

# LOOKING THROUGH STAINED GLASS



## A Column by Fr. Tom



### The Heart of Jesus is Love and Mercy

We have spent Lent and Easter trying to get to the Heart of Lent, the Heart of Easter, and really the Heart of Jesus. It is no coincidence that the next Feast of the Church after Easter, one that ends the Octave of Easter, is Divine Mercy Sunday, which comes from the Heart of Jesus. When we look at the image of Divine Mercy, we notice that the focus of the image is the Heart of Jesus, the fountain of His Mercy and His Love.

During Lent, we spent time on contrition for our sins and working through our Lenten practices and disciplines to rid ourselves of sin. During Holy Week and Easter, we come to realize that Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice for our sins and also conquered sin and death by His Death and Resurrection. However, given our human frailty, we continue to commit sin, so we must continue to look to Jesus for His Mercy.

This is the first reason for our Feast of Divine Mercy on the Second Sunday of Easter, His Mercy for our sins. In addition, as Christians we are concerned for the welfare of others. Therefore, we also implore Jesus' Divine Mercy for the sins of the whole world.

While God's Divine Mercy has been taught since the earliest times, and is evident throughout Scripture, a special devotion to Divine Mercy was promoted through the writings of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, known as her *Diary*. St. Faustina was a Polish nun who lived in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and who received visions and other revelations of Jesus' desire to share God's Divine Mercy with the world. Pope St. John Paul II knew of her revelations and introduced her writings and the devotion to Divine Mercy to the world.

The core of the Divine Mercy devotion includes the Divine Mercy image and the prayer known as the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. The Divine Mercy Image is an image of Jesus who is revealing His Heart, as red and while rays of God's Love and Mercy emanate from it. At the bottom is the caption, "Jesus, I Trust in You."

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy is the prayer that was given to St. Faustina to implore God for His Mercy "on us and on the whole world." It is generally prayed on the beads of the rosary.

One can also pray a novena of Divine Mercy, which includes praying the Chaplet for nine days for various intentions, including the following: all sinners, priests and religious, those who do not believe in God, those who have left the Church, children, and souls in purgatory. While the traditional time for the novena is the nine days leading up to Divine Mercy Sunday, one can certainly pray this novena at any time.

You can find more information about Divine Mercy, St. Faustina, the chaplet and the novena at the following website: [www.thedivinemercy.org](http://www.thedivinemercy.org) You can also visit the St. Paul of the Cross Religious Shop for books and pamphlets on the Chaplet and Novena, for Divine Mercy images, and for the *Diary of St. Faustina*.

Each year, in our parish, we have a special time of prayer on Divine Mercy Sunday. After the 10:45 Mass, we begin 3 hours of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and conclude the time of prayer by praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, followed by Benediction. Please join us this Sunday (April 11) as we pray for God's Divine Mercy "on us and on the whole world." (See page 9 of this bulletin)