

Church of St. Theresa

A Caring Community Reaching Out To One Another in Christ

2855 St. Theresa Avenue, Bronx, New York

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday at 5:00pm,
Sunday at 7:30am, 9:00am(Italian),
10:30am(Family Mass) 12:15pm ,
1:30PM(Spanish) & 5:00pm

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday thru Saturday 8:00am & 9:00am

DEVOTIONS

Miraculous Medal & St. Theresa
Novenas after Monday morning Masses
St. Anthony Novena after Tuesday
morning Masses.

Thursday 12 Noon Mass
& Eucharistic Adoration

Exposition & Benediction of the
Blessed Sacrament First Friday 6:00PM

CONFESSION

Saturdays from 4:00pm to 5:00pm
and by appointment

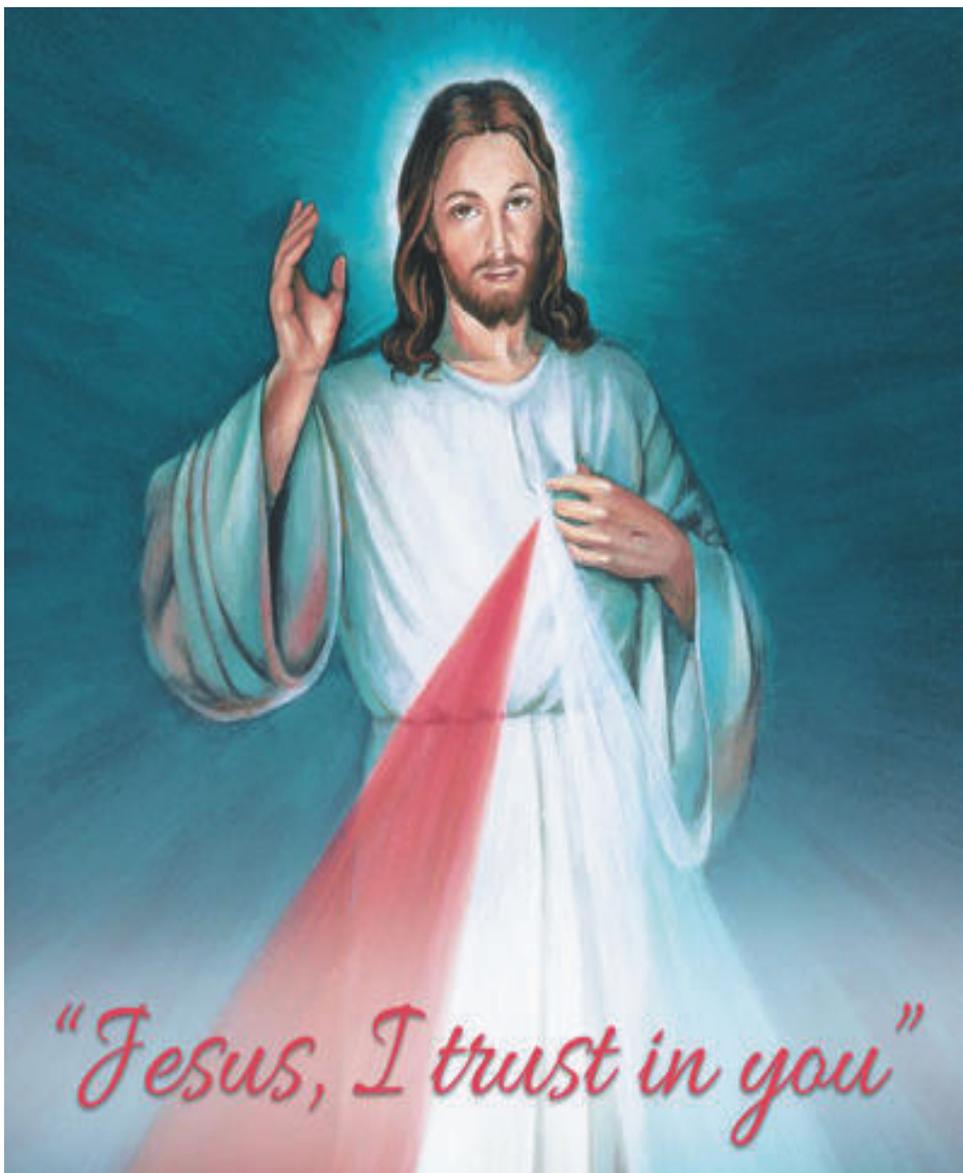
BAPTISMS

Baptisms take place most Sundays
after the 1:30pm Mass.
We ask parents to attend the Baptism
preparation meeting. Register at the
Rectory for the meeting.
The date of the Baptism will be discussed
at the Baptism meeting.

MARRIAGES

Call the Rectory at least six months in
advance of the wedding date to make an
appointment with parish clergy.

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Rev. Edmundo Gomez, Retired,
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E-MAIL: rectorystc@aol.com

SCHOOL: 718-792-3688
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CHURCH OF ST. THERESA, BRONX

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER DERIVAN

The gospel today is about a great saint, a saint who I must admit is special to me, St. Thomas the Apostle. Later on after the Holy Spirit came upon him and the other apostles at Pentecost, St. Thomas would become a great missionary, bringing the gospel of Jesus to other nations and reaching the land of India. Even to this day people in India call themselves “Thomas Christians” because their church and their faith goes back to this holy apostle. But the gospel we hear today tells us about St. Thomas long before he became the missionary and the martyr. It tells us, shall we say, about the absent Thomas, Thomas who was not there with the other apostles on Easter morning. Perhaps Thomas just wanted to be alone, after all that had happened—as he saw Jesus arrested on Holy Thursday night, as he ran away when Jesus was brought to trial, as he was not there on the hill of Calvary when the One he called Master died on the cross. Thomas just wanted to be alone, alone with his sorrow, alone with his grief and even his shame. But Thomas came back. That is the beautiful thing—he