



## What is Divine Mercy?

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### **The Divine Mercy Message and Devotion**

The message of The Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us — all of us. And He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy.

The Divine Mercy message is one we can call to mind simply by remembering ABC:

**A** - Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world.

**B** - Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us.

**C** - Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive.

This message and devotion to Jesus as The Divine Mercy is based on the writings of Saint Faustina Kowalska, an uneducated Polish nun who, in obedience to her spiritual director, wrote a diary of about 600 pages recording the revelations she received about God's mercy. Even before her death in 1938, the devotion to The Divine Mercy had begun to spread.

The message and devotional practices proposed in the *Diary of Saint Faustina* and other publications of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception are completely in accordance with the teachings of Church and firmly rooted in the Gospel message of our Merciful Savior. Properly understood and implemented, they will help us grow as genuine followers of Christ.

## What is Divine Mercy?

### **Forms of Devotion**



## **The Image of The Divine Mercy**

In 1931, our Lord appeared to St. Faustina in a vision. She saw Jesus clothed in a white garment with His right hand raised in blessing. His left hand was touching His garment in the area of the Heart, from where two large rays came forth, one red and the other pale. She gazed intently at the Lord in silence, her soul filled with awe, but also with great joy. Jesus said to her:

**Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You. I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over [its] enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I Myself will defend it as My own glory (*Diary*, 47, 48). 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 (327). I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and [then] throughout the world (47).**

At the request of her spiritual director, St. Faustina asked the Lord about the meaning of the rays in the image. She heard these words in reply:

**The two rays denote Blood and Water. The pale ray stands for the Water, which makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for the Blood, which is the life of souls. These two rays issued**

**forth from the depths of My tender mercy when My agonized Heart was opened by a lance on the Cross. Happy is the one who will dwell in their shelter, for the just hand of God shall not lay hold of him (299). By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls. It is to be a reminder of the demands of My mercy, because even the strongest faith is of no avail without works (742).**

These words indicate that the Image represents the graces of Divine Mercy poured out upon the world, especially through Baptism and the Eucharist.

Many different versions of this image have been painted, but our Lord made it clear that the painting itself is not what is important. When St. Faustina first saw the original image that was being painted under her direction, she wept in disappointment and complained to Jesus: "Who will paint You as beautiful as You are?" (313).

In answer, she heard these words: **"Not in the beauty of the color, nor of the brush lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace" (313).**

So, no matter which version of the image we prefer, we can be assured that it is a vehicle of God's grace if it is revered with trust in His mercy.

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### **Forms of Devotion**

#### **The Hour of Great Mercy**

In His revelations to St. Faustina, Our Lord asked for a special prayer and meditation on His Passion each afternoon at the three o'clock hour, the hour that recalls His death 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. In this hour, I will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion (*Diary*, 1320).**

**As often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it; invoke its omnipotence for the whole world, and particularly for poor sinners; for at that moment mercy was opened wide for every soul. In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world — mercy triumphed over justice. (1572)**

**My daughter, try your best to make the Stations of the Cross in this hour, provided that your duties permit it; and if you are not able to make the Stations of the Cross, then at least step into the chapel for a moment and adore, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, My Heart, which is full of mercy; and should you be unable to step into the chapel, immerse yourself in prayer there where you happen to be, if only for a very brief instant. (1572)**

From these detailed instructions, it's clear that Our Lord wants us to turn our attention to His Passion at the three o'clock hour to whatever degree our duties allow, and He wants us to ask for His mercy. In Genesis 18:16-32, Abraham begged God to reduce the conditions necessary for Him to be merciful to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Here, Christ Himself offers a reduction of conditions because of the varied demands of our life's duties, and He begs us to ask, even in the smallest way, for His mercy, so that He will be able to pour His mercy upon us all.

We may not all be able to make the Stations or adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament, but we can all mentally pause for a “brief instant,” think of His total abandonment at the hour of agony, and say a short prayer such as “Jesus, Mercy,” or “Jesus, for the sake of Your Sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.”

This meditation, however brief, on Christ’s Passion brings us face-to-face with the cross, and, as Pope John Paul II writes in *Rich in Mercy*, “It is in the cross that the revelation of merciful love attains its culmination” (8). God invites us, the Holy Father continues, “to have ‘mercy’ on His only Son, the crucified one” (8). Thus, our reflection on the Passion should lead to a type of love for Our Lord which is “not only an act of solidarity with the suffering Son of man, but also a kind of ‘mercy’ shown by each one of us to the Son of the Eternal Father.”