

3. God's gift to the World, Divine Mercy. **Our Lord's appearances to Sister Faustina.**

Sister Faustina: Divine Mercy Saint.

Sister Maria Faustina Kowalska was born in Poland. When she was twenty years old, she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy.

On the 22nd of February, 1931, she had a vision of Jesus while she was in Plock, Poland. Jesus appeared to her and said, "*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).

Jesus asked her to remind the world of His unfathomable Divine Mercy and He taught her a very special devotion to the Divine Mercy based on trust in Him.

Sister Faustina died on October 5, 1938, at a convent in Krakow. She was buried in the convent chapel beneath the image of the Divine Mercy.

Sister Faustina was beatified on April 18, 1993, her canonization took place on April 30, 2000, the first Sunday after Easter, now known as Divine Mercy Sunday.

She was honoured by becoming the first saint of this millenium, which placed great emphasis on the Divine Mercy Devotion.

The Holy Father, the late Pope John Paul II conducted the canonization ceremony before a crowd of two hundred thousand Divine Mercy Pilgrims.

The message and devotion to Jesus as The Divine Mercy is based on the writings of Saint Faustina, who in obedience to her spiritual director, recorded in diary format all that Jesus told her. Her diary consists of nearly six hundred pages of revelations she received directly from Jesus, teaching her and the world about Divine Mercy.

Devotion to Divine Mercy began spreading as early as 1930 which was eight years before Sister Faustina's death. The message of Divine Mercy is the message of God's love for His people from the Creation of our first parents to the death of Jesus on the cross. His merciful action toward us even when we are still sinners offers us a way to accept redemption from sin and death and the eternal loss of God.

The message of Our Lord is that Divine Mercy is a devotion which must transform our hearts. When we pray the chaplet and follow the devotion meditating on the great mercy of God toward each one of us we must transform ourselves into people of Mercy. The

Mercy of God must become more and more evident in our lives and in our dealings with our neighbour.

'Jesus, I Trust in You' involves total commitment to God; it involves being merciful as He is merciful. It is the message of the Gospels.

Our Lord's own words to Sister Faustina make clear to us just how strongly he felt about our genuine transformation to a people of mercy:

I demand of you deeds of mercy which are to arise out of love for me. You are to show mercy to your neighbour always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse yourself from it. (Diary,742).

When a soul approaches me with trust I fill it with such an abundance of graces that it cannot contain them within itself, but radiates them to other souls. (Diary, 1074)

We radiate God's Mercy to others by our actions, our words, and our prayers. In these three degrees are contained the fullness of mercy. (Diary, 742)

So let us ask the Lord to show each one of us how we can best fulfill his Divine Mercy in our everyday lives.

When the world listens to Our Lord's words, they will again hear Him say, "***Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.***"

Divine Mercy Devotion leads us to venerate the Divine Mercy Image with its caption, **'Jesus I Trust in You.'**

We are asked to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, especially at the Hour of Divine Mercy which is the third hour.

We are asked to pray the Novena of the Divine Mercy from Good Friday to the Sunday after Easter, which is the Feast of the Divine Mercy.

Jesus said, "On that day are open all the Divine floodgates through which graces flow. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet." (From Sister Faustina's Diary, p. 699.)

The Hour of Mercy (3 p.m.)

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 the poor sinners; for at that moment mercy was opened wide for every soul. (1572) This is the hour of great mercy for the whole world. (1320)

It is Jesus' desire that the moment of His Death on the Cross (3:00 p.m.) be venerated every day. At the third hour on that first Good Friday mercy was offered to the world. (1572) At this hour He wants us to meditate on His sorrowful Passion which reveals

God's great love for His people. Jesus asks us to worship and glorify the Mercy of God at the three o'clock hour so that everyone in the world and all those who no longer pray will receive the necessary graces for salvation.

"Try your best to make the Stations of the Cross during this hour, providing your duties permit it," and, Jesus told Sister Faustina, "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 Blessed Sacrament, My Heart, which is full of Mercy. If you are unable to do any of these things, immerse yourself in prayer wherever you happen to be, if only for a brief instant." (1572)

I will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion. (1320)

Divine Mercy Chaplet

1. Using normal rosary beads, begin with:

Our Father....., Hail Mary....., The Creed.

2. Each time you come to a large bead say:

Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and the Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

3. On every group of ten beads say:

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

4. At the end of the Divine Mercy Chaplet say three times:

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

Novena to the Divine Mercy

of the Servant of God Sister Faustina Kowalska.

Remember to include the Divine Mercy Chaplet each day of the Novena.

First day: Today bring me all mankind, especially sinners.

Most Merciful Jesus, whose very nature it is to have compassion on us and to forgive us, do not look upon our sins, but upon our trust which we place in your infinite goodness. Receive us all into the abode of your Most Compassionate Heart, and never let us escape from It. We beg this of you by Your love which unites You to the Father and to the Holy Spirit.

Eternal Father, turn your merciful gaze upon all mankind and especially upon poor sinners, all enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion show us your mercy, that we may praise the omnipotence of Your mercy for ever and ever. Amen.

Second day: Today bring to me the souls of priests and religious.

Most merciful Jesus, from whom comes all that is good, increase Your grace in us, that we may perform worthy works of mercy, and that all who see us may glorify the Father of Mercy who is in heaven.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the company of chosen ones in your vineyard -- upon the souls of priests and religious; and endow them with the strength of Your blessing. For the love of the Heart of Your Son in which they are enfolded, impart to them Your power and light, that they may be able to guide others in the way of salvation, and with one voice sing praise to Your boundless mercy for ages without end. Amen.