came back to his brother apostles. What brought him back? Was it simply he had nowhere else to go? Or was the risen Jesus already drawing him to Himself, calling Thomas back to his love? For whatever reason Thomas came back. He was skeptical when the other apostles told him they had seen the Risen Jesus. Thomas did not want to be fooled. He wanted to be sure that they were telling the truth. In effect, he was saying, “I do not want to learn about Jesus risen from you. I want to learn about the Risen Jesus from Him. I want to see His wounds. I want to see Him.” And a week later, on this Sunday, the Lord answered Thomas. We have this beautiful scene of the Risen Jesus entering the upper room again on the Sunday after Easter. And what does Jesus say to Thomas? Not “I am disappointed in you, Thomas,” not “Why did you not believe that I am risen?” The Risen Jesus simply said to Thomas, “See my wounds. See my hands and feet and side when I was crucified. See my wounds. See me.”

In a sense, dear friends, St. Thomas did us a great favor. What He wanted to see was Jesus alive, but He wanted to make sure it was the same Jesus whom he followed and loved. And what proved to him that Jesus was alive and risen were the wounds, the scars that were on the body of the Risen Lord. The great Bishop Fulton Sheen wrote about this gospel story. He calls it the story of the Scars of Christ. The wounds of Jesus were the result on our sins—He was crucified not simply by nails but by the sins of the world, including each one of us. But Easter turns the wounds into scars—the marks still there, Christ still wounded, but Christ alive and risen. Bishop Sheen reminds us: “The only one who can bring peace to us is the Christ with scars, who Himself passed through death to give us hope and life. What figures large in the Easter story are the scars of Christ. This is the Christ of Easter morn.” And Bishop Sheen tells us that we should reflect deeply on the scars of Jesus for they teach us a powerful lesson. Let me use the Bishop’s words: “What do the scars of Jesus teach us? They teach us that life—Jesus’ life and our life—is a struggle; that unless there is a cross in our lives, there will never be an empty tomb; unless there is a Good Friday, there will never be an Easter Sunday; unless there is a crown of thorns, there will never be the halo of light; and unless we suffered with Him, we shall not rise with Him. The scars of Christ are pledges of victory - His and ours too.”

