

Homily of Second Sunday of Easter Year C, 2022 Divine Mercy Sunday

Acts 5:12-16; Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; Revelation 19:11-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31

In 2000, St. Pope John Paul II canonized St. Faustina, and made the second Sunday of Easter to be celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday. St. Faustina was a Polish nun gifted with mystical visions, messages and revelations from the Risen Jesus. This is a rare instance when a private revelation is authenticated to the degree that it becomes a Sunday celebration by the Universal Church.

The feast situates well following Easter Sunday to show that the events of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus for the redemption of humanity were out of God's gratuitous mercy. God's mercy is gratuitous because humanity did nothing to merit it.

The author of the Book of Revelation was commanded as we read in the second reading, "Write down what you see" (Revelation 1:11). That was St. Faustina's experience. She wrote down the revelations that she received. She writes in her diary, "Proclaim that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. All God's works are crowned with mercy" (Diary 301). God is so merciful and ever forgiving that he does not judge us according to our sins. Psalm 130:3 prays, "If you, Lord, keep account of sins, Lord, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness and so you are revered." God forgives no matter the depth of one's sin and guilt. The Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 gives us a good idea of the depth of God's forgiveness. His banner over us is love (Song of Solomon 2:4).

We proclaim God's mercy, not only in words but also in deeds. God's mercy continues in our world through us if we become instruments of his mercy by works of charity. Jesus says, "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers [and sisters] of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). Yes, when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit prisoners, bury the dead, and give alms to the poor, we are treating others as if they were Christ in disguise.

The image of the Divine Mercy of Jesus showing two rays, one reddish (symbolizing blood) and the other whitish (symbolizing water), with the inscription "**Jesus, I trust in you**" at the bottom, is one of St. Faustina's visions. The image takes us back to the passion, crucifixion and death of Jesus. When the soldier pierced the side of Jesus, "immediately blood and water flowed out" (John 19:34). Jesus said during the Last Supper, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28). St. Faustina writes in her diary, that the water makes souls righteous, and blood is the life of souls (Diary 299).

Jesus invites us as he invited Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe" (John 20:27). Thomas put his finger into the source of divine mercy and was healed of his doubt. In our prayers and as we celebrate the Eucharist, may we receive our own healing. May we receive our healing and deliverance as the people in the first reading: "A large number of people from the towns in the vicinity of Jerusalem also gathered, bringing the sick and those disturbed by unclean spirits, and they were all cured" (Acts 5:16).

The faith of the people is amazing. "Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and mats so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them" (Acts 5:15). If the shadow of Peter had such power, imagine how much more is the Body and Blood of Jesus! May we give testimonies of our own miraculous healings and deliverances. Amen.

St. Faustina's Prayer for Healing:

"Jesus may Your pure and healthy blood circulate in my ailing organism, and may Your pure and healthy body transform my weak body, and may a healthy and vigorous life throb within me, if it is truly Your holy will" (Diary 1089).

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion,
have mercy on us and on the whole world.
Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One,
have mercy on us and on the whole world (Divine Mercy Chaplet).

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