

Divine Mercy

By Father John Catoir JCD 4/8/18

The message of Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us, all of us. And He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins so that we can call upon Him with trust and receive His forgiveness.

What else do you know about Divine Mercy? Read on, for my take on this mystery. I discovered something I never thought about before; namely, that all the saints we pray to and admire were once mediocre sinners, every one of them.

On the Sunday right after Easter, the Church reminds us of the sins of the Apostles. We celebrated Divine Mercy Sunday, because God forgave those closest to Him, the Apostles, who ran away in fear for their lives after the crucifixion. He did so much to prepare them, and yet they turned out to be cowards when He needed them most.

The Gospel centered on doubting Thomas, who refused to believe that Jesus was risen, even after the others testified that they had seen Him. “Until I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were...I will not believe!” -John 20:25. These are the words of a defiant man, still too frightened to trust his friends.

The reason this Sunday is called Divine Mercy Sunday is because it points to the fact that the apostles, who later became saints and martyrs, were once spiritual pipsqueaks, and unrepentant hypocrites. Their excuses are understandable, but their performance under fire was unworthy of them.

I’ll bet there were times in your life when you thought of yourself as far from perfect, to say the least. Divine Mercy Sunday sends the message that all the saints and martyrs who ever lived were once mediocre, flawed human beings.

Only by the mercy of God were they restored to the state of grace and enabled to fulfill their destiny in life. It is a message of hope. The supernatural virtue of hope is defined as “expectation with certainty.” You can rely on God’s mercy and forgiveness.



A deeper understanding of the meaning of forgiveness can help you to fully appreciate this mystery. Forgiveness reconciles your mind and heart with God, with neighbor, and most of all with self.

“The forgiven penitent is reconciled with himself in his inmost being, where he regains his own true identity. He is reconciled with his brethren, whom he has in some way wounded, and he is reconciled with the Church, and with all creation” (Pope John Paul II).

The Lord stands ready to forgive everyone, including you. You in turn must be ready to forgive others and yourself. *“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”*

I leave you with this prayer written by Cardinal John Henry Newman:

“God created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have a mission. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. Therefore, I will trust Him. If I am sick, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He’s about.”