What do we see when we look at the scars of Jesus? What message is the Risen Jesus giving to us? The answer is simple: The scars that Jesus showed St. Thomas are the scars of Jesus’ mercy. We could say that Jesus’ mercy flows through the scars He bears, the scars from the wounds He suffered on the Cross. The scars of Jesus remind us that His mercy is a costly mercy. It is not a cheap gift, an easy gift. Quite the opposite: Jesus’ mercy flows from the hands that suffered. Jesus’ mercy comes from the suffering He endured, the death He endured, all in mercy for us.

We call today Divine Mercy Sunday. This Feast day was given to us by Our Lord Himself to St. Faustina Kowalska when he appeared to this humble Polish sister eighty years ago to tell her, “Mankind will never find peace until it comes to the fount of my mercy.” We can truly say that St. Faustina, whom you will read about in today’s bulletin, was the saint of Divine Mercy or, as Jesus told her, “the secretary of my mercy.” But we could also say that there is another saint of Divine Mercy who lived long before St. Faustina. That saint knew Jesus’ mercy first-hand. And of course that is St. Thomas. If St. Thomas were to speak to us today, he might say, “I came to that upper room, not knowing what I would find. What I found was the mercy of my Risen Lord flowing from the scars of His wounds.”

Dear friends, Jesus’ mercy changed St. Thomas. Jesus’ mercy can change any person who comes to Him with an open heart. May we too be the messengers, the secretaries of Jesus’ mercy, helping others to come home to Him, helping others to find the merciful Jesus, helping them to say to Him the words St. Thomas said on that Sunday of Mercy, “Jesus, my Lord. Jesus, my God.”

Father Thomas B. Derivan



PRAYER OF ST. FAUSTINA FOR THE DIVINE MERCY

“Help me, Lord, that my eyes may be merciful; may I see what is in my neighbors’ souls and come to their help.

Help me that my ears may be merciful, listening to my neighbor’s worries and cares.

Help me that my tongue may be merciful, speaking of your comfort and forgiveness for all.

Help me that my hands may be merciful, filled with good deeds.

Help me, O Lord, that my heart may be merciful so that I may feel the sufferings of my neighbor.

May your Mercy rest upon me always. Amen

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER—DIVINE MERCY

A MESSAGE FOR THIS SUNDAY FROM POPE FRANCIS

Today's Gospel passage recounts that on the day of Easter, Jesus appears to his disciples in the Upper Room, in the evening, bearing three gifts: *peace, joy, the apostolic mission*.

The first words he says are: "Peace be with you." The Risen One brings authentic peace, because through his sacrifice on the Cross he achieved reconciliation between God and humanity, and he conquered sin and death. This is peace. His disciples needed this peace first and foremost, because, after the Master was arrested and condemned to death, they fell into dismay and fear. Jesus appears among them alive and, in showing the wounds—Jesus wanted to preserve his wounds—in his glorious body, gives peace as the fruit of his victory. But that evening the Apostle Thomas was not present. Apprised of this extraordinary event, incredulous at the testimony of the other Apostles, he demands to personally verify the truth of what they assert. Eight days later, just as today, the apparition is repeated: Jesus confronts Thomas' incredulity, inviting him to touch His wounds. They are the sources of peace, because they are the sign of the immense love of Jesus who defeated the forces hostile to man: sin, death. He invites him to touch the wounds. It is a lesson for us, as if Jesus were to tell all of us: "If you are not at peace, touch my wounds."