Third day: Today bring to me all devout and faithful souls.

Most merciful Jesus, from the treasury of Your mercy, You impart Your graces in great abundance to each and all. Receive us into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart and never let us escape from It. We beg this of You by that most wondrous love for the heavenly Father with which Your Heart burns so fiercely.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon faithful souls, as upon the inheritance of Your Son. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, grant them Your blessing and surround them with Your constant protection. Thus may they never fail in love or lose the treasure

of the holy faith, but rather, with all the hosts of Angels and Saints, may they glorify Your boundless mercy for endless ages. Amen.

Fourth day: Today bring to me the pagans and those who do not yet know Me.

Most compassionate Jesus, You are the light of the whole world. Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of pagans who as yet do not know You. Let the rays of Your grace enlighten them that they, too, together with us, may extol Your wonderful mercy; and do not let them escape from the abode which is Your Most Compassionate Heart.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls of pagans and of those who as yet do not know You, but who are enclosed in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Draw them to the light of the gospel. These souls do not know what great happiness it is to love You. Grant that they, too, may extol the generosity of Your mercy for endless ages. Amen.

Fifth day: Today bring to me the souls of heretics and schismatics.

Most Merciful Jesus, Goodness Itself, You do not refuse light to those who seek it of You. Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of Heretics and schismatics. Draw them by Your light into the unity of the Church, and do not let them escape from the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart: but bring it about that they, too, come to glorify the generosity of Your mercy.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls of heretics and schismatics, who have squandered Your blessings and misused Your graces by obstinately persisting in their errors. Do not look upon their errors, but upon the love of Your own Son and upon His bitter passion, which he underwent for their sake, since they too, are enclosed in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Bring it about that they also may glorify Your great mercy for endless ages. Amen.

Sixth day: Today bring to me the meek and humble souls of little children.

Most Merciful Jesus, You Yourself have said, "Learn from Me for I am meek and humble of heart." Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart all meek and humble souls and the souls of little children. These souls send all of heaven into ecstasy, and they are the heavenly Father's favourites. They are a sweet-smelling bouquet before the throne of God; God himself takes delight in their fragrance. These souls have a permanent abode in Your Most Compassionate Heart, O Jesus, and they unceasingly sing out a hymn of love and mercy.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon meek and humble souls, and upon the souls of little children, who are enfolded in the abode which is the Most Compassionate Heart

of Jesus. These souls bear the closest resemblance to Your Son. Their fragrance rises from the earth and reaches Your very throne. Father of mercy and all goodness, I beg You by the love You bear these souls and by the delight you take in them: bless the whole world, that all souls together may sing out the praises of Your mercy for endless ages. Amen.

Seventh day: Today bring to me the souls who especially venerate and glorify My Mercy.

Most Merciful Jesus, whose Heart is Love Itself, receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of those who particularly extol and venerate the greatness of Your mercy. These souls are mighty with the very power of God Himself. In the midst of all afflictions and adversities they go forward, confident in Your mercy. These souls are united to You, Jesus, and carry all mankind on their shoulders. These souls will not be judged severely, but Your mercy will embrace them as they depart from this life.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls who glorify and venerate Your greatest attribute, that of Your fathomless mercy, and who are enclosed in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. These souls are a living gospel; their hands are full of deeds of mercy and their spirit, overflowing with joy, sings a canticle of mercy to You, O Most High! I beg You O God: Show them Your mercy according to the hope and trust they have placed in You. Let there be accomplished in them the promise of Jesus, who said to them, "I Myself will defend as My own glory, during their lifetime, and especially at the hour of their death, those souls who will venerate My fathomless mercy."

Eighth day: Today bring to me the souls who are in the prison of Purgatory.

Most Merciful Jesus, You Yourself have said that You desire mercy; so I bring into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls in Purgatory, souls who are very dear to You, and yet must make retribution to Your justice. May the streams of Blood and Water which gushed forth from Your Heart put out the flames of the purifying fire, that in that place, too, the power of Your mercy may be praised.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls suffering in Purgatory, who are enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. I beg You, by the sorrowful Passion of Jesus Your Son, and by all the bitterness with which His Most Sacred Soul was flooded, manifest Your mercy to the souls who are under Your just scrutiny. Look on them in no other way than through the wounds of Jesus, Your dearly beloved Son; for we firmly believe that there is no limit to Your goodness and compassion. Amen.

Ninth day: Today bring to me souls who have become lukewarm.

Most Compassionate Jesus, You are Compassion Itself. I bring lukewarm souls into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart. In this fire of Your pure love let these tepid

souls, who, like corpses, filled You with such deep loathing, be once again set aflame. O Most Compassionate Jesus, exercise the omnipotence of Your mercy and draw them into the very ardor of Your love; and bestow upon them the gift of holy love, for nothing is beyond Your power.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon lukewarm souls who are nonetheless enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Father of Mercy, I beg You by the bitter Passion of Your Son and by his three-hour agony on the Cross: let them, too, glorify the abyss of Your mercy. Amen.

The Novena to the Divine Mercy and information on Sister Faustina Kowalska and Divine Mercy Devotion is taken from information and flyers distributed by the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, Stockbridge, MA 01263.