



**Our Lord to St Faustina:**

**“Speak to the world about My mercy ... It is a sign for the end times. After it will come the Day of Justice. While there is still time, let them have recourse to the fountain of My mercy.”**

**“I am prolonging the time of mercy for the sake of sinners. But woe to them if they do not recognize this time of My visitation.”**

**“I am giving mankind the last hope of salvation, that is recourse to My mercy.”**

**“I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls...On that day [Divine Mercy Sunday] 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.”**

This Sunday is Divine Mercy Sunday and the quotes above were some of the words of our Lord to St Faustina. It was our Lord Himself, through St Faustina, who requested that the Sunday after Easter be designated as the Feast of Divine Mercy, or Divine Mercy Sunday. As indicated especially by the last quote above, our Lord promises special graces, tremendous graces, for those who would go to Confession that day.

Our Lord appeared to St Faustina many times and gave her many messages. Although these messages involved a number of different things, there was a continuous emphasis on practicing *devotion* to Divine Mercy, for example, veneration of the Divine Mercy image (above) and praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet. To that end, there will be a Divine Mercy celebration / “devotion” at 3 of the parishes in this pastorate: Emery, Humboldt, and Salem this Sunday, April 7, with each one starting at 1:30 pm. You can come and go as you please – you don’t have to feel obliged to be there the whole time. The celebration/devotion will entail:

- Divine Mercy image set out
- Handouts at the main entrance of the church
- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 1:30 pm; *silent* adoration.
- The priest might say a few words about Divine Mercy, but for the most part...
- Confession will be offered right after Exposition
- Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 pm; the priest will come out of the confessional to lead the Chaplet
- Confessions offered until 4 pm
- Benediction at 4 pm (Blessed Sacrament reposed)
- Priest returns to the confessional if need be – confession offered until all are heard.

The handouts will have: a little history of St Faustina and the development of the Feast of Divine Mercy, the prayers for the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and some quotes from our Lord to St Faustina. The quotes especially are to help a person become recollected – i.e., to help raise your mind to God, which is the essence of prayer.

We tried to spread the Divine Mercy celebrations out across the pastorate (it's not very feasible for one priest to do more than one because we can't be sure of an ending time). Any one of these is for the whole pastorate so don't say: it's not at my parish, I'm not going. Don't lose out because of some small matter like the location. Put it aside and be determined to seek the Lord with your whole heart, mind, soul, and strength regardless of where I have to go. Every Catholic church in the world is your home here on earth. It does not belong to the people who live there, it belongs to the Lord. When I step into any Catholic church, I am in my Father's house. It is our Lord who says: this is MY house, and all men of good will, all those who seek Me, are welcome.

Given our Lord's emphasis on spreading this devotion to Divine Mercy, Pope St John Paul II established an Indulgence for Divine Mercy Sunday, which states (in part):

"And so the Supreme Pontiff, motivated by an ardent desire to foster in Christians this devotion to Divine Mercy as much as possible...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 honor of Divine Mercy..."

(A partial Indulgence can also be obtained through the same means.)

A plenary (full) indulgence means that not only are sins forgiven, not only is there reconciliation, but all of the punishment (repair needed) due to sin is also wiped out; i.e., full repair is completed. Now plenary indulgences are not so easy to receive because of the condition: detachment from all sin – complete freedom from any attachment to sin, including venial sins. A person has to go through an arduous period of purification to be at that state. But so what. Even if you can't receive a full indulgence, you can at least receive a partial one by partaking in the Divine Mercy devotions. Remember that indulgences can also be offered for those who have died. I can say, privately, to our Lord – I offer this for... whoever it might be. This is doing something truly good for your dearly departed.

Should I go to the Divine Mercy celebration? Should I take this seriously? Many won't even bother asking themselves that question at all and many who do will end up talking themselves out of this great act of mercy of our Lord with something like: ah, nah, not me; I'm a good person, nobody else is doing it, blah-blah-blah, and off I go once again refusing the gifts of our Lord, yielding to temptation. If you have never really fought against such a temptation before, let this be the first time. Think about the moment of your death. Death is not the end of our existence. We do not ever really die, not in the sense that we usually think of death – as some sort of final end. No, our mind, our consciousness, (our soul) – never dies. At some point your soul will separate from your body and your body will become lifeless but your soul never dies, you never die. Think about that moment, the moment when you go and stand before the judgement seat of our Lord. Do you really know what that will be like? Do you want the sins of your whole life to be there? Will you be stepping *alone* into a terrifying darkness, facing an all-knowing, non-negotiating, judge who cannot be bamboozled? If I do not spend my life preparing for that moment, the answer is yes. Our Lord said to St Faustina (repeating what He says in Revelation): "He who refuses to pass through the door of My mercy must pass through the door of My justice." What a terrifying thing to have to face the exacting justice of God. And why face it? Not because our Lord is unwilling to pardon and be reconciled but rather because I refused His offer of pardon, reconciliation, and conversion. When we go and stand before our Lord, there will be no excuses, no lies or half-truths, no covering up, no political gamesmanship, no saying I was great in the world or I had this position or that position or I was in with the in-crowd; there will be no: yeah I chose to be contrary to what you said, I chose to do this instead, and *I* decided that that makes me good. No. He is absolute truth, all knowing and all powerful. There will be no more "I decide." We do not have to face an uncompromising judge, however. Our Lord does not want it that way. He wants us to see a loving Savior and Father when we go and stand before Him, such that the moment of death is the sweetest moment of my existence. This is why He has come with this great devotion to His Mercy. The choice is in my hands.

God bless you, Fr Kuhn.