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 CATHOLIC TRADITIONS, COLUMNISTS, LORRAINE VINCENT, SPIRITUAL GROWTH,
 TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH

COMPLETE PARDON TO SOULS

Divine Mercy Sunday



By Lorraine Vincent
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The Divine Mercy

Our Lord Jesus Christ is The Divine Mercy. Jesus wants His message of mercy to be spread throughout the world. We have a tapestry of Jesus, The Divine Mercy, at the front of Blessed Sacrament Church; and there is a picture of The Divine Mercy near the front of St. Mary's Church. Jesus spoke to St. Faustina many times about His Sacred Image. Jesus said: **"I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this image with the signature: 'Jesus, I trust in You'"** (*Diary*, 327). The rays of graces streaming from His Heart represent the love and mercy that Jesus has for us, and His great desire to save souls. Jesus said, **"By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls"** (*Diary*, 742).

St. Faustina

Jesus chose Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938) to write down all His words in her *Diary, Divine Mercy in My Soul*, and requested that she promote His message of Divine Mercy (see *Diary*, 1142). Jesus said to her, **"I desire that the first Sunday after Easter be the Feast of Mercy"** (*Diary*, 299).

Therefore, when Saint John Paul II canonized Saint Faustina on April 30, 2000, he stated during his homily: "The Second Sunday of Easter (which is the first Sunday after Easter) from now on throughout the Church will be called 'Divine Mercy Sunday'." Also, through Jesus' words to St. Faustina, our Holy Catholic Church has promoted The Divine Mercy message and devotion including works of mercy, throughout the universal Church.

St. Faustina wrote this prayer: "O most sweet Jesus, who have deigned to allow miserable me to gain a knowledge of Your unfathomable mercy; O most sweet Jesus who have graciously demanded that I tell the whole world of Your incomprehensible mercy, this day I take into my hands the two rays that spring from Your merciful Heart; that is, the Blood and the Water; and I scatter them all over the globe so that each soul may receive Your mercy and, having received it, may glorify it for endless ages" (*Diary*, 836).

Our Time in Purgatory can be Cancelled

Divine Mercy Sunday is a very special day. If we follow the directives of our Catholic Church we can have all our sins forgiven, and our time in Purgatory cancelled. Jesus said, **“I want to grant a complete pardon to the souls that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on the Feast of My Mercy”** (*Diary*, 1109, 699). On all other days of the year the Sacrament of Reconciliation forgives sins, saves us from Hell and reconciles us with God so we can receive His graces; but it does not take away our time in Purgatory. Our *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1472, 1473, states: “Every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory”. This suffering in Purgatory cleanses the soul completely and prepares the repentant sinner to go to Heaven.

Divine Mercy Sunday is the greatest day of the year for us sinners. On this day Jesus has promised to totally forgive all sins and take away all punishment in Purgatory—“complete pardon”—for those who “go to Confession and receive Holy Communion” worthily, free from mortal sin, and with a humble heart on this special day. During the Divine Mercy Sunday Mass we should pray for the intentions of Pope Francis. We should also admit we are sinners, have the determination to start anew, and make a commitment to continuous conversion.

Therefore, having fulfilled the Church’s directives, all our sins and punishment in Purgatory are removed on this day, from when we were born up to this point in time. However, it also means that from this day on, we will have to suffer in Purgatory for any future sins, until we go to Divine Mercy Sunday to Confession and Holy Communion the following year. So every year on this special day, we can be wiped completely clean.

Pope Benedict XVI stated that we can go to Confession in Lent, and during the week before Divine Mercy Sunday; because a priest cannot cope with 500 people all wanting to go to Confession on that one day. So let us fulfill the conditions set by our Church, receive Holy Communion on Divine Mercy Sunday, and take advantage of this marvelous offering.

The Divine Mercy Novena of Chaplets

Jesus requested that we prepare for Divine Mercy Sunday by reciting His novena of Chaplets of Divine Mercy (on the beads of the Rosary), beginning on Good Friday, and continuing for nine days until the first Sunday after Easter. In this way we can offer our intentions to The Divine Mercy and pray for souls.

St. Faustina heard these words: **“This prayer will serve to appease My wrath. You will recite it for nine days, on the beads of the rosary, in the following manner: First of all, you will say one OUR FATHER and HAIL MARY and the I BELIEVE IN GOD. Then on the OUR FATHER beads you will say the following words: “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.” On the HAIL MARY beads you will say the following words: “For the sake of His sorrowful Passion have mercy on us and on the whole world.” In conclusion, three times you will recite these words: “Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world”** (*Diary*, 476).

