



JESUS I TRUST IN YOU



Saint John Paul II, who proclaimed the feast of Divine Mercy, at the Tomb of St. Faustina Kowalska in Lagiewniki, Poland.



My Conversion to Divine Mercy

By Fr. Roger J. Landry

When I first entered Mount St. Mary's seminary in Maryland in 1993, I met some fellow seminarians with a devotion to the Divine Mercy. They would often get together and recite the chaplet together. I was invited on several occasions to join them, but I always politely declined. I thought I didn't need another devotion and preferred to use my Rosary beads for the Rosary. I also didn't want to spend the time researching the devotion to see whether it was genuinely from the Lord or merely the latest Catholic fad.

When I was then sent to Rome to continue my preparation for the priesthood, my thoughts remained the same, but on my way back and forth between the North American College and St. Peter's Basilica, I would always pass the Church of Santo Spirito, which was the center for the Divine Mercy devotion in Rome. One day I stopped into the Church to go to confession and the Church was packed with young people praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet. It struck me that in order to be a good priest, I minimally was going to have to study the devotion to be able to reply to young people like them should I ever be asked about whether it was salutary for their spiritual growth.

So I got a copy of *The Diary of Blessed Faustina Kowalska*, the 730-page journal of what this Polish nun during the 1930s said the Lord revealed to her as his "secretary." I began to read it, but it gave me vertigo. It just seemed to repeat the same points with very minor changes, and I didn't know what to do with the massive amounts of unsynthesized spiritual data. I read about half of it before I concluded I couldn't take it anymore. Even though many of the points were beautiful and nothing seemed to be contrary to the faith, I determined to put off a final evaluation until I could muster the time and the willpower to return to finish it.

Everything changed for me, however, on April 30, 2000, the day Sr. Faustina was canonized by Pope John Paul II. That morning I celebrated Mass in a closed and almost totally empty basilica of St. Peter and headed to the Blessed Sacrament chapel to make my thanksgiving. When the Pope celebrated outdoor public Masses, I normally would stay there praying the breviary until the masters of ceremony arrived to pass out surplices and stoles for those who were going to be distributing Holy Communion during the Mass, a privilege that always came with a great seat.

That day, however, as I was finishing my thanksgiving, the unbidden

thought came to me that Sr. Faustina's canonization might be my last chance to see a papal Mass from the perspective of the piazza before returning back home to take up a pastoral assignment. So I walked through the Jubilee door about 7:30 and out into the square. Some of those who were responsible for seating must have erroneously thought that since I was leaving the closed basilica, I had to be someone important. I was able to proceed unimpeded to the back left corner of the front-right section before the altar. I wondered what I'd do for the three hours before the canonization Mass. As it turns out, I didn't have to worry about how to occupy my time.

After I had finished morning prayer, a young man, one of the first people to enter the square after the gates were opened at 7:30, approached and asked me in Italian whether I would be able to hear his confession. "Certo," I replied, as he knelt down on the hard stone of St. Peter's square in front of me. After I had given him absolution, a young girl came and queried whether I spoke Spanish. I told her that I did, and she asked whether I would be willing to hear her confession, too. I said that I would be happy to do so.

For the next two hours and 45 minutes, until literally the opening antiphon of the Mass, I heard confessions non-stop in the back-left corner of the front-right section. Italians, Spaniards, Brazilians, French- or English-speaking Poles and Germans, as well as a few from Britain and the United States, all humbly knelt down and poured themselves out. I was blown away by the depth and beauty of their contrition and appreciation for the gift of God's mercy. As only a priest could see from the "inside" of people's souls, I witnessed the profound fruits that the devotion to Divine Mercy had produced in Catholics from various countries, cultures and languages. As Mass began, I thanked the Lord for having moved me to go out to the square that morning and for having used me as his instrument to share his Divine Mercy with so many.

During John Paul's homily for St. Faustina's canonization, I was surprised and thrilled when he said, "It is important then that we accept the whole message [of God's merciful love] that comes to us from the word of God on this Second Sunday of Easter, which from now on throughout the Church will be called 'Divine Mercy Sunday.... By this act I intend today to pass this message on to the new millennium.'" I knew that from that point forward, I was being summoned, as all priests were, to be a particular herald of that message. The experiences of that morning were a gift from God to help me to see the greatness of the interior miracles that the devotion could effect in people. I remember rejoicing that I would have the opportunity, returning to parishes in the Diocese of Fall River, to bring this message and celebrate

Introduction to the Divine Mercy Devotions

By Fr. Roger J. Landry

We celebrate on Easter the most important event in the history of the world, the most crucial event in the history of our personal life: the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We know what Jesus did the first time he met with his apostles on Easter Sunday evening, something that shows us very clearly what he believed his mission to be, what the point of his coming down from heaven was, and what he wanted to be the priority of his apostles and his Church.



The ten apostles were huddled together out of fear in the Upper Room where just three days earlier Jesus had given them His Body and Blood for the first time in Holy Communion. Jesus walked through the closed doors and his first words to them — words that he had died to say to them, words he had risen to say to them — were “Peace be with you!” They didn’t get it. Just like they didn’t want to believe Mary Magdalene when she said that she had seen Jesus earlier that morning, just like they were reluctant to believe the disciples from Emmaus earlier that evening, the apostles thought Jesus was a ghost. So he repeated, “Peace be with you!” Jesus had come down from heaven and had given his life to give them — to give us — *peace*, a peace the world cannot give and a peace the world cannot take away. He had said before his death, “Not as the world gives peace do I give it.” Peace for Jesus was not the absence of war and international conflict, but peace with God through the forgiveness of sins. Without this peace, no other type of peace is possible, because sin destroys peace.

