

THE FEAST OF MERCY

COMPLETE REMISSION OF ALL SINS AND PUNISHMENT AND MORE!

When we truly contemplate and come to understand the incredible graces that are available on the Feast of Mercy, it is difficult to believe that any other day could be more glorious.

The Lord's desire to shower us with His mercy burns so deeply that Saint Faustina recorded fourteen revelations concerning His command that the Feast of Mercy be formally established and celebrated the first Sunday after Easter each year. The gifts He has in store for us are greater than we can fathom. It is obvious that they are the gifts of a kind and merciful God, eager to help us change our lives and the way of the world. Jesus tells St. Faustina:

Do all you possibly can for this work of My mercy. I desire that My mercy be worshiped and I am giving mankind the last hope of salvation; that is, recourse to My mercy. My Heart rejoices in this feast. (*Diary*¹, 998)

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. (699)

At the canonization of St. Faustina on April 30, 2000, Pope John Paul II proclaimed the official establishment of this feast. Later that night he remarked that it was the happiest day of his life! No doubt the Holy Fathers joy came from his trust that great promises would be fulfilled by Jesus for millions and millions across the globe:

The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day are opened all the divine floodgates through which graces flow. (699)

The Feast of Mercy offers us an opportunity to be completely cleansed in the Blood of the Lamb, totally reconciling us with the Father. The extra baggage is gone. We are made fresh and new. All of our sins, no matter how scarlet are washed away in our repentance. Our new state of soul advances us along the road to holiness and allows Christ to shine through us ever brighter. The better we prepare to receive these graces the more super-abundant they will be for us the first Sunday after Easter each year.

ALL KINDS OF GRACES AVAILABLE

On the Feast of Mercy the Lord promises that "*oceans of grace*" are available. We should have confidence in the Lord's mercy and appeal to Him for daily needs such as good jobs or grades, help with finances and relationships, good health and world peace. As we prepare for the Feast of Mercy we can commend the needs of our nation, family and friends to the Lord as He promises to heal and strengthen:

I yearn for souls, My daughter. On the day of My feast, the Feast of Mercy, you will go through the whole world and bring fainting souls to the spring of My mercy. I shall heal and strengthen them. (206)

THE GRACE OF MERCY SUNDAY – THE DEFEAT OF DEMONIC MULTITUDES

When we look at St. Faustina's *Diary* entries regarding the first time the Image of The Divine Mercy was publically displayed and venerated we can draw insight into understanding the dramatic spiritual realities that take place surrounding the Feast of Mercy. For this was also the first time the Feast of Mercy was

celebrated in the manner that comes to us through the revelations of St. Faustina. The year is 1935 and the place is Vilnius, or *Vilno*, a city in northern Poland at the time, Lithuania today. Let us contemplate these passages with the prayer that they will inspire us to honor, promote and celebrate this feast to the fullest. Saint Faustina recorded:

Sunday, April 28, 1935.

Low Sunday; that is, the Feast of The Divine Mercy, the conclusion of the Jubilee of Redemption. When we went to take part in the celebrations, my heart leapt with joy that the two solemnities were so closely united. I asked God for mercy on the souls of sinners. Toward the end of the service, when the priest took the Blessed Sacrament to bless the people, I saw the Lord Jesus as He is represented in the image. The Lord gave His blessing, and the rays extended over the whole world. (420)

When the image was displayed, I saw a sudden movement of the hand of Jesus, as He made a large sign of the cross. In the evening of the same day, when I had gone to bed, I saw the image going over the town, and the town was covered with what appeared to be a mesh and nets. As Jesus passed, He cut through all the nets and finally made a large sign of the cross and disappeared. I saw myself surrounded by a multitude of malicious figures burning with hatred for me. Various threats came from their lips, but none of them touched me. (416)

When the sermon was over, I did not wait for the end of the service, as I was in a hurry to get back home. When I had taken a few steps, a great multitude of demons blocked my way. They threatened me with terrible tortures, and voices could be heard: "She has snatched away everything we have worked for over so many years!" When I asked them, "Where have you come from in such great numbers?" the wicked forms answered, "Out of human hearts; stop tormenting us!" Seeing their great hatred for me, I immediately asked my Guardian Angel for help, and at once the bright and radiant figure of my Guardian Angel appeared and said to me, "Do not fear, spouse of my Lord; without His permission these spirits will do you no harm." Immediately the evil spirits vanished, and the faithful Guardian Angel accompanied me, in a visible manner, right to the very house. His look was modest and peaceful, and a flame of fire sparkled from his forehead. O Jesus, I would like to toil and wear myself out and suffer all my life for that one moment in which I saw Your glory, O Lord, and profit for souls. (418, 419)

