

# THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

## (DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY)

APRIL 8, 2018

### MASS READINGS:

MONDAY: IIS 7:10-14,8:10, PS 40, LK 1:26-38

TUESDAY: ACTS 4:32-37, PS 93, JN 3:7B-15

WEDNESDAY: ACTS 5:17-26, PS 34, JN 3:16-21

THURSDAY: ACTS 5:27-33, PS 34, JN 3:31-36

FRIDAY: ACTS 5:34-42, PS 27, JN 6:1-15

SATURDAY: ACTS 6:1-7, PS 33, JN 6:16-21

**NEXT SUNDAY: THIRD SUNDAY OF EAST-**

**ER- RDGS: ACTS 3:13-15, 17-19, PS 4, 1 JN 2:1-5A, LK 24:35-48**

### MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: AGNES IJENEBO IDUMA

TUESDAY: JOHN RENN

WEDNESDAY: MARY JO DANAHER

THURSDAY: PAUL MILLER

FRIDAY: POOR SOULS

VIGIL:ROBERT BOHAN

7:30: STACY BROWN

10:00: AVERY & ALICE SHEETS

NOON:FOR THE PARISH

### MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Jody Geller. Louise Albregts. Marian Schwartz.  
Dorothy Nelson. Robert Bennett & Dick Livingston.  
Karen Fox, Mike & Rosemary Cavanaugh.  
(Bob Stone, Mary Walden, Daniel Wooley, James  
Cash). Carl & Scott Waclawik. Shirley Wagner.  
Kasi Perry. (Norb & Mark FitzSimons & Larry  
White).

*"Peace be with you.*

*As the Father has sent me, so I send you."*

To preface this commission from Jesus by the word "peace" is more than just a polite salutation, it constitute the manner in which we are to consider ourselves sent. We already know that peace comes from doing the will of God and Christ himself, who is the "will incarnate" gave us the gift of peace that, unlike what the world gives, is a lasting, deep seated peace which characterizes a profound union with the Father. Hence it is in this sort of "peace" that we are to consider the next part of what Jesus has to tell us. Peace is necessary if we are to be sent in the manner of Jesus. First he took upon himself the humble condition of a slave/servant. We begin by noting his humble birth in Bethlehem, his upbringing in Nazareth and the manner in which he lived. We also consider what humility surrounded his willingness to be silent before his accusers and finally to underdo the passion for the sake of sinners. We are aware that due to this deep humility God raised him and gave him the name above every other name and that we too who humble ourselves will be exalted. This requires no small amount of inner peace, the ability to suffer for the ungodly, to put others first and to be silent and cooperative in that necessary "pruning" process our lives must undergo, our own "crosses" we are instructed to take up. All the while this is taking place we are also "sent" to bring the Good News of the Kingdom. Along with humility Christ was joyful in that the Father had given him the task of setting captives free, bringing sight to the blind and so on. We too take up the mantle of Christ and through our own interior freedom won at Calvary we begin to free others, first by forgiving them as we have been forgiven in Christ and next by showing them that true freedom is found not in pursuing one's selfish desires but in service to one's brothers and sisters. Through this form of joyful service we conform ourselves to the commission of Christ by becoming like him and allowing others to experience the joy that comes with the Risen Savior. Humility and joy thus become two of the many gifts the Spirit gives us in order that we might fulfill our mandate toward the world and become the instruments of life we are called to be. Above all though is that peace which passes all understanding and allows us to weather any storm and to endure any trial so long as we remain united to him who conquered sin and death and who extends to us the promise of eternal life in the Kingdom prepared for us before the foundation of the world.

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### Chaplet of Divine Mercy

1. Begin with the Sign of the Cross, 1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary and The Apostles Creed.
2. Then on the Our Father Beads say the following:  
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.
3. On the 10 Hail Mary Beads say the following:  
For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.  
*(Repeat step 2 and 3 for all five decades).*
4. Conclude with *(three times)*:  
Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

### What is Divine Mercy Sunday?

Among all of the elements of devotion to The Divine Mercy requested by our Lord through St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, the Feast of Mercy holds first place. The Lord's will with regard to its establishment was already made known in His first revelation to the saint, as recorded in her *Diary*. In all, there were 14 revelations concerning the desired feast.

Our Lord's explicit desire is that this feast be celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. This Sunday is designated in "The Liturgy of the Hours and the Celebration of the Eucharist" as the "Octave Day of Easter." It was officially called the *Second Sunday of Easter* after the liturgical reform of Vatican II. Now, by the Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the name of this liturgical day has been changed to: "Second Sunday of Easter, or Divine Mercy Sunday."