Jesus said to the apostles, “Just as the Father sent me, so I send you!” Why had the Father sent Jesus? He sent him ultimately to save us from our sins — and the consequence of our sins, death — by his life, passion, death and resurrection. “Just as the Father sent me [to forgive sins], so I send you!” Jesus was communicating and commissioning. As the first thing he did on the day he rose from the dead, Jesus was going to send out the apostles to forgive sins in his name.

But since no one can forgive sins but God alone (Mk 2:7), Jesus breathed on

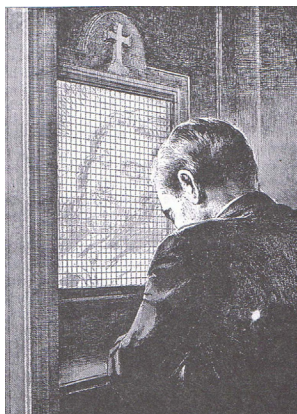
them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” He gave them God the Holy Spirit so that they might forgive sins, just as we hear every time the priest pronounces those beautiful words in confession, “God, the Father of Mercies... has sent His Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins.” And then he said words that point clearly to the Sacrament of Confession: “Those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; those whose sins you retain, they are retained.”

Jesus was making them his ministers, his ambassadors, of mercy. Just as through them, Jesus himself says, “This is my body,” and “This is the chalice of my blood” in the Mass, so through them Jesus was going to say, “Your sins are forgiven; go in peace!”

This mission of mercy was going to be the apostles’ most important task, the mission in which Jesus involved them intimately as his first action upon rising from the dead. And we know that the only way that they would know which sins to forgive and which to retain would be if penitents told them their sins, which points to the essential structure of the Sacrament of Confession.

So Jesus is saying something to us very startling. If we want peace — and each of our hearts cries out for it, in our hearts, in our families, in our neighborhoods, cities, societies, nations and across the globe! — then Jesus gives us the means. And he wants us to take Him and those means seriously.

Jesus says that the most important factor in peace is not the number of diplomats. It’s not the strength of the United Nations. It’s not the capture and elimination of terrorists. It’s not the suppression of the capacity of rogue nations to make nuclear weapons or to get the Israelis and the Palestinians to talk again.



Jesus says that real peace is based on *the Sacrament of Confession*, the sacrament he instituted to give us peace. In other words, the two most important people in the world if we want real peace are not the President of the United States and the Secretary General of the United Nations, but a *priest*, who is God’s instrument to give his mercy to the world, and *you*, if you come to receive that peace, live in it and share it.

Why is there such a lack of peace in the world? Because the world has not been taking God serious-





ly and going to him to receive his mercy. That's a startling statement — and it's meant to be — and one you won't read in the editorial pages of the newspapers. There's a lack of peace in the world because people have been trying to make themselves God in determining what's right or wrong, committing all types of sins, and refusing to turn back to him to beg his forgiveness and receive it. The longer we refuse to acknowledge our need for God's mercy, seek it and share it, the worse it gets.

Just ask yourself whether you think the world would be any different if we and others repented and stopped breaking the ten commandments. There would be no murder, no hatred, no broken families, no stealing, no lying, no envy, and no intergenerational disrespect, and people would make time to put God first in their lives. There can be no real peace when modern Cains are killing Abels. There can be no peace when there is no peace at the home because of lack of respect or infidelity. There can be no real peace if people cannot trust each other.

There's a bumper sticker that you still see in certain circles that became very popular when I was a young boy. It was taken out of context from a quotation from Pope Paul VI: "If you want peace, work for justice." But the justice he was talking about primarily was our becoming just with God through the forgiveness of our sins, and our sharing that justice with others. A better motto would be, "If you want peace, go to confession!" "If you want peace, bring others to Christ in confession!" "If you want peace, and you're a young boy or man, have the guts to ask yourself whether the Lord might be calling you to be a priest," so that he can send you out, just like he sent the apostles out on Easter Sunday Evening, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to forgive and retain sins in his name.

For peace, we have to recognize our need for God's mercy, ask for and receive that mercy, and then share that mercy with others. These are the three fundamental steps underlying the devotion to God's mercy.

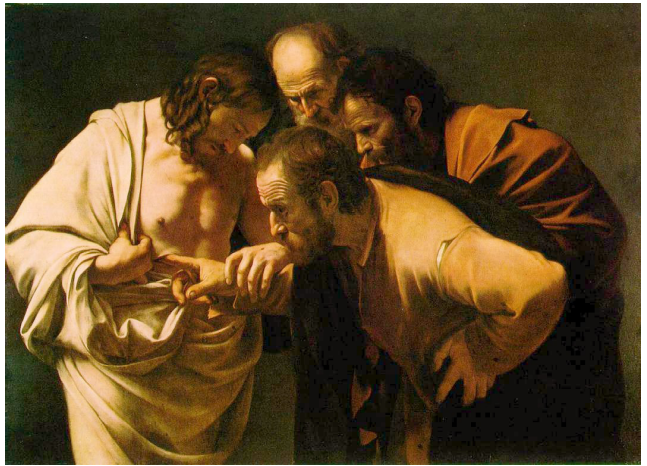


1. *To recognize our need for God's mercy* — like the Prodigal Son, we have to realize that we have sinned, and that without God's forgiveness, we will die in our sins. God, however, does not desire the death of the sinner, but that we may return to him and live, which leads us to the second step:

2. *To trust in, ask for and receive God's mercy* — Jesus

established only one ordinary way for us to receive this mercy for all the sins we've committed after our baptism: the Sacrament of Reconciliation, confessing our sins to Christ through the priest. There are a lot of people today, including Catholics, who say, "I can confess my sins directly to the Lord!" We have to admit that it's true that we can *confess* our sins to whomever we want — to our best friends, husbands or wives, parents and children, coworkers, social workers, shrinks, bartenders, Oprah Winfrey and Dr. Phil. But we can't receive forgiveness there, which is the point. None of them can give Jesus' absolution. The only means in this world in which we can be *sure* that the Lord forgives us is when we confess our sins to a priest, whom Jesus has ordained, and sent out from the Upper Room for this purpose. To believe in the Lord Jesus means to believe that he knew what he

was doing and did it out of love for us. We need to take seriously — and be forever grateful — for the Sacrament he established on the night he rose from the dead. We might not love going to confession, but we should always love being forgiven and having peace



with God, with others, and within ourselves restored. More than that, Jesus said to Simon the Pharisee that the one who has been forgiven much, loves much, and the one who has been forgiven little, loves little. In order to love God more, we need to receive his merciful love. The less we do, the less we appreciate the true greatness of his gift in dying for us out of love to forgive us of our sins.

3. *To share it with others* — We're called to be merciful with others. Jesus said, "Be merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful... The measure with which you measure will be measured back to you." In another place, he taught, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." The Lord's point is that the prerequisite for our receiving mercy is our showing mercy to others. After having taught us the Our Father in which we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we have forgiven those who have trespassed against us," the Lord warned us, "If you forgive others their sins, your heavenly

Father will forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their sins, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your sins.” As Jesus taught us in the parable of the two debtors, God forgives us unpayable debts making us rich in his mercy so that we can share that richness with others who have wronged us, and in the process of forgiving, become more and more like him.

Over the history of the Church, because so many didn’t get this message of God’s mercy (and our need for repentance) from the Gospel — because so many were not doing any of these three things — Jesus himself came down to us to repeat it. He came down to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in the 1670s with the revelation of His Sacred Heart, which involved all three of these truths. The Church listened for a while, but then forgot. Eventually the Lord came down again.

That’s what happened when Jesus appeared to a polish nun, St. Faustina Kowalska, whom Pope John Paul II canonized in 2000. Beginning in 1931, Jesus began to appear to her in her convent on the outskirts of Krakow and asked her to become his “secretary,” taking down what he revealed to her for the good of the Church and the world. He revealed to her the message of his divine, merciful love. She wrote down what the Lord said and it filled in her diary — what turned out to be 700 pages in the English translation. Jesus described how he wanted to pour out on the world his mercy, how he wanted people to trust in his mercy and ask for it, and how he wanted them to share his merciful love with others. Jesus didn’t



teach us anything new about his merciful love; he reiterated it. What was new was that the Lord Jesus asked the Church, and that means each one of us, to grow in his Divine Mercy by five practices:

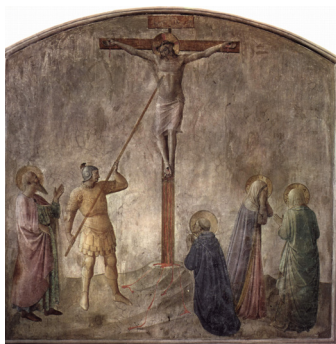
- *Divine Mercy Sunday* — The Lord said, “I want... the first Sunday after Easter ... to be the Feast of Mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and a shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day, the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day are open all the divine floodgates through which graces flow.” Blessed Pope John Paul II at St. Faustina’s Canonization said, “It is important that we accept in its entirety the message that comes to us from God’s Word on this sec-

ond Sunday of Easter. From now on, throughout the whole Church, this day will take the name of ‘Divine Mercy Sunday.’” But each of us needs to live it, to seek confession within eight days of the feast and to receive Holy Communion worthily.

- *To pray to the Lord under the image of Divine Mercy* — The Lord revealed to St. Faustina an image that he desired to be made: “One night when I was in my cell, I perceived the presence of the Lord Jesus dressed in a white tunic. One hand was raised in blessing, the other rested on his chest. From an opening in the tunic in the chest, two great rays were coming out, one red and the other clear... After some time, Jesus said to me, “Paint an image in accordance with what you see, with the inscription, ‘Jesus, I trust in you.’” A little later, Our Lord explained to her the meaning of the two rays: “The two rays represent the Blood and the Water. The white ray represents the Water [baptism], that justifies souls; the red ray represents the Blood that is the life of souls [the Eucharist]. Both rays flow from the depths of my Mercy when, on the Cross, my Heart in agony was opened by the lance.”
- *To pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy* — This is something that people can pray on Rosary beads. It is a devotion that is happily becoming more and more popular today. St. Faustina heard an interior voice that taught her this prayer. On the larger beads of the Rosary, one says, “Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of your dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and for those of the whole world.” On the ten smaller beads, we pray, “For the sake of his sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.” You pray five “decades” in this way, after which, one prays three times the “Holy, Holy, Holy” from the Good Friday reproaches, “Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One,” “Have mercy on us and on the whole world.” What we’re doing in this beautiful prayer is offering Christ’s own sacrifice during the Triduum, to the Father. We’re lifting up the Eucharist — Christ’s body, blood, soul and divinity — and making Christ’s prayer our own. There is no more powerful prayer! Jesus promised, “It pleases me to grant everything they ask of Me by saying the chaplet... if it be compatible with my Will.” This is especially true of the moment of death. Jesus specifically asked priests — and I’m obeying him right now — to “recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this chaplet only once [with an attitude of trust, humility and sorrow for sin], he would receive grace from my infinite mercy.”
- *To pray particularly at three in the afternoon, the time in which Jesus died on the Cross,*