OBTAINING DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY GRACES FOR OUR COUNTRY

Proclaim God's Mercy - The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist

Over and over again the Lord directed St. Faustina to tell the whole world about His mercy, so the Feast of Mercy should not go unnoticed in any home or parish. Check the resource section of this site for help promoting Divine Mercy Sunday in your community:

Tell the world about My mercy and My love. The flames of mercy are burning me. I desire to pour them out upon human souls. Oh, what pain they cause Me when they do not want to accept them! My daughter, do whatever is within your power to spread devotion to My mercy. I will make up for what you lack.
(1074)

Availing ourselves to the graces of the Feast of Mercy is something we should keep in mind during our entire Lenten journey. Many parishes and shrines have extra-ordinary services and activities to help observe the greatness of the day and to celebrate the mercy of God. These are all great and should be encouraged, but we do not want to overlook that the Feast encompasses the entire liturgical day, including each and every Mass, beginning with the Saturday Vigil Mass. In other words, all Masses on that weekend

are *Mercy Sunday Masses*, a time to proclaim, celebrate, receive and reflect the mercy of God. And doesn't it make sense that by following the desires of Jesus in regards to the Feast of Mercy we are drawn to embrace the first of the five Precepts of the Church², the positive laws that define the bare minimum one must do in order to be considered a Catholic in good standing, "You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation."

It is My desire that it [the Feast of Mercy] be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. (699)

RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Mercy Sunday graces are best received upon worthy reception of the Holy Eucharist. A worthy reception of Holy Communion means the sacrament has been received by a soul in the state of grace, or free from mortal sin. It is the moment when the body and soul has the potential for the most intimate union with the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus, The Divine Mercy. By receiving Holy Communion on the Feast of Mercy we fulfill the third precept of the Church, "You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season."

However, If you cannot receive communion for whatever reason, do not lose hope. St. Thomas Aquinas teaches us that Spiritual Communion may be as efficacious. One may receive grace wherever they, uniting themselves spiritually heart to heart with Our Lord in the sacrifice. Jesus promised:

Tell aching mankind to snuggle close to My merciful heart and I will fill it with peace. (1074)

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Confession is a wonderful Sacrament to receive on the Feast of Mercy, and since St. Faustina recorded that the Lord promised, "The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment," many souls feel they must go to Confession on the Feast of Mercy; however, this is simply not the case.

To begin with, in a practical sense, it is impossible for all Catholics to receive any sacrament all in one day, and the Lord never demands anything that is impossible. Rather, the emphasis the Lord puts on going to Confession reminds us of the need to prepare well for the worthy reception of Holy Eucharist. We are also directed toward fulfilling the second precept of the Church, "You shall confess your sins at least once a year," a precept that has sadly been untaught and ignored by many over the last several decades.

The Mercy Sunday promises have undoubtedly contributed to the return of many to the Sacrament of Penance, the *fount of mercy*, where the Lord told St. Faustina the greatest miracles take place. Here countless multitudes have found reconciliation, relief from heavy burdens, power over addictions, healing of old wounds, the grace to forgive, and so much more, resulting in families and communities that are holier, stronger, more united and merciful.³

PUBLIC VENERATION OF THE IMAGE

The Lord made it quite clear that He wants everyone to know about the Feast of Mercy and that one of the means for this is by the public veneration of The Divine Mercy Image:

And who knows about this feast? No one! Even those who should be proclaiming my mercy and teaching people about it often do not know about it themselves. This is why I want the image to be solemnly blessed on the First Sunday after Easter, and want it to be venerated publically so that every soul may know about it. (340)

