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The readings for this Sunday show us our need for God's Divine Mercy, offered to us through the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the forgiveness of our sins, and through each celebration of the Sacraments (all instituted to sanctify us), when we receive them in trusting Faith.

The first reading (Acts 2:42-47) tells us how the early Church grew every day because of the acts of mercy — sharing, sacrificial *agápe* love — practiced by the early Christians.

In the second reading (1 Pt 1:3-9), St. Peter glorifies God, the Father of Jesus Christ, for showing us His mercy by granting to His Incarnate, Only-begotten Son, Jesus, the gifts of Resurrection from the dead and a glorious Ascension into Heaven, thus giving us the assurance of our own resurrection.

Today's Gospel vividly reminds us of how Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a sacrament of Divine Mercy. The risen Lord gave his Apostles the power to forgive sins with the words, "*Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain, they are retained*" (Jn 20:19-23). Presenting the doubting Thomas' famous profession of Faith, "*My Lord and my God,*" the Gospel illustrates how Jesus showed his Divine Mercy to the doubting apostle and emphasizes the importance of Faith for everyone.