invoking the Mercy of the Lord — Jesus said to St. Faustina, “At three in the afternoon, implore my Mercy, especially for sinners, or at least briefly reflect on my Passion, especially on the abandonment I felt at the moment of agony. This is the hour of great Mercy for the whole world. I will allow you to penetrate my mortal sadness. In that hour, I will deny nothing to the soul that asks me in the name of my Passion.” Jesus gave three indispensable conditions to hear prayers made at the hour of Mercy: the prayer has to be directed to Jesus, take place at three, and invoke the value and merits of his passion.

- *To make a novena between Good Friday and Divine Mercy Sunday to implore divine mercy* — He gave St. Faustina an intention for each day of the novena, as we will see later in this booklet. Jesus said, “I desire that during these nine days



you bring souls to the fount of My mercy, that they may draw from there strength and refreshment and whatever graces they need in the hardships of life and, especially, at the hour of death. On each day you will bring to my Heart a different group of souls, and you will immerse them in this ocean of My mercy, and I will bring all these souls into the house of My Father. The groups, for each of the days, are all humanity, especially sinners; priests and religious; the pious and faithful; those who do not believe in Jesus and who

don't yet know him; our separated Christian brothers and sisters; the meek and humble and children; those who venerate the mercy of Jesus; those in Purgatory; and the lukewarm.”

My intention in this introduction is not to describe all of these practices in minute detail. There are, thankfully, many, books, booklets, websites, videos and more available everywhere to describe these practices. The main point is not just to *learn about* this devotion, but to begin *learning and living it*. Jesus wishes for each of us to start trusting more deeply in his mercy, invoking it, receiving it and sharing it, and since he is “Mercy Incarnate,” as he said to St. Faustina, he wants, as the Divine Mercy Image say to trust in him, invoke him, receive him and share him. His mercy endures forever and we trust in his merciful love!

“Humanity will not find peace,” Jesus said to St. Faustina, “until it turns trustfully to divine mercy.” During this novena, we turn to him with trust begging for the peace our hearts desire and for the peace our world so desperately and urgently needs.

Praying the Novena of Divine Mercy

Praying the Novena of Divine Mercy is easy straightforward and is normally done together with praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. We should strive to align our hearts and minds to the words that are being said to God the Father. It involves prayers for specific groups each day in the context of praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.



The chaplet can be recited or sung. It is normally prayed on Rosary beads. Music and the prayers are provided.

1. Recite the Novena Prayer for each day of the Novena, found later in this booklet.
2. Make the sign of the Cross, starting the prayer in the name of the Most Blessed Trinity.
3. Pray together this opening prayer: *“You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelope the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.”*
4. Then pray three times, *“O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You!”*
5. Pray slowly the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary* and *The Apostles Creed*.
6. On the “Our Father” beads, pray: *“Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.”*
7. On the ten “Hail Mary” beads pray: *“For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.”*
8. Repeat Steps 6 and 7 for all five decades.
9. After all five decades, pray three times, *“Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One: Have mercy on us and on the whole world.”*
10. To conclude, pray: *“Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless, and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us, and increase your mercy in us, that in difficult moments, we might not despair, nor become despondent, but with greater confidence, submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is love and mercy itself. Amen.”*

The Sung Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Leader: E - ter - nal Fa - ther, I of - fer You the Bo - dy and Blood,
Soul and Di - vi - ni - ty of Your dear - ly be - lov - ed Son,
Our Lord, Je - sus Christ,
All: in a - tone - ment for our sins, and those of the whole world.

Decades 1, 3 & 5

Leader: For the sake of His sor - row - ful pas - sion,
All: Have mer - cy on us and on the whole world.

Decades 2 & 4

Leader: For the sake of His sor - row - ful pas - sion,
All: Have mer - cy on us and on the whole world.

After 5 decades, sing 3 times:

All: Ho - ly God, Ho - ly Might - y One, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One,
Have mer - cy on us, and on the whole world. and on the whole world.

The Specific Prayers of the Novena

Jesus asked that the Feast of the Divine Mercy be preceded by a Novena to the Divine Mercy which would begin on Good Friday. He gave St. Faustina an intention to pray for on each day of the Novena, saving for the last day the most difficult intention of all, the lukewarm and indifferent of whom He said: “These souls cause Me more suffering than any others; it was from such souls that My soul felt the most revulsion in the Garden of Olives. It was on their account that I said: ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass Me by.’ The last hope of salvation for them is to flee to My Mercy.”

In her diary, St. Faustina wrote that Jesus told her: “On each day of the novena you will bring to My heart a different group of souls and you will immerse them in this ocean of My mercy ... On each day you will beg My Father, on the strength of My passion, for the graces for these souls.”