Touch Jesus' wounds, which are the many problems, difficulties, persecutions, illnesses of so many suffering people. Are you at peace? Go. Go to visit someone who is the symbol of Jesus' wounds. Touch Jesus' wounds. Mercy flows from those wounds. That is why today is the Sunday of Mercy. A saint used to say that Jesus' crucified body is like a bundle of mercy, which reaches each of us through his wounds. All of us need mercy, as we know. Let us draw near to Jesus and touch his wounds in our suffering brothers and sisters. Jesus' wounds are a treasure: mercy issues from them. Let us be courageous and touch Jesus' wounds. With these wounds he stands before the Father; he reveals them to the Father, as if to say: "Father, this is the price; these wounds are what I paid for my brothers and sisters." With his wounds Jesus intercedes before the Father. He gives us mercy if we draw near, and he intercedes for us. Do not forget Jesus' wounds.

The second gift that the Risen Jesus brings to his disciples is *joy*. The evangelist recounts that "the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." And there is also a verse, in Luke's version, that says that they disbelieved for joy. We too, perhaps when something incredible, beautiful has happened, might say: "I cannot believe it; this is not true!" This is how the disciples were. They disbelieved for joy. This is the joy that Jesus brings us. If you are sad, if you are not at peace, look to Jesus Crucified; look to the Risen Jesus; look at his wounds and receive that joy.

And then, in addition to peace and joy, Jesus also brings the gift of *mission* to the disciples. He says to them: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." Jesus' Resurrection is the beginning of a new dynamism of love, capable of transforming the world with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

This second Sunday of Easter, we are invited to approach Christ with faith, opening our heart to peace, joy and the mission. But let us not forget Jesus' wounds because from them come peace, joy and the strength for the mission. Regina Coeli Message, April 28, 2019

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Father Peter John Cameron, O.P.

The Second Sunday of Easter is observed in the Church as Sunday of Divine Mercy. We owe the existence of this celebration on the octave day of Easter to the graced intervention of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, a young Polish religious born in 1905 who belonged to the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. In Saint Faustina's famous Diary appear fourteen revelations of the Lord regarding the desired feast. At the canonization of Saint Faustina on April 30, 2000, Pope (now Saint) John Paul II declared: "This Second Sunday of Easter...from now on throughout the Church will be called 'Divine Mercy Sunday.'"

Wounds and Mercy

The Gospel proclaimed on the Sunday after Easter is always the story of doubting Thomas (Jn 20:19 - 31). What convinces us about the boundless mercy of God are the wounds of his Risen Son.

Saint Faustina recounts an encounter with Jesus four days after professing her perpetual vows:

After a moment, I saw the Lord, all covered with wounds; and he said to me, "Look at whom you have espoused." I understood the meaning of these words and answered the Lord, "Jesus, I love you more when I see you wounded and crushed with suffering like this than if I saw you in majesty." Jesus asked, "Why?" I replied, "Great majesty terrifies me, little nothing that I am, and your wounds draw me to your heart and tell me of your great love for me."

One of our most difficult challenges is finding the courage to face those terrifying, lifelong wounds we scurry to keep buried inside us. They cripple us, discourage us, wrecking us with fear, with hopelessness that turns joy into a joke. But for once at Easter, we see ourselves as we are in the mirror of the wound-bearing Savior. And when mercy incarnate beckons, "Bring your hand and put it into my side," those miraculous wounds free us from every sadness and despair. The wounds of Jesus woo us to the Great Love our heart was made for. Mercy, like every grace, always enters through a wound. (Reprinted from the Magnificat)



Your Loving Care

Lord Jesus, when you walked with us on earth you spread your healing power. We place in your loving care all who are affected by Coronavirus. Keep us strong in faith, hope and love. Bring relief to our sick, console our bereaved, protect those who care for us. We lift our prayer to you Lord, and trust in your infinite mercy, as we wait for the daybreak. Amen

EASTER STATIONS OF LIGHT

During Lent, we observed the Stations of the Cross, remembering Our Lord carrying the Cross and suffering and dying on the Cross for us. A new devotion in the Church is the Easter Stations of Light, recalling the great events that began on Easter Sunday up to the day of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. In our bulletin each week during these Easter days we present these Stations of Light for your prayerful reflection. These reflections were written by Father Francis Martin.



