



JESUS I TRUST IN YOU

THE MESSAGE

The *Message* of Divine Mercy is that God is merciful. He is love itself poured out for us, and He wants no one to escape that merciful love.

The message is that God wants us to turn to Him with trust and repentance while it is still a time of mercy, before He comes as the just Judge. This turning with trust to Him who is Mercy itself is the only source of peace for mankind. Turning to and imploring God's mercy is the answer to the troubled world. There is no escaping that *answer*.

THE RESPONSE OF TRUST AND CONVERSION

What God most wants of us is to turn to Him with *trust*. And the first act of trust is: *receive* His mercy. To trust God is to rely on Him who is mercy itself. The Lord wants us to live with trust in Him in all circumstances. We trust Him because He is God, and He loves us and cares for us.

His mercy is always available to us, no matter what we have done or what state we are in, even if our sins are as black as night, and we are filled with fears and anxieties.

The greater the sinner, the greater the right he has to my mercy (Diary 723)

But there is more we can do. As Catholics, as Christians, we can go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and be reconciled to God and to man. The Lord wants us to live reconciled with Him and one another.

THE RESPONSE OF MERCY TOWARD OTHERS

Not only are we to *receive* His mercy, but we are to *use* it, by being merciful to others by our actions, by our words, and by our prayers; in other words by practicing the Corporal and Spiritual works of Mercy.

THE MESSAGE of DIVINE MERCY: TRUST and MERCY

The Corporal Works of Mercy are feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the travelers, comforting the prisoners, visiting the sick, and burying the dead. The Spiritual Works of Mercy include teaching the ignorant, praying for the living and dead, correct the sinners, counseling those in doubt, consoling the sorrowful, bearing wrongs patiently, and forgiving wrongs willingly.

IT'S SCRIPTURAL

The message of mercy is the content and the challenge of Sacred Scripture. In the Hebrew Bible we see a God of mercy who calls His people to be merciful. In the New Testament Jesus exhorts us:

Be merciful even as your Father is merciful (Lk 6:36 RSV).

He sets the highest goal for us and expects us to obtain it by His merciful love:

Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy (Mt 5:7 RSV).

When He comes again, He will judge us on our mercy toward one another:

Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me (Mt. 25:40).

IT'S THE CURRENT TEACHING OF POPE JOHN PAUL II:

The message of The Divine Mercy - Jesus Himself - is at the heart of the gospel. The message of mercy presents the truth and the call of the gospel to our present age. This message of mercy is proclaimed by Pope John Paul II, in his encyclical *Rich in Mercy*, as the message for our age.

...the Church must consider it one of her principle duties - at every stage of history and especially in our modern age - to proclaim and to introduce into life the mystery of mercy, supremely revealed in Jesus Christ (14).

MERCY - THE MESSAGE AND RESPONSE THROUGH THE AGES

The message and response of mercy is not something new. In the past God spoke a message of mercy through

the patriarchs and prophets - through Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah and many others.

In the last days God has spoken to us by His Son, Jesus Christ, who is Mercy personified and incarnated.

God continues to speak a word of mercy even to our generation, through the Church and its shepherds, and through Holy men and women - mystics - whom God has chosen as His vessels.

In our century He revealed Himself to Sister Faustina, a simple and holy nun in Poland during the 1930's. He called her to be His secretary and His apostle of mercy. He spoke to her of His mercy and the way He wants us to respond to it.

DEVOTION TO THE DIVINE MERCY

Our Lord not only taught Sister Faustina the fundamentals of trust, and of mercy to others, but He also revealed special ways to live out the response to His mercy. These we call the *devotion to The Divine Mercy*. The word "devotion" means fulfilling our vows. It is a commitment of our lives to the Lord who is Mercy itself.

By giving our lives to The Divine Mercy - Jesus Christ Himself - we become instruments of His mercy to others, and so we can live out the command of the Lord:

Be merciful even as your Father is merciful (Lk 6:36 RSV).

Through Sister Faustina, Our Lord gave us special means of drawing on His mercy; an Image of The Divine Mercy, a Chaplet of The Divine Mercy, a Feast of Mercy, a novena, and prayer at the 3:00 o'clock hour - the hour of His death.