The different souls prayed for on each day of the novena are:

- All mankind, especially sinners
- The souls of priests and religious
- All faithful and devout souls
- Those who do not believe in God and those who do not yet know Him
- The souls of separated Christian brothers and sisters
- The meek and humble souls and the souls of children
- The souls who especially venerate and glorify Jesus’ mercy
- The souls who are detained in Purgatory
- The souls who have become lukewarm.



FIRST DAY (GOOD FRIDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me all mankind, especially all sinners, and immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. In this way you will console Me in the bitter grief into which the loss of souls plunges Me.”

And so we pray:

Most Merciful Jesus, whose very nature it is to have compassion on us and to forgive us, do not look upon our sins but upon our trust which we place in Your infinite goodness. Receive us all into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart, and never let us escape from It. We beg this of You by Your love which unites You to the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon all mankind and especially upon poor sinners, all enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion show us Your mercy, that we may praise the omnipotence of Your mercy for ever and ever. Amen.

SECOND DAY (HOLY SATURDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me the Souls of Priests and Religious, and immerse them in My unfathomable mercy. It was they who gave me strength to endure My bitter Passion. Through them as through channels My mercy flows out upon mankind.”

And so we pray:

Most Merciful Jesus, from whom comes all that is good, increase Your grace in men and women consecrated to Your service, that they may perform worthy works of mercy; and that all who see them may glorify the Father of Mercy who is in heaven.*

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the company of chosen ones in Your vineyard -- upon the souls of priests and religious; and endow them with the strength of Your blessing. For the love of the Heart of Your Son in which they are enfolded, impart to them Your power and light, that they may be able to guide others in the way of salvation and with one voice sing praise to Your boundless mercy for ages without end. Amen.

THIRD DAY (EASTER SUNDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me all Devout and Faithful Souls, and immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. These souls brought me consolation on the Way of the Cross. They were a drop of consolation in the midst of an ocean of bitterness.”

And so we pray:

Most Merciful Jesus, from the treasury of Your mercy, You impart Your graces in great abundance to each and all. Receive us into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart and never let us escape from It. We beg this grace of You by that most wondrous love for the heavenly Father with which Your Heart burns so fiercely.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon faithful souls, as upon the inheritance of Your Son. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, grant them Your blessing and surround them with Your constant protection. Thus may they never fail in love or lose the treasure of the holy faith, but rather, with all the hosts of Angels and Saints, may they glorify Your boundless mercy for endless ages. Amen.

FOURTH DAY (EASTER MONDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me those who do not believe in God and those who do not know Me. I was thinking also of them during My bitter Passion, and their future zeal comforted My Heart. Immerse them in the ocean of My mercy.”

And so we pray:

Most compassionate Jesus, You are the Light of the whole world. Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of those who do not believe in God and of those who as yet do not know You. Let the rays of Your grace enlighten them that they, too, together with us, may extol Your wonderful mercy; and do not let them escape from the abode which is Your Most Compassionate Heart.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls of those who do not believe in You, and of those who as yet do not know You, but who are enclosed in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Draw them to the light of the Gospel. These souls do not know what great happiness it is to love You. Grant that they, too, may extol the generosity of Your mercy for endless ages. Amen.

FIFTH DAY (EASTER TUESDAY)



Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me the Souls of those who have separated themselves from My Church, and immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. During My bitter Passion they tore at My Body and Heart, that is, My Church. As they return to unity with the Church My wounds heal and in this way they alleviate My Passion.”

And so we pray:

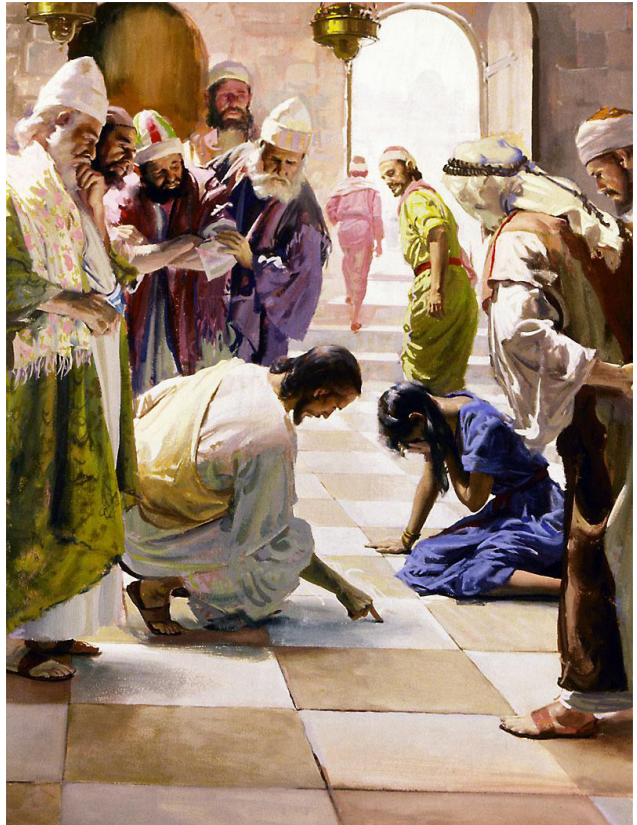
Most Merciful Jesus, Goodness Itself, You do not refuse light to those who seek it of You. Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of those who have separated themselves from Your Church. Draw them by Your light into the unity of the Church, and do not let them escape from the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart; but bring it about that they, too, come to glorify the generosity of Your mercy.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls of those who have separated themselves from Your Son’s Church, who have squandered Your blessings and misused Your graces by obstinately persisting in their errors. Do not look upon their errors, but upon the love of Your own Son and upon His bitter Passion, which He underwent for their sake, since they, too, are enclosed in His Most Compassionate Heart. Bring it about that they also may glorify Your great mercy for endless ages. Amen.