### 'Now On Throughout the Church'

Pope John Paul II made the surprise announcement of this change in his homily at the canonization of St. Faustina on April 30, 2000. There, he declared: "It is important then that we accept the whole message 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 the words "the whole message," Pope John Paul II was referring to the connection between the "Easter Mystery of the Redemption" — in other words, the suffering, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, followed by the sending of the Holy Spirit — and this Feast of Divine Mercy, the Octave Day of Easter, which fulfills the grace of atonement as lived through by Christ Jesus and offered to all who come to Him with trust.

This connection is evident from the scripture readings appointed for this Sunday. As John Paul said, citing the Responsorial Psalm of the Liturgy, "The Church sings ... as if receiving from Christ's lips these words of the Psalm." "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His steadfast love (= mercy) endures forever" (Ps 118:1). And then, Pope John Paul II developed the connection further: "[This comes] from the lips of the risen Christ, who bears the great message of Divine Mercy and entrusts its ministry to the Apostles in the Upper Room: 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you. ... 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 20:21-23).

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### The Importance of the Image

During his homily, John Paul also made clear that the Image of The Divine Mercy St. Faustina saw, which is to be venerated on Divine Mercy Sunday, represents the Risen Christ bringing mercy to the world (see *Diary* 49, 88, 299, 341, 570, 742). Pope John Paul II said: "Jesus shows His hands and His side [to the Apostles]. He points, that is, to the wounds of the Passion, especially the wound in His Heart, the source from which flows the great wave of mercy poured out on humanity.

"From that Heart, Sr. Faustina Kowalska, the blessed whom from now on we will call a saint, will see two rays of light shining from that Heart and illuminating the world: 'The two rays,' Jesus Himself explained to her one day, 'represent blood and water' (*Diary*, 299).

"*Blood and water!* We immediately think of the testimony given by the Evangelist John, who, when a soldier on Calvary pierced Christ's side with his spear, sees blood and water flowing from it (see Jn 19:34). Moreover, if the blood recalls the sacrifice of the cross and the gift of the Eucharist, the water, in Johannine symbolism, represents not only Baptism but also the gift of the Holy Spirit" (see Jn 3:5; 4:14; 7:37-39).

### The Meaning of the Day

Clearly, Divine Mercy Sunday is not a new feast established to celebrate St. Faustina's revelations. Indeed, it is not *primarily* about St. Faustina at all — nor is it altogether a *new* feast! As many commentators have pointed out, The Second Sunday of Easter was already a solemnity as the Octave Day of Easter; nevertheless, the title "Divine Mercy Sunday" does highlight and amplify the meaning of the day. In this way, it recovers an ancient liturgical tradition, reflected in a teaching attributed to St. Augustine about the Easter Octave, which he called "the days of mercy and pardon," and the Octave Day itself "the compendium of the days of mercy."

Liturgically the Easter Octave has *always* been centered on the theme of Divine Mercy and forgiveness. Divine Mercy Sunday, therefore, point us to the merciful love of God that lies behind the whole Paschal Mystery — the whole mystery of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ — made present for us in the Eucharist. In this way, it also sums up the whole Easter Octave. As Pope John Paul II pointed out in his *Regina Caeli* address on Divine Mercy Sunday, 1995: "the whole octave of Easter is like a single day," and the Octave Sunday is meant to be the day of "thanksgiving for the goodness God has shown to man in the whole Easter mystery."

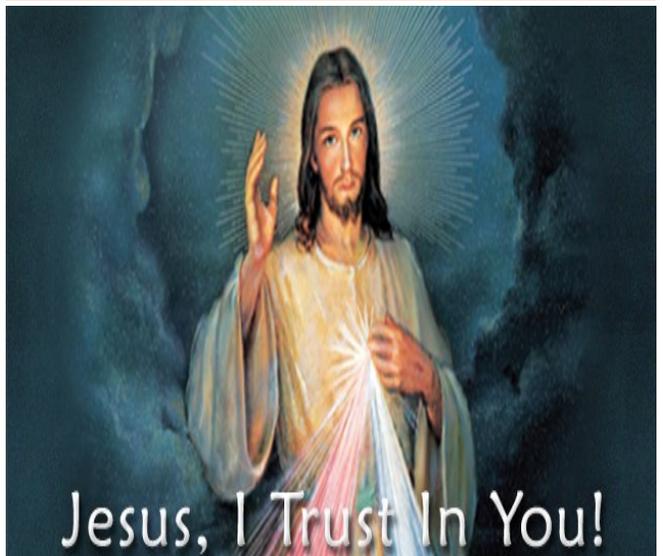
Given the liturgical appropriateness of the title "Divine Mercy Sunday" for the Octave Day of Easter, therefore, the Holy See did not give this title to the Second Sunday of Easter merely as an "option," for those dioceses who happen to like that sort of thing! Rather, the decree issued on May 5, 2000, by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and The Discipline of the Sacraments clearly states: "the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II has graciously determined that in the Roman Missal, after the title Second Sunday of Easter, there shall henceforth be added the appellation 'or [that is] Divine Mercy Sunday'..."