These special means are in addition to the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation which have been given to the Church.

THE IMAGE OF THE DIVINE MERCY

Jesus appeared to Sister Faustina with rays of red and pale light streaming from the area around His heart. His hand was raised in blessing, recalling the scene of Easter Sunday night (see John 20: 19-23).

He asked Sister Faustina to have this vision painted along with the words, "Jesus, I Trust in You!"

He presented this image to remind people to trust in His mercy, and to come to Him for mercy:

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).

Jesus explained that the rays represented the blood and water which flowed from His pierced side and taught Sister Faustina the prayer:

O blood and water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in you (Diary 84)

THE CHAPLET OF THE DIVINE MERCY

Our Lord taught Sister Faustina a prayer for mercy that she was to pray "unceasingly."

He told her that by praying in this way her prayers would have great power for the conversion of sinners, for peace for the dying, and even for controlling nature.

We too can pray this chaplet, using ordinary rosary beads of five decades. We begin with the Our Father, Hail Mary and the Creed.

Then, on the large beads we pray:

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 small beads we pray:

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

And at the end, we pray three times:

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

THE FEAST OF THE DIVINE MERCY

Our Lord asked Sister Faustina to pray and work towards establishing a Feast of The Divine Mercy on the Sunday after Easter, He told her:

On that day, the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession (eight days before or after) and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment (Diary 699)

It is a day that would celebrate the paschal mystery with a focus on God's covenant of mercy. It would be a day of complete forgiveness and pardon, like the day of atonement in the Old Testament (see Lv 16) - all our sins and the punishment due to them would be atoned for.

We can already celebrate this "Mercy Sunday" by going to Confession (eight days before or after) and Communion on that day. We can honor the mercy of the Lord by our prayers and works of mercy.

THE NOVENA BEFORE THE FEAST

In preparation for the Feast of The Divine Mercy, the Lord asked Sister Faustina to make a novena of prayer from Good Friday to the following Saturday.

These nine days of prayer (the word "novena" means nine) before the Feast of Mercy are like the nine days of prayer in the upper room before the day of Pentecost: (see Acts 1:14).

For each of the nine days, our Lord gave Sister Faustina a different intention: all mankind, especially sinners; the souls of priests and religious; all devout and faithful souls; those who do not believe in Him and those who do not yet know Him; the souls of the separated brethren; the meek and humble souls and the souls of the little children; the souls who especially venerate and glorify His mercy; the souls detained in purgatory; souls who have become lukewarm.

I desire that during these nine days you bring souls to the fount of My Mercy, that they may draw therefrom strength and refreshment and whatever grace they have need of in the hardships of life, and especially at the hour of death (Diary 1209).

We, too, can make a novena of prayer for these intentions and others, especially by praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

THE THREE O'CLOCK HOUR

In his revelations to Sister Faustina, Jesus asked for special, daily remembrance at 3:00 o'clock, the very hour He died for us on the cross:

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: This is

the hour of great mercy for the whole world. I will allow you to enter into My mortal sorrow. In this hour, I will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion (Diary 1320).

At 3:00 o'clock we can pray:

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelope the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us (Diary 1319).

O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You (Diary 84).

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF SISTER FAUSTINA

The spiritual life of Sister Faustina was based on her humility and her obedience to the will of God. On this foundation the structure of her spiritual life was formed - devotion to the Eucharist, Confession, Mary, Suffering and Intercession.

PEACE

The *only source of peace* in our troubled world is the mercy of God. The Lord made it clear to us through Sister Faustina:

Mankind will have no peace until it turns with trust to my mercy! (Diary 300).

The essence of the message and the devotion to The Divine Mercy is: TRUST and MERCY.

In the words given to Sister Faustina: Jesus, I trust in you!

In the words of Jesus in the gospel: Be merciful even as your Father is merciful (Lk 6:36 RSV).

The Marian Helpers Center, through the Marian Press, has developed extensive material that expands on this message of Divine Mercy, including the TV cassette and 16mm film of the motion picture *Divine Mercy - No Escape*, as well as books, pamphlets and reproductions of the Sacred Image of The Divine Mercy. All these and others are available from:

The Divine Mercy Department
Marian Helpers Center
Stockbridge, MA 01263