■Third Station■ Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

Jesus said to her, “Mary!” she turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni,” which means Teacher. (Jn 20:16)

Meditation

They spoke, and her heart ached with longing. Then he spoke her name and she knew him. Our job in prayer is to wait and long for him in trust. When he has secretly worked in our hearts and has made us ready, he takes the initiative: Somehow, he calls our name and we know even as we are known. “The watchmen came upon me,/as they made their rounds of the city;/ Have you seen him whom my heart loves?/ I had hardly left them/when I found him whom my heart loves./ I took hold of him and would not let him go (Sg 3:3-4). Let this be the story of our lives: Seek the Lord and he will make himself known, then let our heart hold him fast.

Prayer

Jesus, give to us as you gave to Mary the gift of an affection for you and a love that willingly embraces your will.



■Fourth Station■ Jesus Walks with the Disciples to Emmaus

Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us? (Lk 24:32)

Meditation

An ancient rabbi would *string pearls*, that is, pierce a sacred text and link it to another until he returned to the source of revelation, the fire of Sinai. Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures (Lk 24:27). He fed them with the bread of the Word, he brought them to the place of revelation and they discovered that the fire of revelation is Jesus himself! Jesus will do the same for us if we will take the time to go to the Scriptures. Perhaps we will be discouraged at first, but then the risen Christ will open our minds to understand.

Prayer

Lord, be patient with us; we are dull and slow to believe. We need your instruction so that our hearts will burn with love as we come to know you.



APRIL 25TH ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST

Mark lived at the time of Jesus. Although he was not among the original twelve apostles, he was a relative of St. Barnabas, and apostle. Mark is well-known because he wrote one of the four Gospels. That is why he is called an evangelist, a Gospel writer. Mark's Gospel is short, but it gives many little details that are not in the other Gospels.

While still young, Mark went with the two great saints, Paul and Barnabas, on a missionary journey to bring the teachings of Jesus to new lands. Before the journey was over, though, Mark seems to have had a disagreement with St. Paul. Mark suddenly returned to Jerusalem. Paul and Mark later worked out their differences. In fact, Paul wrote from prison in Rome that Mark came to console and help him.

Mark also became a beloved disciple of St. Peter, the first pope. St. Peter called St. Mark “my Son.” some think that Peter meant to say that he had baptized Mark. Mark was consecrated a bishop and sent to Alexandria, Egypt. There he converted many people. He worked hard to spread love for Jesus and his Church. It is believed that he went through long and painful sufferings before he died.

St. Mark's relics were brought to Venice, Italy. He is the patron saint of that famous city. People go to the beautiful basilica of St. Mark to honor him and to pray to him.

We can remember St. Mark when we have a disagreement with someone. We can think of him also when we can't get along with people even if we want to. At those difficult moments, we can ask St. Mark to show us his secret for patching up differences.

“MISSING MASS”

Usually when we say we have “missed Mass,” that means we have not gone to Mass on Sunday. Maybe we tell ourselves that we have other things to do or some other excuse. It is certainly not good to miss Mass. We are, in a sense, not only disobeying the 3rd Commandment, but we are letting God down.

But how things have changed in these recent weeks! We have all missed Mass—not just in the sense that we have not gone, but in the sense that we have really, missed coming to church on Saturday evening or Sunday, joining with our fellow parishioners in celebrating the greatest prayer of all—the Mass. We have missed, most of all, receiving Our Lord in Holy Communion, remembering that He gives us His strength through that holy sacrament to live our Christian lives. We have missed all of that, not because it is our fault—quite the opposite. We could even say that we have been deprived of Mass because of this epidemic. It is something none of us have ever experienced before—not being able to join in public Mass. Yes, many have followed the Mass on the internet, whether that is Mass here in our church or Mass from the Cathedral with Cardinal Dolan or Mass with the Holy Father in Rome. But it is not the same. The internet is good, but it is not the real thing. We want to be at Mass. Whoever we are, we miss the Mass.