SIXTH DAY (EASTER WEDNESDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me the Meek and Humble Souls and the Souls of Little Children, and immerse them in My mercy. These souls most closely resemble My Heart. They strengthened Me during My bitter agony. I saw them as earthly Angels, who will keep vigil at My altars. I pour out upon them whole torrents of grace. I favor humble souls with My confidence.”

And so we pray:



Most Merciful Jesus, You yourself have said, “Learn from Me for I am meek and humble of heart.” Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart all meek and humble souls and the souls of little children. These souls send all heaven into ecstasy and they are the heavenly Father’s favorites. They are a sweet-smelling bouquet before the throne of God; God Himself takes delight in their fragrance. These souls have a permanent abode in Your Most Compassionate Heart, O Jesus, and they unceasingly sing out a hymn of love and mercy.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon meek souls, upon humble souls, and upon little children who are enfolded in the abode which is the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. These souls bear the closest resemblance to Your Son. Their fragrance rises from the earth and reaches Your very throne. Father of mercy and of all goodness, I beg You by the love You bear these souls and by the delight You take in them: Bless the whole world, that all souls together may sing out the praises of Your mercy for endless ages. Amen.

SEVENTH DAY (EASTER THURSDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me the Souls who especially venerate and glorify My Mercy, and immerse them in My mercy. These souls sorrowed most over my Passion and entered most deeply into My spirit. They are living images of My Compassionate Heart. These souls will shine with a special brightness in the next life. Not one of them will go into the fire of hell. I shall particularly defend each one of them at the hour of death.”

And so we pray:

Most Merciful Jesus, whose Heart is Love Itself, receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of those who particularly extol and venerate the great-

ness of Your mercy. These souls are mighty with the very power of God Himself. In the midst of all afflictions and adversities they go forward, confident of Your mercy; and united to You, O Jesus, they carry all mankind on their shoulders. These souls will not be judged severely, but Your mercy will embrace them as they depart from this life.



Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls who glorify and venerate Your greatest attribute, that of Your fathomless mercy, and who are enclosed in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. These souls are a living Gospel; their hands are full of deeds of mercy, and their hearts, overflowing with joy, sing a canticle

of mercy to You, O Most High! I beg You, O God, show them Your mercy according to the hope and trust they have placed in You. Let there be accomplished in them the promise of Jesus, who said to them that during their life, but especially at the hour of death, the souls who will venerate this fathomless mercy of His, He, Himself, will defend as His glory. Amen.

EIGHTH DAY (EASTER FRIDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me the Souls who are in the prison of Purgatory, and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy. Let the torrents of My Blood cool down their scorching flames. All these souls are greatly loved by Me. They are making retribution to My justice. It is in your power to bring them relief. Draw all the indulgences from the treasury of My Church and offer them on their behalf. Oh, if you only knew the torments they suffer, you would continually offer for them the alms of the spirit and pay off their debt to My justice.”

And so we pray:

Most Merciful Jesus, You Yourself have said that You desire mercy; so I bring into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls in Purgatory, souls who are very dear to You, and yet, who must make

retribution to Your justice. May the streams of Blood and Water which gushed forth from Your Heart put out the flames of Purgatory, that there, too, the power of Your mercy may be celebrated.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls suffering in Purgatory, who are enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. I beg You, by the sorrowful Passion of Jesus Your Son, and by all the bitterness with which His most sacred Soul was flooded: Manifest Your mercy to the souls who are under Your just scrutiny. Look upon them in no other way but only through the Wounds of Jesus, Your dearly beloved Son; for we firmly believe that there is no limit to Your goodness and compassion. Amen.



NINTH DAY (EASTER SATURDAY)

Jesus said to St. Faustina and through her to us, “Today bring to Me the Souls who have become lukewarm, and immerse them in the abyss



of My mercy. These souls wound My Heart most painfully. My soul suffered the most dreadful loathing in the Garden of Olives because of lukewarm souls. They were the reason I cried out: ‘Father, take this cup away from Me, if it be Your will.’ For them, the last hope of salvation is to run to My mercy.”

And so we pray:

Most compassionate Jesus, You are Compassion Itself. I bring lukewarm souls into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart. In this fire of Your pure love, let these tepid souls who, like corpses, filled You with such deep loathing, be once again set aflame. O

Most Compassionate Jesus, exercise the omnipotence of Your mercy and draw them into the very ardor of Your love, and bestow upon them the gift of holy love, for nothing is beyond Your power.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon lukewarm souls who are nonetheless enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Father of Mercy, I beg You by the bitter Passion of Your Son and by His three-hour agony on the Cross: Let them, too, glorify the abyss of Your mercy. Amen.

Divine Mercy Sunday

During the course of Jesus' revelations to Saint Faustina on the Divine Mercy, he asked repeatedly that a feast day be dedicated to the Divine Mercy and that this feast be celebrated on the Sunday after Easter. The liturgical texts of that day, the Second Sunday of Easter, concern the institution of the Sacrament of Penance, the Tribunal of the Divine Mercy, and are thus already suited to the request of Our Lord.

