



The Feast *of* Mercy

Complete Remission of All Sins
and Punishment and More!

The Power of Mercy

When we genuinely 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 formally be 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 told 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 of St. Faustina, 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 St. 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 Father's joy came from his trust that Jesus would fulfill great promises for millions and millions across the globe. The Lord told St. Faustina:

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 graces flow are opened. (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. All 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 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 "a whole oceans of grace" are available. We should have confidence in the Lord's mercy and appeal to Him for all kinds of needs, from daily things such as good jobs or grades, to help with finances and relationships, good health and world peace. As we prepare for the Feast of Mercy, we should commend the needs of our nation, family, and friends to the Lord and take full advantage of His promise to heal and strengthen the weak:

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 publicly displayed and venerated, we can gain insight into the dramatic spiritual realities surrounding the Feast of Mercy.

The year was 1935. The place was Vilnius, or Vilno, a city in northern Poland at the time, Lithuania today. It was the weekend after Easter, and the Image was displayed over a crowd celebrating the conclusion of the Jubilee of the Redemption.



The "Dawn Gate" to the city of Vilnius. Here the image of The Divine Mercy was seen for the first time by the public during celebrations marking the close of the Jubilee Year of the Redemption of the World, April 26-28, 1935.

That weekend was the first time the Feast of Mercy was celebrated in the manner that comes to us through the revelations to St. Faustina.

Let us contemplate these passages about manifestations that occurred that weekend and pray that they will inspire us to honor, promote, and celebrate the Feast of The Divine Mercy 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!" (418)

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. (419)

Obtaining Divine Mercy Sunday Graces for Our Country

Proclaim God's Mercy

Many times over, the Lord directed St. Faustina to tell the whole world about His mercy, so it stands to reason that the Feast of Mercy should not go unnoticed in any home or parish.

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. Still, we do not want to overlook that the Feast encompasses the entire liturgical day, including every Mass, beginning with the Anticipated Mass on Saturday. In other words, all Masses on the weekend of the Second Sunday of Easter are Divine Mercy Sunday Masses, a time to proclaim, celebrate, receive, and reflect the mercy of God.



Attending Holy Mass on Sunday

The First Precept

By following the desires of Jesus in regards to the Feast of Mercy, we are not challenged or directed to create additional obligations, above and beyond that which the Church already requires. We are merely drawn to practice the Precepts of the Church. The Precepts are five positive laws that define the bare minimum one must do to be considered a Catholic in good standing. The first precept is:

“You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.”

The Feast of Mercy is on a day we should normally be attending Mass as practicing Catholics.

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

In his book, *Understanding Divine Mercy*, Fr. Chris Alar, MIC explains why this particular Sunday is so significant: Divine Mercy Sunday is the last day of the Octave of Easter, the eighth day, which is the greatest day of the Octave, the climax of the whole feast. In a sense, Divine Mercy Sunday is the most important day of the most important feast!



Confession of Sins

The Second Precept

Confession is a wonderful Sacrament that washes our souls clean. Saint 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,”** so many souls feel they must go to Confession on the Feast of Mercy; however, this is actually not the case.

It would be impossible for all Catholics to receive any sacrament all in one day, and the Lord never demands something impossible. Rather, the emphasis the Lord puts on going to Confession is to remind us of our need to receive Him in the state of grace, which we achieve through this sacrament.

Are we in serious sin? Or worse, despite grave sin, or a multitude of sins on our soul, do we still come to the Table of the Lord and receive His Body and Blood as though we were in the state of grace?

Many of us have needed this prompting to go to Confession from the Lord, and millions have heeded it. By calling us to this sacrament, we are directed to fulfill another precept of the Church; this time the second one:

“You shall confess your sins at least once a year.”

This precept is not often enough emphasized or encouraged, and sadly it has become ignored by many over the last several decades.

Undoubtedly though, the promises of Divine Mercy Sunday have led many back to the Sacrament of Penance, oftentimes after many, many years. Jesus pointed out to St. Faustina

that it is in the confessional that “the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy” and “the greatest miracles take place” which accounts for the multitudes who 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. Divine Mercy indeed!



Reception of Holy Communion

The Third Precept

To put it simply, the only condition to receive the graces of Divine Mercy Sunday is the worthy reception of Holy Communion. Worthy reception occurs when the sacrament has been received by a soul in the state of grace, or free from mortal sin. At this moment, both the body and soul have 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.”

If you cannot receive Holy Communion for whatever reason, do not lose hope. Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches us that Spiritual Communion may be as efficacious as physically receiving the Eucharist. Uniting ourselves spiritually to the heart of Jesus will fill us with His peace, no matter what!

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





Provide for the needs of the Church

The Fifth Precept

Opening ourselves to the reception of divine mercy and grace requires us to be living reflections of these blessings to others. Christ is to shine through us, emanating forth through our deeds, words, and prayers.

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)

Deeds of mercy require giving of our time, talent and treasure. In this way, we help to provide for the needs of the Church and satisfy the Fifth Precept of the Church.

Just in case you are wondering, the Fourth Precept is: You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.

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 anything 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. That is why I want the image to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter, and I want it to be venerated publicly so that every soul may know about it. (341)

There are several ways to venerate the Image of Divine Mercy publicly on the Feast of Mercy. A solemn procession of the Image at the beginning of the Mass and visible placement in the sanctuary is a fantastic way to demonstrate that Jesus is truly present. The Image 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 reach every soul as the Lord desires:

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



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, others, and indeed our entire country. Consider making a Divine 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 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 to drugs, smoking, drinking, internet, shopping . . .
- Financial security
- Good times with family and friends

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 from 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
- Mercy for those undergoing persecution
- Zeal for the Gospel message

For Our Parish

- Greater Mass attendance
- More devotion to the Blessed Sacrament
- Every age-appropriate parishioner to receive Sacrament of Penance this year
- Healing of relationships
- The 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



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