

# Thoughts By Sr. Jo Ann

## Second Sunday of Easter \* Divine Mercy Sunday

Here we are. Even after hearing the words of Mary Magdalene, the Apostles are still fearful, stunned by all that took place in these past hours. Now one more surprise: “Jesus came, stood in their midst and said to them: Peace be with you.” He breathed on them and said “Receive the Holy Spirit.” (John 20:19-31) He breathed on them... The gift of the Holy Spirit is BREATH.

In Genesis, The Hebrew word used is RUAH, breath. The presence of the Spirit is the presence of God’s breath!!!! That must be why Jesus said I must go, but in that rejoining with the One God the Spirit of God can be “breathed” into, yes INTO us. Then, we can forgive, with the gift of God’s breath we can then do the works of Jesus, forgiveness, patience, kindness, love and mercy.

With this thought the Letter from Peter makes sense: “Blessed be God who **in his great mercy** gave us a new birth to a living hope.” (1 Pt 1:3-9) Forgiveness is action, but mercy is a deeply felt way of living, a new birth into a profound feeling of compassion! With this **breath of God**, we have a living hope, where our first response is one of mercy, not anger, not exasperation, never rage.

So, when Thomas returned the next weekend, once again the Christ blessed them with Peace. Peace! That quiet breath of deep stillness.