Jesus gave us His intentions for His novena of Chaplets of Divine Mercy. St. Faustina recorded His words for each of the nine days of the novena; and added a prayer for each day focusing on each intention. This special novena of Jesus’ intentions can be found in her *Diary* in numbers 1209 to 1229.

Pray “The Divine Mercy Chaplet” Daily

St. Faustina also wrote about the value of The Divine Mercy Chaplet when prayed throughout the year: “I heard these words in my soul: **“Say unceasingly the chaplet that I have taught you. Whoever will recite it will receive great mercy at the hour of death. Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this chaplet only once, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy. I desire that the whole world know My infinite mercy. I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in My mercy (Diary, 687). Through the chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will” (Diary, 1731).**

Jesus said, **“Oh, what great graces I will grant to souls who say this chaplet; the very depths of My tender mercy are stirred for the sake of those who say the chaplet ... let all mankind recognize My unfathomable 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 fount of My mercy; let them profit from the Blood and Water which gushed forth for them” (Diary, 848).**

We can pray **The Divine Mercy Chaplet at three o’clock**, the time when Jesus died on the Cross. St. Faustina wrote: “During Holy Mass, I saw the Lord Jesus nailed upon the Cross amidst great torments. A soft moan issued from His Heart. After some time, He said, **“I thirst. I thirst for the salvation of souls. Help Me, My daughter, to save souls. Join your sufferings to My Passion and offer them to the heavenly Father for sinners” (Diary, 1032).** Jesus said, **“At three o’clock, implore My mercy, especially for sinners; and, if only for a brief moment, immerse yourself in My Passion, particularly in My abandonment at the moment of agony [death on the Cross]. This is the hour of great mercy for the whole world. I ...will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion” (Diary, 1320).**

Continue to Go to Confession Once a Month

Having received the gift of “Complete Pardon to Souls” on Divine Mercy Sunday, we have to be careful not to lapse into complacency, and old sinful habits. It is a good idea to go to confession once a month, whether we have to confess a mortal sin or not. Besides the wonderful graces we receive from God, we also receive a wealth of spiritual guidance from the priest in the confessional. The experience keeps us on the right track and renews our commitment to continuous conversion.

Jesus spoke to St. Faustina Kowalska about the Sacrament of Reconciliation. She wrote in her *Diary* that Jesus said to her: **“Pray for souls that they be not afraid to approach the tribunal of My mercy [the Sacrament of Reconciliation]. Do not grow weary of praying for sinners. You know what a burden their souls are to My Heart. Relieve My deathly sorrow; dispense My mercy. ...Write, speak of My mercy. Tell souls where they are to look for solace; that is, in the Tribunal of Mercy [the Sacrament of Reconciliation]. There the greatest miracles take place [and] are incessantly repeated.**

“To avail oneself of this miracle, it is not necessary to go on a great pilgrimage or to carry out some external ceremony; it suffices to come with faith to the feet of My representative [a Catholic priest] and to reveal to him one’s misery, and the miracle of Divine Mercy will be fully demonstrated. Were a soul like a decaying corpse so that from a human standpoint, there would be no [hope of] restoration and everything would already be lost, it is not so with God. The miracle of Divine Mercy [the Sacrament of Reconciliation] restores that soul in full” (Diary, 975, 1448).

Jesus spoke these words to St. Faustina: **“Have confidence, My child. Do not lose heart in coming for pardon, for I am always ready to forgive you. As often as you beg for it, you glorify My mercy (*Diary*, 1488). I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to My compassion, but on the contrary, I justify him in My unfathomable and inscrutable mercy (*Diary*, 1146). Know that as often as you come to Me, humbling yourself and asking My forgiveness, I pour out a superabundance of graces on your soul, and your imperfection vanishes before My eyes, and I see only your love and your humility. You lose nothing but gain much (*Diary*, 1293).**

“I cannot love a soul which is stained with sin; but when it repents, there is no limit to My generosity toward it. My mercy embraces and justifies it. With My mercy, I pursue sinners along all their paths, and My Heart rejoices when they return to Me. I forget the bitterness with which they fed My Heart and rejoice at their return... Tell sinners that I am always waiting for them, that I listen intently to the beating of their heart. When will it beat for Me? Write, that I am speaking to them through their remorse of conscience, through their failures and sufferings, through thunderstorms, through the voice of the Church” (*Diary*, 1728).

“In the Old Covenant I sent prophets wielding thunderbolts to My people. Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My Merciful Heart. I use punishment when they themselves force Me to do so; My hand is reluctant to take hold of the sword of justice. Before the Day of Justice I am sending the Day of Mercy” (*Diary*, 1588).