

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY - April 8, 2018

On this second Sunday of Easter we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday – a devotion which was very much desired and promoted by Pope John Paul II. As children of God we continue to celebrate the joy and peace of the Risen Lord. On April 30, 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized the Polish nun who had received from Christ the amazing revelations of the Divine mercy in the early years of the twentieth century, Saint Faustina.

In her turn, St. Faustina Kowalska (to whom Our Lord appeared) saw, coming from His Heart that was overflowing with generous love, two rays of light which illuminated the world. “The two rays,” according to what Jesus himself told her, “represent the Blood and the Water.” While the Blood recalls the sacrifice of Golgotha and the mystery of the Eucharist, the Water makes us think of Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, let us always have the beautiful expression “Jesus, I trust in you” on our lips. This prayer, dear to so many Christians, clearly expresses the attitude with which we too would like to abandon ourselves trustfully in the hands of our Lord, our only Saviour.

A simple act of abandonment is enough to overcome the barriers of darkness and sorrow, of doubt and desperation. The rays of His Divine Mercy will restore hope, in a special way, to those of us who feel overwhelmed by the burden of sin. Jesus himself once said to Sister Faustina: “Humanity will never find peace until it turns with trust to Divine Mercy.”

Divine Mercy! This is the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ and offers to us all. Today, let us ask our heavenly Mother Mary, Mother of Mercy, to help us always so that we may have trust in Her Son, our Redeemer. Let us also ask for the help of St. Faustina, who we remember today with special affection. Above all, let us thank the Lord for His love, which is stronger than death and sin.

As children of God we continue to celebrate the joy and peace of the Risen Lord. Today the universal church celebrates Divine Mercy Sunday.

In today’s Gospel, we see Jesus calling Thomas and asking him, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side.” (John 20:27) The nailed hands and pierced side are the perfect sign of God’s mercy for His children. Today, together with Thomas, all of us are invited to confess aloud, “My Lord and My God.”

Jesus offers us his gift of peace and gives his apostles the authority to forgive sins, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” It is Jesus himself who commissioned his apostles to forgive sins. To have peace in our hearts, let us make frequent use of this beautiful and wonderful sacrament which heals our souls and restores us to unity with Jesus again after we have turned away from him.

On this Divine Mercy Sunday, as we are meaningfully celebrating our devotion to the merciful Heart of Jesus, let us not forget to take to heart what Pope Francis said at the conclusion of the extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy: “We are called to promote a culture of mercy based on the rediscovery of encounter with others, a culture in which no one looks at another with indifference or turns away from the suffering of our brothers and sisters.

The culture of mercy is shaped in assiduous prayer, in docility to the working of the Holy Spirit, in knowing the lives of the saints and in being close to the poor.” In this way, let our daily life become one of participation, sharing and involvement for the great glory of the merciful Heart of Jesus in whom we with special affection. Above all, let us thank the Lord for His love, which is stronger than death and sin.