

The Ascension Weekly

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The Divine Mercy Novena Starts on Good Friday, March 30th

Guest article contributed by Rosemarie Givens



In the 1930's, there was a young nun in a convent in Poland by the name of Sister Faustina Kowalska. Our Lord chose her as his secretary and apostle of mercy so that she would spread the urgent message of Divine Mercy all over our troubled modern world.

Jesus appeared to her many times and made a specific command to keep a diary of what He would reveal to her. She only had a

third-grade education, but miraculously she faithfully wrote down all of the Lord's wishes and described the encounters between them. You can read these in her book called *Diary, Divine Mercy in My Soul*.

The image that Our Lord asked her to have painted is a portrait of Jesus as Merciful Savior. The red and pale rays represent the blood and water that flowed from His pierced Heart as a fountain of mercy for us. The image is a reminder for us to come to Jesus with trust and to be merciful to others; and it should always carry the signature, "Jesus, I trust in You!" Jesus told Sr. Faustina, "The soul that will venerate this image will not perish."

Our Lord taught Sr. Faustina a special prayer for mercy: "Encourage souls to say the Chaplet... Whoever will recite it will receive great mercy.... Through the Chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will."

On Good Friday, 1937, Jesus dictated the intentions for a novena that He wanted Sr. Faustina to say prior to the Feast of Mercy: "I desire that during these nine days you bring souls to the fountain of my mercy." Jesus also requested that the Sunday after Easter be officially established in the Church as the Feast of Divine Mercy.

Sister Faustina died in 1938 at the age of 33. On Divine Mercy Sunday in 1993 Sister Faustina was solemnly beatified in Rome and on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2000 was canonized a saint by Pope John Paul II. The Holy Father also declared that "the Second Sunday of Easter would be celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday throughout the universal Church." Jesus said, "On that day the very depths of my tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those who approach the fount of My mercy." This year, the Feast of Divine Mercy falls on Sunday, April 8th.

As our Lord promised: "The soul that will go to Confession (several days before or after Mercy Sunday) and receive Holy Communion (on Mercy Sunday) shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment."

A Plenary Indulgence will be granted to those who also complete the novena and include an Our Father and a Hail Mary for the intentions of the Holy Father.

The Novena begins on Good Friday and continues for nine days up until Divine Mercy Sunday, April 8.

Pamphlets are available in the back vestibule. You can pray the novena in the chapel or at home.

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