

~From the Administrator~

Dear Parish Family,

April 4, 2010

ALLELUIA! HE IS RISEN AS HE SAID! ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD! ALLELUIA!

I want to extend my most profound THANK YOU to all who were responsible for helping during our Holy Week services. The decorations that changed every day, the servers who adapted to these unique once-a-year liturgies, as well as all who participated on those days of prayer and fasting. God bless you! WELL DONE!

Please welcome the newest members of our congregation: Tiffany Davis and Michael Klein who were Baptized, Confirmed, and made their First Holy Communion at the Easter Vigil; and Jamie Lee Cotter who was received into the Church, Confirmed, and made her First Holy Communion on the Easter Vigil. Welcome to our Parish Family as well as welcome to the Catholic Church.

The week following Easter Sunday is traditionally known as the Octave of Easter. An Octave is an eight day feast surrounding an important day in the Church calendar. Prior to 1955, there were at least 15 octaves in the Church Calendar. After 1969, there are only two remaining Octaves which are those of Christmas and Easter.

The Sunday after Easter is known by many names:

It is sometimes called St. Thomas Sunday because the Gospel reading always relates the story of "Doubting Thomas," in which Thomas the Apostle comes to believe in the Resurrection of Jesus only after being told by the resurrected Christ to place his finger in the nail marks and his hand in His side. In the Gospel accounts, this event takes place on the eighth day after the Resurrection, hence their significance for this Sunday (John 20:19-29).

More recently it is known as Divine Mercy Sunday, which is the culmination of the novena to the Divine Mercy of Jesus, a devotion given to St. Faustina (Mary Faustina Kowalska) and is based upon an entry in her diary stating that anyone who participates in the Mass and receives the sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist on this day is assured by Jesus of full remission of their sins. The devotion was actively promoted by the late Pope John Paul II, who officially set its commemoration on this Sunday in 2000.

Prior to 1970 this day was called Low Sunday. It was sometimes said that the name derives from its being the last day of the Easter Octave; but it is possible that "low" is a corruption of the Latin word *Laudes*, the first word of the Sequence of the day: "*Laudes Salvatori voce modulemur supplici*" (Let us sing praises to the Savior with humble voice). *Laudes* means "praises".

Traditionally, the newly-baptized would receive baptismal gowns that would be worn until this day, and the official Latin name is *Dominica in Albis*, "Sunday in White Garments".

The name Quasimodo came from the Latin text of the traditional Entrance Antiphon for this day, which begins "*Quasi modo geniti infantes...*" ("As newborn babies...", from the First Letter of Peter (1 Peter 2:2). Literally, *quasi modo* means "as if just now". The character in the French novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* by Victor Hugo, was found abandoned on the steps of Notre Dame Cathedral on the Sunday after Easter, and so named.

Let us continue to pray for each other during this most Blessed Season of Easter! Happy and blessed Easter! God bless you!

Fr. David

By ancient tradition Christians abstain from food prior to receiving the Eucharist. Until the pontificate of Pope Pius XII the Eucharistic fast was from midnight. Pope Pius XII reduced it to three hours, and after Vatican II, Pope Paul VI reduced it to one hour. The Eucharistic fast is before Holy Communion, not the Mass. It is a fast from food and drink, water is alright, as is medicine. Tradition teaches that to be food it must be (a) edible, (b) taken by mouth, and (c) swallowed. In addition to breakfast, lunch and dinner, candy, breath mints, lozenges and anything that is put into the mouth to be dissolved or chewed meets these conditions once the dissolved contents are swallowed. Chewing gum is not only disrespectful during the Sacred Liturgy and once the juice is swallowed the fast is broken. Tradition also teaches that the fast is strict - one hour, that is, 60 minutes. Given that until recently the fast was from midnight, this seems very little to ask.

How to Celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday

During the Mass of canonization of St. Faustina on April 30, 2000, the year of the Great Jubilee, Pope John Paul II proclaimed: "It is important then that we accept the whole message that comes to us from the word of God on this Second Sunday of Easter, which from now on throughout the Church, will be called Divine Mercy Sunday." The readings on that Sunday are always about mercy, trust and the forgiveness of sins.

By the words "the whole message," the Holy Father was referring to the strict connection between the "Easter Mystery of the Redemption" -- the suffering, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, followed by the sending of the Holy Spirit -- and this Feast of Divine Mercy, on the Octave Day of Easter. This feast adds so much more meaning to the Easter celebrations. It was Jesus, Himself who asked for it to be celebrated on this particular Sunday following Easter.

There has been much confusion as to how this feast is to be celebrated. To know how to celebrate the Feast, one must only look at the two decrees that were issued by the Holy See and the words of Our Lord in the diary of St. Faustina, which the Church has accepted, as reliable and worthy of belief. The first decree which established the Feast states that the normal readings for that Sunday are always to be used. They are already perfect as they are and reflect what the Image of Divine Mercy portrays.

The second decree is for the plenary indulgence for Divine Mercy Sunday that was issued on June 29, 2002. This decree also states what the specific duties of Priests are to be: inform the parishioners, hear confessions, and lead the prayers. The indulgence decree also asks Priests to gently encourage the Faithful to practice works

of charity or mercy as often as they can, following the example of Christ.

The words of Our Lord in the diary are very clear, He said, "I want the image to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter, and I want it to be venerated publicly so that every soul may know about it. By means of the Image I shall be granting many graces to souls; so let every soul have access to it." (Diary 341, 570) The Image should be placed in the church so that everyone can see it, perhaps in the sanctuary area and at all the masses on that day so that everyone may venerate and know about it.

Our Lord also said, "I desire that priests proclaim this great mercy of Mine towards souls of sinners. Tell My priests that hardened sinners will repent on hearing their words when they speak about My unfathomable mercy, about the compassion I have for them in My Heart. To priests who proclaim and extol My mercy, I will give wondrous power; I will anoint their words and touch the hearts of those to whom they will speak." (Diary, 50, 1521) Easter Sunday is the best time to proclaim God's mercy.

Our Lord Jesus said, "The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet.... Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy." (699) The plenary indulgence that was issued for Divine Mercy Sunday does not change the promises of Our Lord. Rather it provides the Church's highest mark of approval and endorsement and gives souls more time to go to Confession.

Our Lord also said, "The first Sunday after Easter is the Feast of Mercy, but

there must also be acts of mercy...I demand from you deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me." (Diary, 742) It is clear that Our Lord wants mercy to be shown to others and this can be done by telling everyone about the special promise of the total forgiveness of sins and punishment that He has graciously given to us.

In the Holy Father's homilies, he often refers to the words of Our Lord that are found in the diary. In his homily on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2001 in Rome he said, "It is the appropriate and incisive answer that God wanted to offer to the questions and expectations of human beings in our time, marked by terrible tragedies. Divine Mercy! This is the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ and offers to humanity." He often quotes Our Lord by starting with "Jesus said to St. Faustina." He spoke of the Image of The Divine Mercy saying "The two rays, according to what Jesus Himself told her, denote blood and water. The blood recalls the sacrifice of Golgotha and the mystery of the Eucharist: the water makes us think of Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

So as we can see, the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday is quite simple, in fact, outside of having an image of The Divine Mercy in the church to venerate, there really isn't anything else to do on that day itself. It is Jesus Himself that does all the work on that day. Most of the energy should be focused on getting people to come to Church on Divine Mercy Sunday. Jesus will do the rest. All that we need to do is to tell everyone about the plenary indulgence and urge them to go to Confession. We cannot forget that Easter Sunday is the best time for us to talk about mercy, because the churches are so full of people at this time.