Divine Mercy Sunday, therefore, is not an *optional* title for this solemnity; rather, Divine Mercy is the integral name for this Feast Day. In a similar way, the Octave Day of the Nativity of Our Lord was named by the Church "The Feast of the Mother of God."

### Not Just an Option

This means that preaching on God's mercy is also not just an *option* for the clergy on that day — it is soundly expected. To fail to preach on God's mercy on that day would mean largely to ignore the prayers, readings and psalms appointed for that day, as well as the title "Divine Mercy Sunday" now given to that day in the Roman Missal.

Clearly, the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday does not compete with, nor endanger the integrity of, the Easter Season. After all, Divine Mercy Sunday is the Octave Day of Easter, a day that celebrates the merciful love of God shining through the whole Easter Triduum and the whole Easter mystery. It is a day of declaration of reparation for all sin, thus the Day of Atonement.



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### History of the Message and Devotion to Divine Mercy

The Message of the Divine Mercy that Sr. Faustina received from the Lord was not only directed toward her personal growth in faith but also toward the good of the people. With the command of our Lord to paint an image according to the pattern that Sr. Faustina had seen, came also a request to have this image venerated, first in the Sisters' chapel, and then throughout the world. The same is true with the revelations of the Chaplet. The Lord requested that this Chaplet be said not only by Sr. Faustina, but by others: "Encourage souls to say the Chaplet that I have given you."

The same is true of the revelation of the Feast of Mercy. "The Feast of Mercy emerged from my very depths of tenderness. It is my desire that it solemnly be celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the fount of My Mercy."

These requests of the Lord given to Sr. Faustina between 1931 and 1938 can be considered the beginning of the Divine Mercy Message and Devotion in the new forms.

Through the efforts of Sr. Faustina's spiritual directors, Fr. Michael Sopocko, and Fr. Joseph Andrasz, SJ, and others — including the Marians of the Immaculate Conception — this message began to spread throughout the world.

However, it is important to remember that this message of The Divine Mercy, revealed to St. Faustina and to our present generation is not new. It is a powerful reminder of who God is and has been from the very beginning. This truth that God is in His very nature Love and Mercy Itself, is given to us by our Judeo-Christian faith and God's self-revelation. The veil that has hidden the mystery of God from eternity was lifted by God Himself. In His goodness and love God chose to reveal Himself to us, His creatures, and to make known His eternal plan of salvation. This He had done partly through the Old Testament Patriarchs, Moses and the Prophets, and fully through His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. In the person of Jesus Christ, conceived through power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, the unseen God was made visible.

### Jesus reveals God as Merciful Father

The Old Testament speaks frequently and with great tenderness about God's mercy. Yet, it was Jesus, who through His words and actions, revealed to us in an extraordinary way, God as a loving Father, rich in mercy and abounding in great kindness and love. In Jesus' merciful love and care for the poor, the oppressed, the sick and the sinful, and especially in His freely choosing to take upon Himself the punishment for our sins (a truly horrible suffering and death on the Cross), so that all may be freed from destructive consequences and death, He manifested in a superabundant and radical way the greatness of God's love and mercy for humanity. In His person as God-Man, one in being with the Father, Jesus both reveals and is God's Love and Mercy Itself.

### The message of God's Love and Mercy is especially made known by the Gospels.

The good news revealed through Jesus Christ is that God's love for each person knows no bounds, and no sin or infidelity, no matter how horrible, will separate us from God and His love when we turn to Him in confidence, and seek His mercy. God's will is our salvation. He has done all on our behalf, but since He made us free, He invites us to choose Him and partake of His divine life. We become partakers of His divine life when we believe in His revealed truth and trust Him, when we love Him and remain true to His word, when we honor Him and seek His Kingdom, when we receive Him in Communion and turn away from sin; when we are mutually caring and forgiving.

