

## Divine Mercy Sunday 2019

My beloved brothers and sisters, when Jesus revealed the great mystery of Mercy to St. Faustina Kowalska, just before the outbreak of WWII, He asked her to advocate for the celebration of the Novena of Divine Mercy, which we have been doing since Good Friday, and its conclusion on the Sunday after Easter, which we now call: Divine Mercy Sunday. We need to ask the question: Why this particular Sunday of the Year? I think it is because Jesus wants us to understand the infinite ocean of God's Divine Mercy poured out upon us through the window of His open wounds!

St. Thomas, the doubter, was not present when Jesus first appeared to His disciples on the first day of the week on Easter Sunday. His response was: "I will not believe unless I place my finger into the wounds of His hands and my hand in His side!" In today's Gospel, Jesus, once again, stands in the midst of His disciples and beckons Thomas to do exactly that. Thomas' response in merely seeing the Risen Lord is: "My Lord and my God!" This goes far beyond the response of the others. Thomas sees, and knows that he is standing before the God of Heaven and Earth. It was the glorious wounds of Jesus that made the Divinity of God fully visible to him. It is the Glorious wounds of Jesus, Risen from the dead that makes the reality of God and of Jesus fully visible to us as well. What does Thomas see?

Thomas sees that only God can be so forgiving to men who have all run away from Jesus, God in the flesh, the God who became a man who created mankind, and died for mankind. His Incarnation and death and Resurrection are the full revelation of the infinite mercy of God for a creature who has sinned against Him again and again; and yet, God does not reject us, but redeems us by becoming a man and embracing the suffering and death due to us all by our sins! The wounds of Jesus, glorified in His Resurrection now become the windows into the very reality of who God is and reveals Himself to us in Jesus!

The Glorious wounds of Jesus boldly proclaim that God is not an angry God of revenge, but the God of infinite Divine Mercy and love, who has come for reconciliation. He who was never obliged to forgive us, has come to forgive us

and to offer us His peace and reconciliation—not condemnation! His first words to us are: “Shaloom!”, it means the peace that only God can give!

Secondly, Jesus then extends this infinite act of mercy, not just to His apostles, but extends it throughout time, to all sinners, through His Apostles and their successors! By the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, Jesus makes His priests the windows of His Divine Mercy and love for all men and women throughout time! When a priest or bishop absolves a penitent from their sins, that Divine mercy and Infinite Love and Reconciliation comes from Jesus!

Finally, Jesus empowers His priests to continue this Mercy in the world through the Sacraments, most especially in Baptism, Eucharist and Absolution; but, this also requires our free consent to receive His mercy. His last words on the cross were: “I thirst!”, Jesus did not thirst for sour wine. He thirsted for our freely given acceptance of the infinite act of mercy He pours out upon us on the cross, in our response to Him. He still does! He told St. Faustina, that the greatest consolation we can offer His Infinite Mercy and love, is to rush into the Ocean of Love waiting to pour out upon us. Today, these little ones are going to be immersed into that infinite ocean of love- but so are all of us, in every mass we attend, and every time we go to Confession.

Sometimes, people ask me: “Father, why do you go to Confession every week?” Now you know why! I want to be a sea creature that lives, and moves and has its very being immersed into the infinite ocean of this Divine Mercy! I want to console the heart of Jesus by living in His mercy! And, I want to be His mercy for you and for all I encounter in this short life!