Even though it is hard to understand, perhaps we can learn a lesson from this kind of “missing Mass.” And the lesson is very simple—never to take the Mass for granted. It is so true that we never realize how much we love someone or something until that person or thing is gone. And that has certainly been true during these past weeks. We have missed something and someone—the “something” is joining in Mass and the “someone” is Jesus in Holy Communion. Never have we had something like this before. The only thing that is somewhat similar is when Catholics in persecuted countries have not been allowed to join in the Mass. A few weeks ago I mentioned the Albanian Cardinal Simoni who was prevented by the Communists from celebrating Mass for over twenty years. I think also of another priest, an American Jesuit priest, Father Walter Cizek who for fifteen years was jailed in Russia during the Communist rule in that country, likewise prevented from saying Mass and receiving Holy Communion. You can imagine the sadness of these priests in not being able to say Mass. And you can imagine the joy these priests had when they finally were able to celebrate Mass and receive Holy Communion after suffering so much.

God always brings forth good out of troubled times. Maybe the good that the Lord is bringing us now is a greater appreciation of Mass and Holy Communion. If that happens as a result of this terrible crisis, then perhaps that is something good that will touch us for the rest of our lives. Perhaps that will help all Catholics, including those who have “fallen away” from Sunday Mass, to have a greater love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to realize that, in His words, “This is my Body which will be given up for you.” Maybe families will understand more and more that the Lord invites every family to receive Him for He is the Bread of Life and He will help every family to grow stronger in love for Him and for one another.

You are waiting to come to Jesus at Mass. And Jesus is waiting there for you. Meanwhile open your hearts in a “spiritual Communion,” inviting Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to come more and more to you. Meanwhile say from your heart the beautiful prayer:

“O Sacrament most holy, O Sacrament divine,
All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine. Amen.”

Father Thomas B. Derivan

OUR CELEBRATION OF THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE “NEW” CHURCH



As you know, we had planned to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the dedication of the “new” St. Theresa church on Sunday, May 17th. This was the date fifty years ago when Cardinal Cooke dedicated the new church building which was built, through the great efforts of Monsignor Mario Ponsiglione and his devoted parishioners, after the tragic fire of February, 1965.

Unfortunately, because of the current coronavirus epidemic, we must postpone this celebration. We will plan a new date when the Archdiocese allows us to do so. We thank those who have already purchased tickets to the dinner scheduled for that day and we will inform them directly about the new date.

THE CARDINAL’S APPEAL 2020



The 2020 Cardinal’s Appeal is now underway in our parish and throughout the Archdiocese. The Appeal, as you know, is the major fund-raising effort of the Archdiocese to support the pastoral, educational and social programs of the Church of New York. Your help in the Appeal will certainly be thankfully received by Cardinal Dolan as he continues to serve all of us in our Archdiocese.

We have just had Holy Week, our special time of recalling the sacrifice of Our Lord to take away our sins. Let your Appeal offering be your sacrifice which you unite with the Cross of Our Lord. Make your offering not only a financial gift, but a spiritual gift to the Lord who died for us. Your Appeal offering may be mailed to us or put in the mail slot of the Rectory door or you can send it directly to the Appeal Office. You may pick up additional Appeal envelopes in the vestibule of the church.

Please pray for the success of the Appeal, in our parish. With your generous help we shall again reach our goal in the Appeal this year.

MASS INTENTIONS

During this time when public Mass is not able to be celebrated, the priests are offering private Mass for those who have arranged for announced Masses for loved ones. We are trying to do this, as far as possible, on the actual date that was arranged. In some cases, these Masses have been moved to a later date. This information is available in the rectory.



