

The Feast of Divine Mercy: April 7, 2024

“Jesus, I trust in You!”

Today the Church celebrates a rather new and wonderful feast – yet, a feast that is as old as the New Testament itself, the Feast of Divine Mercy. The Feast is a new one, in that it was formally established by Pope St. John Paul II in the year 2000. That same year, at the same ceremony, the sainted Pontiff canonised the woman to whom Our Lord revealed His wishes for this Feast, the woman now known as St. Faustina Kowalska.

The Feast is really ancient, however, as old as the Gospel itself, since it is nothing less than the proclamation and reiteration of the words of St. John in his first letter: *God is Love*. In fact, we can go a step farther, clearing up a great confusion in the world, stating that this Feast, this devotion to Divine Mercy, really finds its stem in the Old Testament: the common notion of an Old Testament God of anger is shown to be false when we read, in the Book of Exodus, that the Lord tells Moses that He is *a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. (Exodus 34. 6)*

St. Faustina left us a record of her conversations and prayers with the Lord and Our Lady in her diary, *Divine Mercy in My Soul*. In that Diary, in three different places Our Lord tells the world through the Saint His desire to grant complete forgiveness of sin on this feast day, as well as all of the temporal punishment attached. Listen to the words addressed to us by the Lord through St. Faustina:

I want to grant a complete pardon to the souls that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on the Feast of My Mercy. (1109)

Whoever approaches the Fountain of Life on this day will be granted complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. (300)

The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion will obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. (699)

The Church, by Her power of the Keys, has even extended this Mercy, too. If one receives Holy Communion today, but, for some reason is not able to go to Confession today, one can still receive all of the graces of this Feast as long as that person does go to confession either before or after the Feast within 20 days (according to the Apostolic Penitentiary, that is, the Vatican Office which deals with, among other things, the dispensing and rulings of pardons, indulgences, etc.).

Among recent developments in the Church, I have found this Saint and the whole Mystery of Divine Mercy to be one of the most remarkable graces of our times. I leave you with the words of Jesus, Himself:

The Feast of Mercy emerged from My very depths of tenderness... It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. ***Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy.*** (699, emphasis, my own)

Blessed Eastertide! Blessed Feast of Divine Mercy! God love you, Fr. Scott+