This Feast, which had already been celebrated in Poland and within Vatican City, was extended to the Universal Church by Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the canonization of Sr. Faustina on April 30, 2000.

In a decree dated May 23, 2000, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments stated, "Throughout the world the Second Sunday of Easter will receive the name Divine Mercy Sunday, a perennial invitation to the Christian world to face, with confidence in divine benevolence, the difficulties and trials that mankind will experience in the years to come."

Concerning the Feast of Mercy, Jesus said to St. Faustina and therefore to us:

- "Whoever approaches the Fountain of Life on this day will be granted complete forgiveness of sins and punishment."
- "I want the image solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter, and I want it to be venerated publicly so that every soul may know about it."
- "This Feast emerged from the very depths of My mercy, and it is confirmed in the vast depths of my tender mercies."
- "My daughter, tell the whole world about My Inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which grace flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity. Everything that exists has come forth from the very depths of My most tender mercy. Every soul in its relation to Me will I con-

template My love and mercy throughout eternity. The Feast of Mercy emerged from My very depths of tenderness. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy.”

- “Yes, the first Sunday after Easter is the Feast of Mercy, but there must also be deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to our neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to absolve yourself from it.”

Plenary Indulgence For Divine Mercy Sunday

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Indulgences attached to devotions in honour of Divine Mercy

“O God, your mercy knows no bounds and the treasure of your goodness is infinite...” (Prayer after the “Te Deum” Hymn) and “O God, you reveal your almighty power above all by showing mercy and forgiveness...” (Prayer for the 26th Sunday of Ordinary Time). In these prayers Holy Mother Church humbly and faithfully sings of Divine Mercy. Indeed, God’s great patience with the human race in general and with each individual person shines out in a special way when sins and moral failures are forgiven by Almighty God Himself and the guilty are readmitted in a fatherlike way to his friendship, which they deservedly lost.

Duty of honouring Divine Mercy

The faithful with deep spiritual affection are drawn to commemorate the mysteries of divine pardon and to celebrate them devoutly. They clearly understand the supreme benefit, indeed the duty, that the People of God have to praise Divine Mercy with special prayers and, at the same time, they realize that by gratefully performing the works required and satisfying the necessary conditions, they can obtain spiritual benefits that derive from the Treasury of the Church. “The paschal mystery is the culmination of this revealing and effecting of mercy, which is able to justify man, to restore justice in the sense of that salvific order which God willed from the beginning in man, and through man, in the world” (Encyclical Letter *Dives in misericordia*, n. 7).

It is God’s Mercy that grants supernatural sorrow and resolution to amend.

Indeed, Divine Mercy knows how to pardon even the most serious sins, and in doing so it moves the faithful to perceive a supernatural, not merely psychological, sorrow for their sins so that, ever with the help of divine grace, they may make a firm resolution not to sin any more. Such spiritual dispositions undeniably follow upon the forgiveness of mortal sin when the faithful fruitfully receive the sacrament of Penance or repent of their sin with an act of perfect charity and perfect contrition, with the resolution to receive the Sacrament of Penance as soon as they can. Indeed, Our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us in the parable of the Prodigal Son that the sinner must confess his misery to God saying: “Father I have sinned against heaven and against you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son” (Lk 15,18-19), realizing that this is a work of God, “for [he] was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found” (Lk 15,32).

Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday

And so with provident pastoral sensitivity and in order to impress deeply on the souls of the faithful these precepts and teachings of the Christian faith, the Supreme Pontiff, John Paul II, moved by the consideration of the Father of Mercy, has willed that the Second Sunday of Easter be dedicated to recalling with special devotion these gifts of grace and gave this Sunday the name, “Divine Mercy Sunday” (Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Decree *Misericors et miserator*, 5 May 2000).

The Gospel of the Second Sunday of Easter narrates the wonderful things Christ the Lord accomplished on the day of the Resurrection during his first public appearance: “On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you’. When he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad to see the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you’. And then he breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’” (Jn 20,19-23).

Plenary Indulgence

To ensure that the faithful would observe this day with intense devotion, the Supreme Pontiff himself established that this Sunday be enriched by a plenary indulgence, as will be explained below, so that the faithful might receive in great abundance the gift of the consolation of the Holy Spirit. In this way, they can foster a growing love for God and for their neighbour, and after they have obtained God’s pardon, they in turn might be persuaded to show a prompt pardon to their brothers and sisters.