### What is Divine Mercy Spirituality?

Christian Spirituality is a way of living out our faith in imitation of Christ as the highest ideal...

Christian Spirituality is a way of living out our faith in imitation of Christ as the highest ideal and in imitation of his Saints who incarnated the spirit of Christ in their own culture and time.

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* describes Christian spirituality in the category of Christian perfection:

2013 "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity." [65] All are called to holiness: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

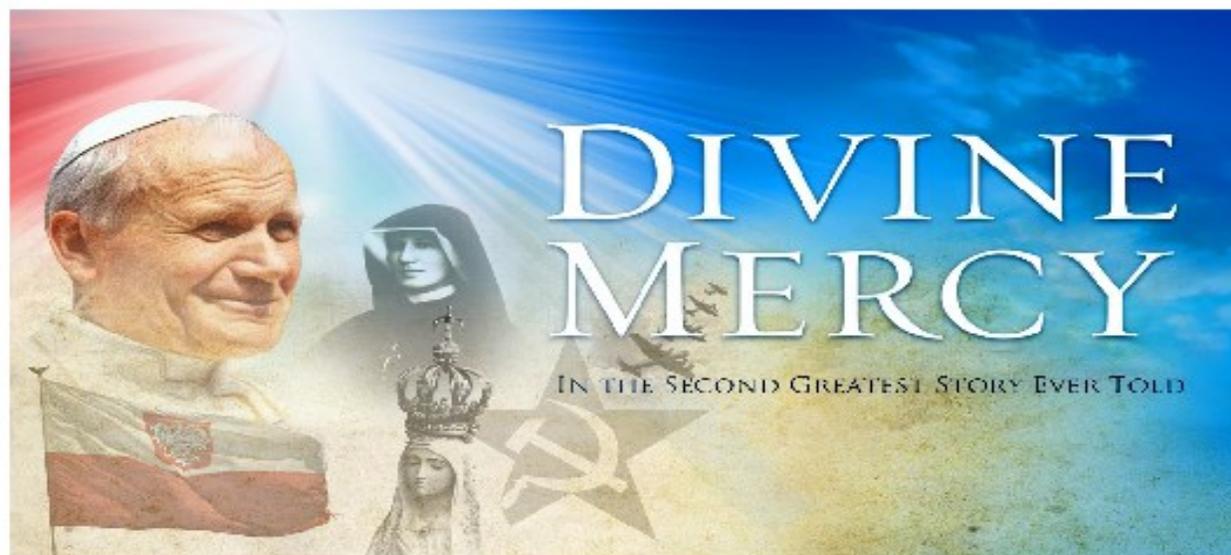
In order to reach this perfection the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ's gift, so that ... doing the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor. Thus the holiness of the People of God will grow in fruitful abundance, as is clearly shown in the history of the Church through the lives of so many saints.

2014 Spiritual progress tends toward ever more intimate union with Christ. This union is called "mystical" because it participates in the mystery of Christ through the sacraments — "the holy mysteries" and, in him, in the mystery of the Holy Trinity. God calls us all to this intimate union with him, even if the special graces or extraordinary signs of this mystical life are granted only to some for the sake of manifesting the gratuitous gift given to all.

Having been freed in the glorious resurrection this now becomes our life and our happiness. Jesus I Trust in You!

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**Join us on Fridays at 5:30 pm in Memorial Hall for Study and Sandwiches**  
**Divine Mercy Chaplet to follow at 6:30 pm**

With his characteristic skill and lucid style, Fr. Gaitley interweaves the dramatic history of Poland, the transformative message of St. Faustina, the miraculous appearance of Mary at Fatima, the witness of St. Maximilian Kolbe, and the world-changing papacy of St. John Paul II into a tapestry of wonder and beauty.

**April 13, 2018 – Episodes 1 & 2**

*God's School of Trust  
Behold This Heart*

**April 20, 2018 – Episodes 3 & 4**

*The Suffering Servant  
Faustina and the Spread of Divine Mercy*

**April 27, 2018 Episodes 5 & 6**

*Proclaim this Message  
Fatima*

**May 4, 2018- Episodes 7 & 8**

*The Secret of Divine Mercy  
God's Master Plan*

**May 11, 2018 – Episodes 9 & 10**

*Mary's Knight  
The Final Question*

