

Direct from the Internet:

What is Divine Mercy ?

A Brief History of the Message and Devotion to Divine Mercy

The Message of the Divine Mercy that Sr. Faustina received from the Lord was not only directed toward her personal growth in faith but also toward the good of the people. With the command of our Lord to paint an image according to the pattern that Sr. Faustina had seen, came also a request to have this image venerated, first in the Sisters' chapel, and then throughout the world. The same is true with the revelations of the Chaplet. The Lord requested that this Chaplet be said not only by Sr. Faustina, but by others: "Encourage souls to say the Chaplet that I have given you."

The same is true of the revelation of the Feast of Divine Mercy. "The Feast of Mercy emerged from my very depths of tenderness. It is my desire that it solemnly be celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Humankind will not have peace until it turns to the fount of My Mercy."

These requests of the Lord given to Sr. Faustina between 1931 and 1938 can be considered the beginning of the Divine Mercy Message and Devotion in the new forms. Through the efforts of Sr. Faustina's spiritual directors, Fr. Michael Sopocko, and Fr. Joseph Andrasz, SJ, and others — including the Marians of the Immaculate Conception — this message began to spread throughout the world.

However, it is important to remember that this message of The Divine Mercy, revealed to St. Faustina and to our present generation is not new. It is a powerful reminder of who God is and has been from the very beginning. This truth that God is in His very nature Love and Mercy Itself, is given to us by our Judeo-Christian faith and God's self-revelation. The veil that has hidden the mystery of God from eternity was lifted by God Himself. In His goodness and love God chose to reveal Himself to us, His creatures, and to make known His eternal plan of salvation. This He had done partly through the Old Testament Patriarchs, Moses and the Prophets, and fully through His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. In the person of Jesus Christ, conceived through power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, the unseen God was made visible.

Jesus reveals God as Merciful Father

The Old Testament speaks frequently and with great tenderness about God's mercy. Yet, it was Jesus, who through His words and actions, revealed to us in an extraordinary way, God as a loving Father, rich in mercy and abounding in great kindness and love. In Jesus' merciful love and care for the poor, the oppressed, the sick and the sinful, and especially in His freely choosing to take upon Himself the punishment for our sins (a truly horrible suffering and death on the Cross), so that all may be freed from destructive consequences and death, He manifested in a superabundant and radical way the greatness of God's love and mercy for humanity. In His person as God-Man, one in being with the Father, Jesus both reveals and is God's Love and Mercy Itself.

The message of God's Love and Mercy is especially made known by the Gospels.

The good news revealed through Jesus Christ is that God's love for each person knows no bounds, and no sin or infidelity, no matter how horrible, will separate us from God and His love when we turn to Him in confidence, and seek his mercy. God's will is our salvation. He has done all on our behalf, but since He made us free, He invites us to choose Him and partake of His divine life. We become partakers of His divine life when we believe in His revealed truth and trust Him, when we love Him and remain true to His word, when we honor Him and seek His Kingdom, when we receive Him in Communion and turn away from sin; when we are mutually caring and forgiving.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

April 11, 2010

St. James the Greater

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Ryan Bubigkeit at the
Request of Don & Dawn Hall

TUESDAY, April 13

8:00AM – Ed Mills
req. by Carol Lombaerde

SATURDAY, April 17

8:00 AM – John Sakach
req. by Carol Lombaerde

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 18

8:00AM – Ronald Joseph Binn
req. by Edna Schoepfer

11:30AM – Timothy Yarosz
req. by his mother

ST. JAMES THE GREATER

\$3,692.00 – Easter Collection – April 4, 2010
\$1,120.00 – Resurrection
\$ 305.00 – Holy Land
\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need
\$4,190.00 – Easter Collection – April 12, 2009

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

\$6,068.00 – Easter Collection – April 4, 2010
\$ 264.00 – Holy Land
\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need
\$6,878.00 – Easter Collection – April 12, 2009

St. Thomas the Apostle

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of George Leppert at the
Request of his wife, Barbara

MONDAY, April 12

9:00AM – Madeline Templeton
req. by Mary Cunico

TUESDAY, April 13

9:00AM – Intentions of Don & Dawn Hall
Many thanks for all your help
req. by John & Marie Connors

WEDNESDAY, April 14

9:00AM – Helen Winters
req. by Josephine

THURSDAY, April 15

No Mass

FRIDAY, April 16

9:00AM – Intentions of Lyse vonDoehren
Birthday Celebration
req. by her husband, Wayne

SATURDAY, VIGIL, April 17

5:30 PM – Bernie Reich
req. by his wife, Grace

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 18

9:30AM – Madeline Templeton
req. by Gerry Mahon

TO CHRIST THE DIVINE HEALER WE PRAY FOR:

Bree Andrews, Vickie Bennett, Joseph Bruno, Eric Cerra,
Gail Collis, Jerry Cooper, Jason DeLorenzo, Geri Fawyer,
Ronnie Ferriere, Marie Furtado, Nancy Green, Eric Harper,
Horace Harper, Catherine Higgins, Sharon Hubbell, Peter
Jaycay, Sharon Johnson, Chuck Lombaerde, Florence
Majewski, Karen Morgan, Richard Nowicki, Joseph Peraino,
Flo Puccio, Ruth Rogers, Evelyn Schweer, Deena Slain, Bill
Sousa, Catherine Vecharello, Lisa Vergona, Tarra Wagner
and Gabriel Wyzga

PILGRIM VIRGIN OF FATIMA STATUE

This beautifully adorned statue is a visible reminder of the
love God has shown in the Blessed Mother. Placing such a
beautiful image in your home turns hearts to prayer and brings
grace to those who open their hearts to any image of God's
love. If you would like to have the statue of Our Lady of
Fatima in your home, please contact Diana, Legion of Mary at
973-948-7601. *Pray the Family Rosary*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

The Sacrament of Confirmation

It is with great joy that we congratulate the following teens of our parishes who were sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit through the Sacrament of Confirmation yesterday:

Joseph Barbagallo, Michael Carano, Michael Hough, Marissa Kabbash, Breann Lodema, Michael Lukasik, Louis Phillips and Tyler Vealey from St. James and Heather Adamsky, Cassidy Dube, Joseph Mannion, Tyler McConnell, Hayley Mooney, Patrick Murphy, Michael Orrico and Christopher Sarao from St. Thomas.

We also congratulate their parents, sponsors, catechists and all those who have nurtured their faith over the years. May the Holy Spirit make them true witnesses of Jesus Christ before the world.

Divine Mercy Sunday

Today, we celebrate the unending mercy of Christ as written in the revelations of St. Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), an uneducated Polish nun. The message is nothing new, but is a reminder of what the Church has always taught through Scripture and tradition: that God is merciful and forgiving, and that we, too, must show mercy and forgiveness to others.

In 2000, Pope John Paul II instituted the message of Christ's mercy to the whole Church. On Divine Mercy Sunday, make a family commitment to show mercy and forgiveness to one another. (Taken from Take Out-Family Faith on the Go)

~ "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." ~ Matthew 5:7

Vacation Bible School

We plan to once again offer a Catholic VBS to the children of our parishes who are four year-old preschoolers through the fifth grade the week of June 28th – July 2nd. We expect a good turnout, however, we will make our final decision for this program based on the interest of the children and the parents and teens that we will need to assist us with this endeavor.

This is really a very easy and enjoyable way for you to get involved in your parish by sharing your faith with the children. A meeting will take place at the Religious Education Center on Wednesday, April 21st at 7:00PM for all who are interested in assisting with this program – remember, we can't do this without you!

16th Annual NJ Catholic Youth Rally – "Called to be Witnesses"

On Sunday, May 16th, a Catholic Youth Rally for those in Junior and Senior High School will take place at Great Adventure. The cost for the day will be \$45.00 and includes the Opening Ceremony at 9:30AM, all day rides, all you can eat buffet from Noon until 4:00PM, and Liturgy with Bishop Galante of the Diocese of Camden at 6:00PM. As we have done in the past, it may be possible for us to travel by bus with the youth of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Swartswood for a small additional fee. If you are interested, please let Mrs. Flexer know in person or by calling the Religious Education Office by Sunday, April 25th.

World Youth Day Yard Sale

A yard sale will take place on **Saturday, April 24th** from 9:00AM until 2:00PM in the upper parking lot of St. Thomas the Apostle to benefit the fundraising efforts of World Youth Day 2011. Space will be available to sellers on a first-come, first-serve basis by calling 973-948-7004 and will cost \$20.00. Our youth will also take any donations of "gently-used" household items, etc. (No clothes or furniture please) from parishioners to sell towards the cost of the pilgrimage.

Operation Rice Bowl

This is just a reminder that the rice bowls are due back at the church at this time. Thank you for your help.

Respect Life Ministry

There will be a meeting on **Monday, April 12th** after the 9:00am Mass to discuss the Baby Shower scheduled for May 16th at the St. Thomas Coffee Hour.

St. Thomas the Apostle Tricky Tray

On Friday evening, **May 7th**, we will be hosting our Annual Tricky Tray. If you are interested in assisting our committee in any way, please call Deirdre Burgos at 973-948-6092. All volunteers are welcome. If you plan on donating a tray, please list your name and phone number on the appropriate sheet in the gathering space so we can have an idea of how many trays we will have. Thank you.

St. Thomas Pot Luck Dinner

Our Pot Luck Dinner for April is scheduled for Saturday, **April 17th** after the 5:30pm Mass. Please join us for an evening of fun, enjoyment and camaraderie. A sign up sheet is located in the gathering space. If you plan to attend, please sign up or call the parish office so we know how many to pan for.