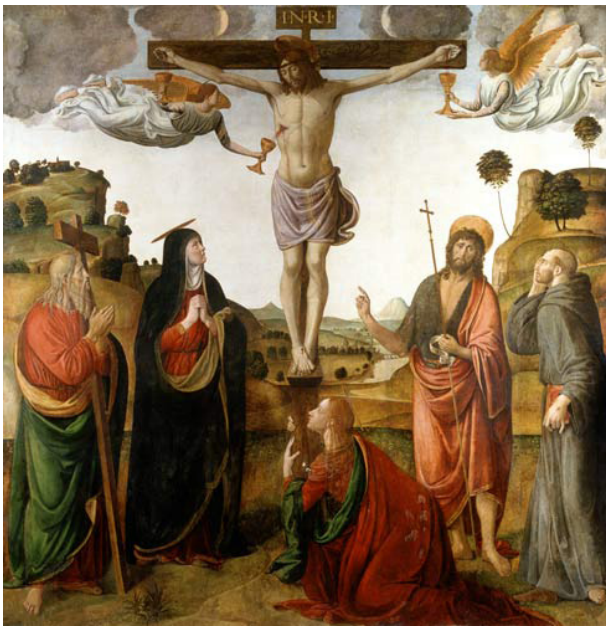
Pardon of others who sin against us

Thus the faithful will more closely conform to the spirit of the Gospel, receiving in their hearts the renewal that the Second Vatican Council explained and introduced: “Mindful of the words of the Lord: “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another’ (Jn 13,35), Christians can yearn for nothing more ardently than to serve the men of this age with an ever growing generosity and success.... It is the Father’s will that we should recognize Christ our brother in the persons of all men and love them with an effective love, in word and in deed (*Pastoral Constitution, Gaudium et spes*, n. 93).

Three conditions for the plenary indulgence

And so the Supreme Pontiff, motivated by an ardent desire to foster in Christians this devotion to Divine Mercy as much as possible in the hope of offering great spiritual fruit to the faithful, in the Audience granted on June 13, 2002, to those Responsible for the Apostolic Penitentiary, granted the following Indulgences:

A plenary indulgence, granted under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the intentions of Supreme Pontiff) to the faithful who, on the Second Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday, in any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, take part in the prayers and devotions held in honour of Divine Mercy, or who, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our



Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. “Jesus, I trust in you!”);

A partial indulgence, granted to the faithful who, at least with a contrite heart, pray to the merciful Lord Jesus a legitimately approved invocation:

- For those who cannot go to church or the seriously ill;
- In addition, sailors working on the vast expanse of the sea; the countless brothers and sisters, whom the disasters of war, political events, local violence and other such causes have been driven out of their homeland; the sick and those who nurse them, and all who

for a just cause cannot leave their homes or who carry out an activity for the community which cannot be postponed, may obtain a plenary indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday, if totally detesting any sin, as has been said before, and with the intention of fulfilling as soon as possible the three usual conditions, will recite the Our Father and the Creed before a devout image of Our Merciful Lord Jesus and, in addition, pray a devout invocation to the Merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you).

If it is impossible that people do even this, on the same day they may obtain the Plenary Indulgence if with a spiritual intention they are united with those carrying out the prescribed practice for obtaining the Indulgence in the usual way and offer to the Merciful Lord a prayer and the sufferings of their illness and the difficulties of their lives, with the resolution to accomplish as soon as possible the three conditions prescribed to obtain the plenary indulgence.

Duty of priests: inform parishioners, hear confessions, lead prayers

Priests who exercise pastoral ministry, especially parish priests, should inform the faithful in the most suitable way of the Church’s salutary provision. They should promptly and generously be willing to hear their confessions. On Divine Mercy Sunday, after celebrating Mass or Vespers, or during devotions in honour of Divine Mercy, with the dignity that is in accord with the rite, they should lead the recitation of the prayers that have been given above. Finally, since “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5,7), when they instruct their people, priests should gently encourage the faithful to practise works of charity or mercy as often as they can, following the example of, and in obeying the commandment of Jesus Christ, as is listed for the second general concession of indulgence in the “Enchiridion Indulgentiarum.”

Saint John Paul II on the Need for Divine Mercy

What will the years ahead bring us? What will man's future on earth be like? We are not given to know. It is certain, however, that in addition to new progress there will unfortunately be no lack of painful experiences. But the light of divine mercy, which the Lord in a way wished to return to the world through Sr Faustina's charism, will illumine the way for the men and women of the third millennium.

As the Apostles once did, however, today too humanity must welcome into the upper room of history the risen Christ, who shows the wounds of his Crucifixion and repeats: Peace be with you! Humanity must let itself be touched and pervaded by the Spirit given to it by the risen Christ. It is the Spirit who heals the wounds of the heart, pulls down the barriers that separate us from God and divide us from one another, and at the same time, restores the joy of the Father's love and of fraternal unity.

It is important then that we accept the whole message that comes to us from the word of God. ... Christ has taught us that man not only receives and experiences the mercy of God, but is also called "to practise mercy" towards others: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5: 7)." He also showed us the many paths of mercy, which not only forgives sins but reaches out to all human needs. Jesus bent over every kind of human poverty, material and spiritual.

His message of mercy continues to reach us through his hands held out to suffering man. This is how Sr Faustina saw him and proclaimed him to people on all the continents when, hidden in her convent at Łagiewniki in Kraków, she made her life a hymn to mercy: Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo.

Sr Faustina's canonization has a particular eloquence: by this act I intend today to pass this message on to the new millennium. I pass it on to all people, so that they will learn to know ever better the true face of God and the true face of their brethren.

It is not easy to love with a deep love, which lies in the authentic gift of self. This love can only be learned by penetrating the mystery of God's love. Looking at him, being one with his fatherly heart, we are able to look with new eyes at our brothers and sisters, with an attitude of unselfishness and solidarity, of generosity and forgiveness. All this is mercy!

It is this love which must inspire humanity today, if it is to face the crisis of the meaning of life, the challenges of the most diverse needs and, especially, the duty to defend the dignity of every human person. Thus the message of divine mercy is also implicitly a message about the value of every human being. Each person is precious in God's eyes; Christ gave his life for each one; to everyone the Father gives his Spirit and offers intimacy. (April 30, 2000)



*For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.*