



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Danny Murphy – Second Sunday of Easter – April 23, 2017

Before we began our liturgy today, Dan announced, quite correctly that today is the Sunday within the octave of Easter – the Second Sunday of Easter, also Divine Mercy Sunday. So, here's what I am going to suggest that we do: because it's Divine Mercy Sunday, instead of reflecting upon the scriptures, let's see if we can apply God's Divine Mercy to our lives. Jesus told stories, we call parables, and he told stories all about God. And in his stories, he didn't teach any doctrinal propositions about God. But rather, his stories portrayed how God acts. His stories weren't about who God is, as much as they were about how God behaves. So that's what these stories tried to do and the reason we think he told these parables, is to try to persuade the crowds to the attractiveness about God's shocking love! In the parables that

Jesus told, people who tried to bargain with God, people who thought that they should have favor with God because they earned that by their own good deeds, people who tried to gain God's love by their own efforts, people like the early laborers in the vineyard, people like the older brother of the Prodigal Son, people like the accusers of the woman caught in adultery – people like that, trying to bargain, to win, to earn? In his stories, in his parables, they fell flat on their face and they were totally confounded. On the other hand, people who had no right at all to God's mercy; people like the eleventh hour workers in the vineyard, people like the Prodigal Son, people like the woman who committed adultery, people like that? They were overwhelmed by God's love. In his stories/parables, Jesus says that grace has the last laugh on justice, because that's how God acts. That's Divine Mercy! It's unearned, undeserved, unconditional, God's Divine Mercy. Any you know why I'm going out on a limb here? My guess is, and I think that it is a pretty accurate guess, my guess is that we have a hard time accepting that! Jesus told all these stories and what we heard in tonight's scriptures: the first reading especially and then in St. Peter. We like to EARN things, we like to think we DESERVE things. Jesus says: "Oh no, no, no, you do that if you want, but NOT with me! That's not what I do and that's not what my Father does! And my stories are to show you how God acts!" NOW, most of us, are familiar with the story of Jesus washing the apostles feet at the last supper? Jesus washing his apostles' feet shows that God embraces, enfolds everyone equally. It's hard to ACCEPT that, but the washing of the feet SHOWS that! Jesus washed the feet of his apostle John, the beloved, the only one who stayed with

him at the foot of the cross on Calvary. Jesus washed the feet of his apostle, Judas even though he knew he was going to betray him. Jesus washed the feet of his apostle Peter, even though he knew that he was going to deny him. Jesus washed the feet of all the other apostles even though he knew that they were going to abandon him. Jesus washing the feet of his apostles is a portrait of God's divine mercy – equally for everyone. And – see if we can pick up on this – the gesture of washing feet reaches out beyond all the divides that might separate us from one another. Many of us are concerned about all the strife and discord in our country. Now, see if you can imagine our country where we wash one another's feet – not literally, but definitely. Imagine our country where those who are Pro-Choice and those who are Pro-Life wash one another's feet. Imagine our country where Republicans and Democrats; conservatives and liberals wash one another's feet; where bishops wash the feet of the victims of clerical sexual abuse, and the victims wash the feet of their parish priests. Imagine our country if we put down our divisive placards and picked up a towel and a basin. Washing one another's feet – not literally, but defiantly – it can change our whole country! At the last supper, our Lord's fervent prayer; "Father, May they be one! May they be completely one!" Washing one another's feet can help make that happen – that's Divine Mercy! "You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one! I hope someday, that you'll join us, and the world will be as one!"