Respect Life Reflection

God's love was revealed to us in this way: God sent His only-begotten Son into the world so that we might have life through Him." 1 Jn 4:9. Love always gives life; it never takes it. That's why Christians are pro-life. Prayer – May we be immersed in that love so that we too may always be defenders of life.

BEYOND THE PARISH

New Jersey's 7th Annual Pro-life Youth Rally will take place on Friday, April 23rd from 8:30AM to 2:30PM at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey.

St. Joseph Regional School is having a Carnival!

Games, Rides, Food & Talent Night! All proceeds benefit St. Joseph Regional School. It will take place at **Skyhawks Baseball Parking Lot** at Ross Corner. The dates are as follows: Wednesday, **May 12th** from 6PM – 10PM, Thursday, **May 13th** from 6PM – 10PM, Friday, **May 14th** from 6PM – 11PM and Saturday, **May 15th** from 2PM – 11PM. To purchase pre-sale tickets at a discount, please contact Deanna Sternefeld at 973-293-3509.

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISHES

STC -- St. Thomas Ch. or Fr. Lewis Center

SJC -- St. James Ch. or Church Hall

REC -- Fr. Gacquin Religious Ed. Center

Sunday, April 11, 2010

Divine Mercy Sunday

9:30 a.m. STC & REC Gr. 6-7-8 Mass & Class

9:30 a.m. STC Coffee Hour after Mass

1:30 p.m. STC Divine Mercy Adoration & Chaplet Prayers

4:00 p.m. REC Confirmation Prep. Gr. 9

Monday, April 12

10:00 a.m. STC Right to Life Mtg.

Tuesday, April 13

10:00 a.m. STC Reflection on Readings

4:00 p.m. REC Grades 1 & 2

Wednesday, April 14

4:00 p.m. REC Grades 3, 4 & 5

Thursday, April 15

9:30 a.m. STC Moms & Tots Group

Friday, April 16

All day: STC Adoration of Blessed Sacrament

3:00 p.m. STC Chaplet of Divine Mercy

4:00 p.m. STC Evening Prayer & Benediction

Saturday, April 17

9:30 a.m. REC Legion of Mary Mtg.

10:00 a.m. STC Morning of Reflection:

"Why Catholics Go to Mass"

Sunday, April 18, 2010

9:30 a.m. STC C.L.O.W.

11:30 a.m. SJC Coffee Hour after Mass

Future Events

Sat. May 1 STC & SJC First Holy Communion

Sat. Ap. 24 STC 10 a.m.-3 p.m. K of C Car Wash

Fri. May 7 STC 6 p.m. Tricky Tray

Congratulations to young people of our parishes who received the Sacrament of Confirmation yesterday from Bishop Serratelli. We pray that the Holy Spirit will guide them in all their big decisions ahead. May He also keep them faithful and strong in the Catholic way of life.

Our Thanks to all who had a part in making the services of Holy Week and Easter so meaningful: our choir and musicians, those who served at the Liturgies, all who decorated and those who helped clean the church in preparation for the services. Thanks also to the Knights for sponsoring the Seder Supper, and our Confirmation youth for presenting the Living Stations.

Today is Divine Mercy Sunday. On this first Sunday after our Lord's Resurrection, we emphasize the mercy of God that Jesus brought into the world. It is this mercy that gives us confidence to approach God for help and strength.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will take place at St. Thomas Church, 1:30 p.m.—3 p.m. Confessions will be available. At 3 pm the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be prayed. Please join us.

This Saturday, April 17th, our parish will be hosting a **Morning of Reflection** on the topic: **"Why Catholics Go To Mass."** *Why Catholic? International* is sponsoring this event, to be conducted by director Theresa Leonetti, M Div. With the above theme, we will consider what it is that we celebrate at Mass. Also, we will understand better how Christ is present in the Eucharist, and how to live the Mass in daily life. Please join us from 10 a.m. to 12 Noon. Refreshments will be served. All are welcome.

The Knights of Columbus are in the **Car Wash** business for one day as they offer this service to our parishes. The date is: **Saturday, April 24th** in the St. Thomas parking lot. Hours are **10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Benefit will be for our World Youth Day pilgrims.

A Word from Pope Benedict: "My brothers and sisters, Easter is the true salvation of humanity! If Christ – the Lamb of God – had not poured out his blood for us, we would be without hope. ... But Easter has reversed that trend: Christ's resurrection is a new creation. It is an event that has profoundly changed the course of history, tipping the scales once and for all on the side of good, of life, of pardon. We are free, we are saved! Hence from deep within our hearts we cry out: 'Let us sing to the Lord: glorious his triumph!'" *Easter Message 'Urbi et Orbi' (To the City and to the World)*