

FEAST OF DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY



Divine Mercy Sunday occurs on the Sunday after Easter. On this day, all sins would be forgiven for those who go to sacramental confessions.

The Feast of Divine Mercy was recorded in the diary of St. Faustina granting the biggest promise of Grace from the Devotion of Divine Mercy. On this day, all who receive communion may obtain total forgiveness of all sins, meaning that the person would go directly to heaven without suffering in purgatory. Plenary indulgences are granted by the Catholic Church by reciting certain simple prayers.

St Faustina Kowalska was a young, uneducated Polish nun who belonged to the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Poland during the 1930s. She received messages and visions of Jesus, where he asked specifically for a feast of Divine Mercy to be founded the Sunday after Easter. Jesus asked Sr. Faustina to record these experiences, which she compiled into notebooks. These notebooks are known today as the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, and the words contained within are God's loving message of Divine Mercy. The first Mass for Divine Mercy Sunday was held on March 23, 1937. Both Faustina Kowalska and her confessor Father Micheal Sopocko attended the Mass. St Faustina was canonized on April 30, 2000, by Pope John Paul II on the Sunday after Easter of that year. She was the "first saint of the new millennium."

DIVINE MERCY MESSAGE

In a series of revelations to St. Maria Faustina Kowalska in the 1930s, our Lord called for a special feast day to be celebrated on the Sunday after Easter. Today, we know that feast as Divine Mercy Sunday, named by Blessed John Paul II at the canonization of St. Faustina on April 30, 2000.

The Lord expressed His will with regard to this feast in His very first revelation to St. Faustina. The most comprehensive revelation can be found in her Diary entry 699:

My daughter, tell the whole world about My inconceivable 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 opened all the divine floodgates through which graces flow. 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 from the very depths of My most tender mercy. Every soul in its relation to Me will contemplate 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.

Nevertheless, Divine Mercy Sunday is **NOT** a feast based solely on St. Faustina's revelations. Indeed, it is not primarily about St. Faustina — nor is it altogether a new feast. The Second Sunday of Easter was already a solemnity as the Octave Day of Easter. The title "Divine Mercy Sunday" does, however, highlight the meaning of the day.

The message of The Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us – all of us. And, he wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy, and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy.

The Divine Mercy message is one we can call to mind simply by remembering ABC:

A - Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world.

B - Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us.

C - Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive.

Spend time to learn more about the mercy of God, learn to trust in Jesus, and live your life as merciful to others, as Christ is merciful to you.

To receive these graces, the only condition is to receive Holy Communion worthily on Divine Mercy Sunday (or the Vigil celebration) by making a good confession beforehand and staying in the state of grace and trusting in His Divine Mercy. By these conditions, our Lord is emphasizing the value of confession and Holy Communion as miracles of mercy. The Eucharist is Jesus, Himself, the Living God, longing to pour Himself as Mercy into our hearts.

In addition, our Lord says through St. Faustina that we are to perform acts of mercy:

"Yes, the first Sunday after Easter is the Feast of Mercy, but there must also be acts of mercy" (742).

HOW DO WE CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF DIVINE MERCY?

Go to one of these links below to find out more about the Feast of Divine Mercy Sunday

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/tribunals/apost_penit/documents/rc_trib_appen_doc_20020629_decreii_en.html

http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=510

https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2000/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20000430_faustina.html

<http://www.faustina-message.com/biography-michael-sopocko.htm>

<http://www.thedivinemercy.org/library/article.php?NID=2566>