about often enough, and that is the light is coming from within Jesus going out! It is not coming in from the outside!

In other words, Jesus is showing us, that we open our hearts not to let God in, we open our hearts to let God out! Whoaaa that sure takes us on a different journey, we are no longer looking for God outside of ourselves, but within! It is a quarter inch journey that can take a lifetime to make☺but well worth the trip!

We are now called to live with our hearts open, to let God out everywhere we go! And how do we keep our hearts open? By never closing them! When we close our hearts, we separate from the truth of our divinity!

Yes, our open heart lets God's light and love flow out! Yes it is a vulnerable place to live, in this open heart stance but the only place that love and mercy can abide together!

...if something bad comes in, God makes it good!

...if something fearful comes in, God gives us faith!

Opening our hearts to let God shine out! Your hearts, as merciful ministers, are open all the time, pouring out mercy wherever you go. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Spirit dwelling in you

We know that to live mercy is a full body process:

- 1. It begins with empathy in **the mind**, when we aware of someone's suffering,**
- 2. And then we engage **the heart** where then compassion flows,**
- 3. And then **in body** we take that first step, an small action and mercy grows!!**

As I have heard so many inspiring definitions of mercy, the one that challenges my heart the most is **Mercy ~ UNDESERVED FORGIVENESS, whoa again, I may have the grace to forgive someone who asks forgiveness or shows remorse, but to have mercy, underserved forgiveness for one who shows neither?**

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That is the Mercy our dear Pope Francis is talking about and why he mercifully gave us a whole year to practice it!

Spirit dwelling in you

We now are light bearers of Spirit to all as merciful ministers! We are ready now to shine our light out, because we are balanced, dobedobedo, blessed, graced and free to do so!

Everywhere we look we see light, and we are reminded of who we are....GOD SHINING OUT** in the world!**

Be aware of light through your day...Church lights, window light, candle light, exit lights...

...refrigerator light, closet light, night light, front porch light, garage light, bike light, pool light, head lights, stadium lights, engine light, yikes!, TV, phone, computer, ipad light, street lights, starlight, moon light, sunlight, Bud light☺

EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK IS THE LIGHT OF JESUS

And, as we welcome the OUTER light, we then begin to see that deeper INNER light...

- **The light that is the ESSENCE in us all,**
- **The light in your spouses smile,**
- **The light in your children's and grand children's eyes,**
- **The light of truth spoken timidly by a teen**
- **The light of mercy lifting up the fragile one**
- **The light of wisdom in the aging,**
- **The light heartedness of a co-worker,**
- **The light of goodness in those we are blessed to serve,**
- **And then, we feel the "Lightness" of living as a merciful minister of God! Then, we are ready to celebrate...**

Spirit dwelling in you.