There are a number of ways to publically venerate the Image. For example, it may be solemnly processed to the sanctuary for the celebration of the Eucharist where it may be incensed, adorned with flowers, and/or surrounded by candles. Individuals and families may be encouraged to kneel and pray before it, to place their petitions in a box or basket nearby, and to touch or kiss the Image as a sign of affection and trust. Prints or holy cards may be blessed and distributed to each person or family to help reach every soul as the Lord desires:

By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls; so let every soul have access to it. (570)

DEEDS OF MERCY

The Lord makes it perfectly clear that if we want to receive His mercy, we must be merciful to others:

Yes, the first Sunday after Easter is the Feast of Mercy, but there must also be acts of mercy....I demand from you deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it. I am giving you three ways of exercising mercy toward your neighbor: the first - by deed, the second - by word, the third - by prayer. In these three degrees is contained the fullness of mercy, and it is an unquestionable proof of love for Me. (742)

NOVENA OF CHAPLETS

The Lord directed St. Faustina to pray a Novena of Chaplets beginning on Good Friday and ending on the next Saturday in preparation for the Feast of Mercy. Each day she was to bring to the Lord a different group of souls so that the entire world would be embraced. This novena has become a common tradition, and although it is an admirable way to prepare for the Feast Day in the footsteps of St. Faustina, it is not an actual *requirement* for obtaining grace on Mercy Sunday. Nonetheless, the more we prepare our hearts and souls, the more we avail ourselves to a superabundance of grace.⁴

MAKE YOUR LIST AND LEAVE IT IN TRUST

As we have seen, the Feast of Mercy offers us a tremendous opportunity to obtain great graces for ourselves and for others, indeed our entire country. Consider making a *Mercy Sunday Gift List* each year, similar to a Christmas gift shopping list. Include blessings and graces you would like to obtain for others and for our country, both spiritual and temporal. Include your needs too. Write your intentions down, pray over them, and then leave them all in the Lord's hands. Don't be timid or afraid to ask for too much, because you can't. The Lord encourages us to think big and ask for much. So let's not let Him down, let's be sure to ask with TRUST, as the Lord bid St. Faustina to write:

The more a soul trusts, the more it will receive. Souls that trust boundlessly are a great comfort to Me, because I pour all the treasures of My grace into them. I rejoice that they ask for much, because it is My desire to give much, very much. On the other hand, I am sad when a soul asks for little, when they narrow their hearts. (1578)

My daughter, look into the abyss of My mercy and give praise and glory to this mercy of Mine. Do it in this way: Gather all sinners from the entire world and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy. I want to give Myself to souls. (206)

MERCY SUNDAY WISH LIST IDEAS

FOR OURSELVES AND FAMILIES

To be Christ centered and sacramental
Protected from all evil
Safe from all harm
Healing from past hurts
Reconciliation of relationships
Healing of health issues
Strength to overcome addictions, smoking, drinking, internet, shopping . . .
Financial security

FOR OUR COUNTRY

Re-Christianization of the United States
End to legalized abortion and all abortion
Respect for the sanctity of all life
Uphold traditional marriage
Preserve religious freedom
End of human trafficking
Eliminate drug use and gang violence
Bless us with law abiding citizens and politicians
Protect us evil nations and ways

FOR OUR CHURCH

For an immense blessing of the Holy Spirit for each member
For the Holy Father's protection and holiness
An increase in love and devotion for the Most Blessed Sacrament
The Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Vocations to the priesthood, religious life, and lay ministry
Purification of all sin and lukewarmness
Zeal for the Gospel message

FOR OUR PARISH

More devotion to the Blessed Sacrament
Every age appropriate parishioner to receive Sacrament of Penance this year
Healing of relationships
Spiritual growth of the staff and parish leaders
More participation from youth and young families
To be a tithing parish, understanding that it is in giving that we receive
Debt reduction
Build or support Catholic school

¹ All references to Diary: Diary of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul © 1987 Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M, Stockbridge, MA 01263. All rights reserved. www.marian.org

² According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church citations 2041 – 2043 the five Precepts of the Church are:

1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.

To learn more visit the Catechism: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s1c3a3.htm

³ Visit: ([url for 3. Action Plan](#) a. [Nurture Personal Holiness](#) iii [Sacrament of Penance](#))

⁴ Visit: ([url for DMFA Prayer Guide download](#))

View this article online at www.DivineMercyforAmerica.org/Devotion-to-the-Holy-Eucharist/

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