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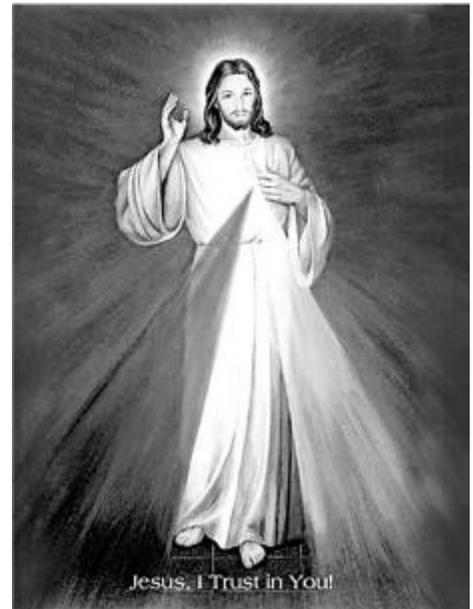
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LITANY IN PRAISE OF THE DIVINE MERCY

Leader:

Our response will be: I trust in You

Divine Mercy, gushing forth from the bosom of the Father
Divine Mercy, greatest attribute of God,
Divine Mercy, incomprehensible mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity,
Divine Mercy, unfathomed by any intellect, human or angelic,
Divine Mercy, from which wells forth all life and happiness,
Divine Mercy, better than the heavens,
Divine Mercy, source of miracles and wonders,
Divine Mercy, encompassing the whole universe,
Divine Mercy, descending to earth in the Person of the Incarnate World,
Divine Mercy, which flowed out from the open wound of the Heart of Jesus,
Divine Mercy, enclosed in the Heart of Jesus for us, and especially for sinners,
Divine Mercy, unfathomed in the institution of the Sacred Host,
Divine Mercy, in the founding of Holy Church,
Divine Mercy, in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism,
Divine Mercy, in our justification through Jesus Christ,
Divine Mercy, accompanying us through Jesus Christ,
Divine Mercy, embracing us especially at the hour of death,
Divine Mercy, endowing us with immortal life,
Divine Mercy, accompanying us every moment of our life,
Divine Mercy, shielding us from the fire of hell,
Divine Mercy, in the conversion of hardened sinners,
Divine Mercy, astonishment of Angels, incomprehensible to Saints,
Divine Mercy, unfathomed in all the mysteries of God,
Divine Mercy, lifting us of every misery,
Divine Mercy, source of our happiness and joy,
Divine Mercy, in calling us forth from nothingness to existence,
Divine Mercy, embracing all the works of His hands,
Divine Mercy, crown of all of God's handiwork,
Divine Mercy, in which we are all immersed,
Divine Mercy, sweet relief for anguished hearts,
Divine Mercy, only hope of despairing souls,
Divine Mercy, repose of hearts, peace amidst fear,
Divine Mercy, delight and ecstasy of holy souls,
Divine Mercy, inspiring hope against all hope. (Diary, 949)



Prayer of Entrustment of the world to Divine Mercy

God, merciful Father, in Your Son, Jesus Christ, You have revealed Your love and poured it out upon us in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. We entrust to You today the destiny of the world and of every man and woman.

Bend down to us sinners, heal our weakness, conquer all evil, and grant that all the peoples of the earth may experience Your mercy. In You, the Triune God, may we ever find the source of hope. Eternal Father, by the Passion and Resurrection of Your Son, have mercy on us and upon the world! Amen.

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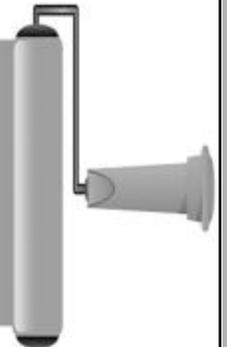
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