

REQUIREMENTS FOR DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY



St. Pope John Paul II wrote an encyclical, entitled, *Rich in Mercy (Dives in Misericordia)*, where he stated that "the message of Divine Mercy... in a sense formed the image of his Pontificate." He beatified and canonized Sr. Maria Faustina Kowalska and held her up as the apostle and secretary of Divine Mercy; mostly because of her diary, entitled, *Divine Mercy in My Soul*. She also established and promoted the Image and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

During Faustina's canonization, Beloved John Paul II, instituted the feast day of Divine Mercy Sunday on the first Sunday after Easter; and the following instructions of Our Lord to Sr. Faustina were an incentive for its establishment. Jesus said, "My daughter, 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 for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. 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. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity. Everything that exists has come forth from the very depths of My most tender mercy. Every soul in its relation to Me will contemplate My love and mercy throughout eternity.

Jesus asked that the Feast of the Divine Mercy be preceded by a Novena to the Divine Mercy which would begin on Good Friday. He gave St. Faustina an intention to pray for on each day of the Novena, saving for the last day the most difficult intention of all, the lukewarm and indifferent of whom He said: "These souls cause Me more suffering than any others; it was from such souls that My soul felt the most revulsion in the Garden of Olives. It was on their account that I said: 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass Me by.' The last hope of salvation for them is to flee to My Mercy."

In her diary, St. Faustina wrote that Jesus told her: "On each day of the novena you will bring to My heart a different group of souls and you will immerse them in this ocean of My mercy ... On each day you will beg My Father, on the strength of My passion, for the graces for these souls."

The Feast of Mercy emerged from My very depths of tenderness. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy" (*Diary*, #699).

In 2002, Pope John Paul II entrusted the whole world to the Mercy of God; and proclaimed Divine Mercy as the answer to all the world's problems. Pope John Paul died on the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday, leaving us this beautiful feast day, which is one of the greatest treasures of the Church.

This sacred day, allows the Faithful to obtain a PLENARY indulgence by following three conditions and devotions:

1. Sacramental Confession
2. Eucharistic Communion,
3. Prayer for the Intentions of Our Holy Father, the Pope.

These must be done in any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for sin, even a venial sin, and take part in the prayers and devotions (Recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet and Veneration of the Divine Mercy Image) held in honor of Divine Mercy, OR in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you); (Note: this plenary indulgence is applicable to the souls in Purgatory).

In order to obtain a PARTIAL indulgence, the Faithful are required to pray, a legitimately approved invocation to our Merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you) with a contrite heart.

For those who are sick and those who nurse them, and all who for a just cause are home bound or are driven out of their homeland, or who carry out an activity for the community which cannot be postponed, may obtain a PLENARY indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday, by totally detesting any sin with the intention of fulfilling as soon as possible the three usual conditions:

1. Sacramental Confession,
2. Eucharistic Communion,
3. Prayer for the intentions of Our Holy Father, the Pope,

and the recitation of the Our Father and the Creed before a devout image of Our Merciful Lord Jesus and, in addition, pray a devout invocation to Him (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you.)

If it is impossible for some people to obtain the PLENARY indulgence according to the last way I described, then the Faithful may obtain the PLENARY Indulgence, if with a spiritual intention, they are united with those carrying out the prescribed practice for obtaining the Indulgence in the usual way and offer to the Merciful Lord a prayer and the sufferings of their illness and the difficulties of their lives, with the resolution to accomplish as soon as possible the three conditions prescribed to obtain the plenary indulgence, which once again are:

1. Sacramental Confession,
2. Eucharistic Communion,
3. Prayer for the intentions of Our Holy Father, the Pope.

(The specific information, which explains the process of obtaining the indulgences in honor of Divine Mercy Sunday was taken from the Apostolic Penitentiary Decree given approval by Archbishop Luigi De Magistris, Tit. Archbishop of Nova, Major Pro-Penitentiary and Fr. Gianfranco Girotti, O. F. M. Conv., Regent).