Second Sunday of Easter (Sunday of Divine Mercy)
Acts 2:42-47
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

Br. Steve Herro, O. Praem.

“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life….” Acts of the Apostles, 2:42.

In the week that I write this, there are several incidents in my personal life and our nation which resonate with this basic premise of the apostolic life.

First, our family was discussing the use of public libraries in the United States. Yes, I do have a library degree and am an active member of the Friends of the Brown County Library, but even withstanding these conditions, I would have replied to my brother that we need public libraries because some cannot afford a computer or 24 hour personal Internet access; we are created by God to live in community and something is gained by sharing our information search with others; and finally, the public information published by reputable sources is often more tested than private information (no one knows that you are a dog on the Internet).

Second, I had an initial discussion as a new volunteer with a committee member of the De Pere Beautification Committee. As I explained to Kathy, I not only appreciate the fact that I am blessed to have lots of gardens and trees on our Abbey property, but I would like to help others appreciate the wonder of the natural world that God has gifted all of us to share in common.

Third, our nation reeled after the comment of one legislator’s response to what he did not like about the current national health care policy during initial debate on the Affordable Health Care Act, “...What about men having to purchase prenatal care?” There was a collective act of consternation by proponents of the common good, those who believe health care is a right, and the many who understand the economics of health insurance pools.

Today is also the Sunday of Earth Week and but eight days after the deadline for filing income taxes. Acknowledging our common home and the benefits to all of society as a result of taxation may also be highlighted in a homily this Sunday. Our First Reading explicitly reminds us of the practices of the first Christian community, when many shared much in common for the betterment of all.

Steve is a member of St. Norbert Abbey, De Pere, Wisc. He is involved in a number of justice and peace ministries and contributes actively to the liturgical life of his Abbey community.