

## Homily of Divine Mercy Sunday (Second Sunday of Easter), Year A, 2026

Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; 1 John 5:1-6; John 20:19-31

In the year 2000, St. Pope John Paul II canonized St. Faustina and named the second Sunday of Easter Divine Mercy Sunday.

St. Faustina was a Polish nun gifted with mystical visions, messages, and revelations from the Risen Jesus. This is a rare instance when a private revelation is recognized and raised to the level that it becomes a Sunday celebration by the Universal Church. The feast situates well following Easter Sunday to show that the events of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus for the redemption of humanity were out of God's gratuitous mercy. God's mercy is gratuitous because humanity did nothing to merit it.

St. Faustina writes in her diary, "Proclaim that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. All God's works are crowned with mercy" (No. 301). God is so merciful and ever forgiving that he does not judge us according to our sins (Psalm 130:3). Today's Psalm says, "His mercy endures forever." Jesus is the highest expression of God's merciful love for us. St. John writes, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16).

St. Peter writes in the second reading, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ..."

Since God shows us so much mercy, we are challenged to show mercy to one another. Jesus encourages us, "Be merciful, just as also your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). Jesus tells us the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. In the parable, the king asks the unforgiving servant, "Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?" (Matthew 18:33). St. James writes, "Mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13).

One of St. Faustina's visions is the image of the Divine Mercy of Jesus showing two rays, one reddish (symbolizing blood) and the other whitish (symbolizing water), with the words "**Jesus, I trust in you**" at the bottom. The image takes us back to the passion, crucifixion, and death of Jesus. When the soldier pierced the side of Jesus, "immediately blood and water flowed out" (John 19:34). St. Faustina's vision is a confirmation of John 1 John 5:6, "This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood."

What is the meaning of the Blood? St. Paul writes, "In him we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of transgressions" (Ephesians 1:7). What is the meaning of the Water? St. Paul writes, "Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word" (Ephesians 5:25-26). The "bath of water" is spiritual renewal (regeneration) by the power of the word and the Holy Spirit. This is why 1 John 5:7-8 writes, "So there are three that testify, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three are of one accord."

Thomas was privileged to be the only one Jesus asked to put his finger into his side where the lance pierced. When he put his finger into the source of divine mercy, he was healed of his doubt. He exclaimed the greatest profession of faith, "My Lord and my God." We are more privileged than Thomas because we go beyond touching him to consuming him. May Jesus whom we consume bear lasting fruits in us, especially the fruit of mercy.

The first reading informs us how the early Christians practiced their faith. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking of bread in their homes." That is why we celebrate the Eucharist every day.

Another special identity of the early Christians was the work of mercy. "All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need." Let us check on one another, support one another, and encourage one another. St. Gregory of Nazianzen writes, "Not even night should interrupt you in your duty of mercy. Do not say: '*Come back and I will give you something tomorrow.*' ... The Lord of all asks for mercy, not sacrifice, and mercy is greater than myriads of fattened lambs."

We see, among the early Christians, the fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10, "Over the House of David and citizens of Jerusalem I will pour out a spirit of kindness and prayer." May this prophecy, also, come to fulfilment among us, Christians of today.

The disciples locked themselves up for fear of the Jews, but Jesus passed through the locked doors, stood in their midst, blessed them with peace, and breathed on them the Holy Spirit. May Jesus unlock every locked door. May he drive out all fears. May he breathe the Holy Spirit upon us and grant us peace: peace in our lives, families, communities, countries, and the world. "Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world."

Amen.

**St. Faustina's Prayer for Healing (Diary 1089):** "*Jesus may Your pure and healthy blood circulate in my ailing organism, and may Your pure and healthy body transform my weak body, and may a healthy and vigorous life throb within me, if it is truly Your holy will.*"

**Anima Christi Prayer:** "*... Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear me. ...*" Amen.

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