

The Sunday after Easter is Divine Mercy Sunday!

How should we prepare for this great Feast of Mercy?



Jesus told St. Faustina that this Feast of Mercy would be a very special day when **"all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened"**. (Diary 699) Our Lord made a great promise to all those souls who would go to Confession and then receive Him in Holy Communion on the Feast of Mercy, on the Sunday after Easter, which is now called Divine Mercy Sunday throughout the Catholic Church.

Jesus promised that **"The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain the complete forgiveness of sins and punishment."**(Diary 699) He went on to say **"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)

We want to encourage everyone to take advantage of this incredible promise and the additional Plenary Indulgence on this great Feast of Mercy "Divine Mercy Sunday". We want you to benefit fully from these promises, and we also want you to notify all of your family and friends about them too and urge them to return to the practice of their faith!

The Image of The Divine Mercy, which Our Lord requested to be solemnly blessed and venerated on this day, will be on display in our church. Pope John Paul II said that the image portrays the Risen Jesus Christ bringing Mercy to the whole world. Our Lord said **"I want the image to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter, and I want it to be venerated publicly so that every soul may know about it. I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish"**. (Diary 341, 48) Please take the time to visit with this Image of The Divine Mercy and venerate Jesus.

Jesus said to St. Faustina **"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 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 very 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."** (Diary 299)

About the feastday "Divine Mercy Sunday", Jesus said **"...tell the whole world about My inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon the souls who approach the Fount of My Mercy. On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet.... Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy"**. (Diary 699)

Our Lord said **"When you go to confession, to this fountain of My mercy, the Blood and Water which came forth from My Heart always flows down upon your soul..."** and **"Every time you go to confession, Immerse yourself entirely in My mercy with great trust, so that I may pour the bounty of My grace upon your soul. When you approach the confessional, know this, that I Myself am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest, but I Myself act in your soul. Here the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy"** (1602) **Make your confession before Me. The person of the priest is... only a screen. Never analyze what sort of a priest that I am making use of; open your soul in confession to Me, and I will fill it with My light."** (1725)

It is required of all Catholics to confess their serious sins at least once every year. If you haven't yet met this obligation then take advantage of this outstanding opportunity to receive an outpouring of an ocean of graces that Jesus promises on this day. Those who have already confessed their sins should make room for others.

The Church allows for one to go to Confession for up to about 20 days, before or after Divine Mercy Sunday.

How to make a Good Confession

Five Steps For a Good Confession

1. Examine your conscience.
2. Be sincerely sorry for your sins.
3. Confess your sins to a priest.
4. Resolve to amend your life.
5. After your confession, do the penance the priest assigns.

Procedure in the Confessional

You say:

"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been - (state the length of time) - since my last confession. These are my sins."

Then tell your mortal sins and the number of times committed. If you have no mortal sin to confess, then confess the venial sins you have committed since your last confession. When you have finished telling your sins, you should say:

"For these and all the sins of my past, I am truly sorry."

The priest now gives the necessary advice, assigns your penance and asks you to say the Act of Contrition (in some form). Then wait and listen as the priest gives the absolution.

Then say **"Thank you, Father"**, then leave the confessional and then perform the penance assigned by the priest.

The Differences in sins

There are two kinds of actual sin, mortal and venial.

Mortal sin is a horrible offense against God, so horrible that it destroys the life of grace in the soul. Three simultaneous conditions must be fulfilled for a mortal sin: (1) the act must be something very serious; (2) the person must have sufficient understanding of what is being done; (3) the person must have sufficient freedom of the will. So I cannot commit a mortal sin if the matter is not serious (e.g., if I stole a small amount of money from my employer), or if I did not know what I was doing (e.g., if I were to hurt someone accidentally or unthinkingly), or if I did not act with full freedom (e.g., I was under physical or emotional pressure).

A Catholic should know well the difference between mortal and venial sins. Deliberately missing Sunday Mass without sufficient cause is to be considered a very serious mortal sin.

Examination of Conscience

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.
Do I give God time every day in prayer?
Do I seek to love Him with my whole heart?
Have I been involved with superstitious practices (horoscopes or ouija boards) or have I been involved with the occult?
Do I seek to surrender myself to God's Word as taught by the Church?
Have I ever received Communion in the state of mortal sin?
Have I ever deliberately told a lie in Confession or have I withheld a mortal sin from the priest in Confession?
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
Have I used God's name in vain: lightly or carelessly?
Have I been angry with God?
Have I wished evil upon any other person?
Have I insulted a sacred person or abused a sacred object?
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
Have I not kept Sunday as a family day and a day of rest?
Do I do needless work on Sunday?
Do I make others work on Sunday?
4. Honor your father and your mother.
Do I honor and obey my parents?
Have I neglected my duties to my spouse and children?
Have I given my family good religious example?
Do I try to bring peace into my home life?
Do I care for my aged and infirm relatives?
Do I respect my elders?
Do I respect my pastor, bishop, and the Pope?
5. You shall not kill.
Have I had an abortion or encouraged anyone to have an abortion?
Have I physically harmed anyone?
Have I abused alcohol or drugs?
Did I give scandal to anyone, thereby leading them into sin?
Have I been angry or resentful?
Have I harbored hatred in my heart?
Have I been sterilized for reasons of birth control?
Have I encouraged or condoned sterilization?
6. You shall not commit adultery.
Have I been faithful to my marriage vows: in thought and action?
Have I engaged in any sexual activity before marriage or outside of marriage?
Have I used any method of contraception or artificial birth control?
Has each sexual act in my marriage been open to the transmission of new life?
Have I respected all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as objects?
Have I been guilty of any homosexual activity?
Do I seek to be pure in my thoughts, words and actions?
Am I careful to dress modestly, so as not to tempt others?
Have I been guilty of masturbation with myself.

7. You shall not steal.

Have I stolen what is not mine?
Have I returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?
Do I waste time at work, school or at home?
Do I gamble excessively, thereby denying my family of their needs?
Do I pay my debts promptly?
Do I seek to share what I have with the poor?

8. You shall not bear false witness.

Have I lied?
Have I gossiped?
Have I harmed someone's reputation?
Have I spoken behind someone else's back?
Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable in my thoughts of others?
Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?

9. You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.

Have I consented to impure thoughts? Have I caused them by impure television, movies, books, magazines or internet?
Do I pray at once to banish impure thoughts and temptations?
Do I listen to, or engage in, impure conversations or jokes?

10. You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.

Am I jealous of what other people have?
Do I envy other people's families or possessions?
Am I greedy or selfish?
Are material possessions the purpose of my life?
Do I trust that God will care for all of my material and spiritual needs?

An Act of Contrition

"O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven, and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who art all good and deserving of all My love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen."