

**Divine Mercy Sunday
(Second Sunday of Easter)**



Dear Parishioners and Friends,

I regret that we are unable to gather as a parish family to celebrate the Eucharist. However, I want you to know that I continue to celebrate a private Mass throughout this time and include the Mass intentions listed in the parish bulletin at these Masses. The church will remain closed, but I encourage everyone to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and view other good quality spiritual programming on Catholic TV, found on your local cable Channel 268, or on EWTN, Channel 56. You can also view daily Mass on-line at <http://www.catholictv.org/masses/catholictv-mass>.

This Sunday is the Feast of Divine Mercy or better known as “Divine Mercy Sunday” which was instituted by Pope Saint John Paul II on April 30, 2000. The origin of this day, however, began in 1931, when a young Polish nun, Saint Faustina, saw a vision of Jesus with Rays of Mercy streaming from His heart. Christ told her to have an image painted to represent this vision and to sign it, “Jesus, I trust in You.” In a subsequent series of revelations, Christ taught her that His mercy is unlimited and available to even the greatest sinners. At her convent in Krakow, He revealed to Saint Faustina special ways for people to respond to His mercy. The words of Our Lord to Saint Faustina are recorded in the *Diary of Saint Faustina Kowalska, Divine Mercy in My Soul*.

In this Sunday’s Gospel Jesus appears to his apostles after the Resurrection and says to them, “Peace be with you.” We hear, as well, in the Gospel Our Lord say, “Do not be afraid.” One reason we may be afraid and not be at peace in our own times is because we find it difficult to trust Him. So, some questions for us to prayerfully consider today might be: Do we really understand Christ's mercy? What does it really mean to say, “Jesus, I trust in You?” Could it be that we don't want to let Him get too close because we know that it will probably do something to us; something that will require a change in our lives? Are we sometimes afraid to be vulnerable with God? Listening to Our Lord's words in scripture, He tells us in no uncertain terms: *Do Not be Afraid, Be at Peace.*

This feast of Divine Mercy reminds us of many parables taught by Jesus emphasizing God's mercy. We remember the three beautiful parables of Luke's Gospel Chapter 15. God is like a shepherd who leaves 99 sheep to go in search of the one lost one. God is like a woman who searches the entire house to find the coin she lost. God is like a father who comes out of the house to welcome back his prodigal son and who comes out of the house a second time to entice the elder son to come in and join in the celebration.

In the image of Divine Mercy, Jesus comes to us pointing to his heart. The message of Divine Mercy is that the mercy of God is greater than anything we can do and He wants more than anything, to forgive our sins. We are shown in the Gospel how the Holy Spirit breathes upon the disciples and how they are given the authority to forgive sins. When in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we hear those beautiful words of absolution, we should leave with the unshakable knowledge, that our sins have been removed from our soul. Jesus said that it was because of His love and mercy for us that he gave us the Sacrament of Confession and Saint Faustina records Jesus saying: *"Daughter, when you go to confession, to this fountain of my mercy, the blood and water which came forth from My heart always flows down upon your soul and ennoble it. For every time you go to confession, immerse yourself entirely in my mercy, with great trust, so that I may pour out the bounty of my grace upon your soul. When you approach the confessional, know this, that I myself am waiting for you there. I am only hidden by the priest, but I myself act in your soul. Here the misery of the soul meets God solely with the vessel of trust. If their trust is great, there is no limit to my generosity."*

Although it is not possible this year to receive the sacraments at this time, because of the coronavirus, we remember that we can obtain the graces available on this day by receiving Jesus in our hearts with great longing and love in an Act of Spiritual Communion. God will give us all the graces we need because of our great trust in Him. God does not abandon anyone. He is especially close to the broken-hearted and those bound by disease, sin, despair, loneliness or disability.

Going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation is not the only way to prepare ourselves for this feast. We are also to be merciful, to perform acts of mercy. Jesus said to Saint Faustina, *"My daughter, if I demand through you that people revere My mercy, you should be the first to distinguish yourself by this confidence in My mercy. I demand from you deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it. I am giving you three ways of exercising mercy toward your neighbor: the first – by deed, the second – by word, the third – by prayer. In these three degrees is contained the fullness of mercy and it is an unquestionable proof of love for Me. Yes the first Sunday after Easter is the Feast of Mercy, but there must also be acts of mercy, and I demand the worship of My mercy through the solemn celebration of the Feast and through the veneration of the image which is painted. By means of this image I shall grant great graces to souls. It is to be a reminder of the demands of my mercy because even the strongest faith is of no avail without works."*

Let us remember on this Divine Mercy Sunday that Jesus is reaching out to each one of us. The question for us to ask ourselves is: Will we draw near or will we back away remaining at arm's length? May we all choose to accept Christ's mercy. May we all more and more show that mercy to others. May we believe deep in our hearts and souls that God loves us, that He truly loves us... so very much! May we say with confidence, "Jesus, I trust in You!"

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Fr. Bill Rodrigues

SAINT ROCCO—PRAY FOR US

Saint Rocco (AKA "Saint Roch") was born in Montpellier, France in the 14th century to a noble family. Legend has it that his mother had been barren until she prayed to the Virgin Mary. Saint Rocco's birth was made all the more miraculous by a birthmark resembling a red cross on his chest.

His parents died when he was twenty years old, at which point he gave away all his worldly possessions and set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. At the time, Italy was suffering from a plague epidemic. Saint Rocco cared selflessly for the sick, effecting many miraculous cures by making the sign of the cross or laying his hands on them.

In Piacenza, however, he finally fell ill. He was driven out of town and into the forest, where he made a hut for himself out of leaves and branches. Miraculously, a spring arose near his hut to provide him with water and a local dog began bringing him bread to eat. The dog would also lick his wounds clean, eventually healing him.

He returned to Montpellier looking like a wild man with unkempt hair and a long beard. Unrecognized by the townspeople, he was thrown in prison as a spy. He remained there for five years before



dying, unwilling to reveal his identity out of humility. The townspeople recognized the birthmark across his chest, and he was venerated as a folk saint almost immediately after his death. But he was not officially canonized until the 17th century. He is traditionally depicted in religious art with a wound on his thigh, a dog (often seen bringing him a loaf of bread), pilgrim's hat and staff. Saint Rocco is venerated in the Roman Catholic Church as the protector against the plague and all contagious diseases. Let us pray for St. Rocco's intercession for protection from the Coronavirus.

Saint Rocco Prayer for Healing and Protection

During your travels on earth,
God worked His miraculous healing
through your intercession.

Many were cured of the plague
from your prayers and the sign of the cross.

We implore you Saint Rocco
to intercede before the throne of God.
Send forth a blessing of protection from
Contagious diseases and the Coronavirus.

Bless us Heavenly Father with your healing grace.
We ask this in the name of your Divine Son, Jesus.

Amen

Stained glass window photographed inside Saint Francis Xavier
Catholic Church, Newark, NJ

COLLECTION RESULTS—THANK YOU!

Palm Sunday	\$3,362.00
Good Friday Holy Lands	\$ 297.00
Easter Sunday	\$6,659.00
Retired Diocesan Priests	\$ 456.00

Your generosity to St. Joan of Arc is greatly appreciated.

GABRIEL SYSTEM—PLEASE REGISTER

We are so grateful to all who have donated through the envelope system or through Gabriel, our new on-line giving program. **Whether you choose to continue with the envelopes or donate on-line, we encourage everyone to register with Gabriel so we can build an up-to-date parish census including emails and mobile phone numbers to better handle situations like this going forward.**

Directions: On the left-hand side of the website home page scroll down beneath the photo of the church until you see the Online Giving Icon. Click the icon which gives you two options: one to register and one to donate. Once we establish a member portal — down the road — registered donors will have the ability to manage and track donations.

Please keep these deceased loved ones in your prayers.

THIS WEEK

Saturday	5:00	Dawn Monkiewicz
Sunday	8:00	Fr. Bob Kemmery, Parish Family
	10:00	Joyce Bancroft
Monday	8:00	Victims of the Corona Virus
Tuesday	8:00	Marie Smith
Wed	8:00	Victims of the Corona Virus
Fri	8:00	Phyllis M. Moran

NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday	5:00	Alma & John Csaposs
Sunday	8:00	Fr. Pierre Milcent
		Fr. Bob Kemmery, Parish Family
	10:00	The Smith Family

PRAY FOR OUR BELOVED DECEASED

Denis Ambrose, George Hart

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL—HARVEST SUNDAY

The third weekend of the month is traditionally Harvest Sunday. Through your generosity, our conference continues to support those in need with necessities — food, medicine, rent, and utilities — at this difficult time.

THE GIFT OF PEACE

Christine Kingery shared her grandmother's story on the NPR series, "*This I Believe*". Christine's Russian-born grandmother was captured by the Nazis — tortured and taken to a work camp when she was 17. Her story is one of escape; re-capture; and a second internment at a German concentration camp. Christine's resourceful grandmother escaped again — this time with the young man who would later become Christine's grandfather. Together they found their way to America.

At a very young age Christine remembers seething with rage when she heard her grandmother's stories. She recalls blurting out: "*I hate the Germans, don't you?*"

But what she remembers even more vividly was her grandmother's response: "*The Germans are my friends. When I escaped and had nowhere to go, they gave me food, shelter, clothes. Even in the camps, the Germans were my friends. They were the kindest people I know.*"

This shocking answer was Christine's first introduction to the meaning of compassion. A few years later, the high-school-aged Christine, visited Nagasaki. In the museum's exhibits, every photograph — every victim's face — seemed to reflect her grandmother's story. Overwhelmed,



Christine had to go outside to *Peace Park* on the bomb-site grounds. There, beautiful colored origami cranes — thousands of them — were draped over statues and trees. Christine sat on a bench and cried and cried. An old Japanese woman saw the teenager and came to sit beside her. Placing a worn hand over the younger one, the woman said in broken English: "*Peace starts here. Peace starts with you and me. It starts today.*"

The Risen Christ leaves his disciples the "*gift of peace*" — a peace that is so much more than the absence of conflict. The Peace of the Risen Jesus transforms, re-creates, renews. It is a peace centered in wisdom, integrity, and gratitude — a peace that lived in the soul of Christine's grandmother, and in the old Japanese woman of Nagasaki. The Peace of the Living Christ is born of humility and values the hopes and dreams and needs of another over its own. This is the peace that welcomes back the lost; heals the brokenhearted; and respects the dignity of each and every man, woman, and child. May we embrace this transforming gift of Christ's Peace during this Easter season and in each and every season of our lives.

PLEASE HELP US KEEP THESE LISTS UP TO DATE

PRAY FOR THE ILL OF THE PARISH

Martin Coughlin, Loretta Stephens, Harry Marcoux, John Keane, Tris Windle, David Cousins, Lynne Scalia, Alex Podeszwa, Thomas Stone, Nick Bartick, Pam Hedlund, Len Hedlund, Greg Morongell, Nora Gould, Edan Pearl, Anne Caruso, John M. Pollard, Peter Cruckshank, Bill Hannon, Ivy Davis, Maddy Hayes, Clare Stevenson, Joseph Nosari, Vincent Lencvewski, Jeffrey Wolfgang, Joan Ouellette, Bev Sarazin, Tyler Benscoter, Agnes Wolfgang, Fr. Paul Smith, Marilyn Drewes, Ray Castriotta, Julianne Sullivan, Robert Grudzina, Marge LaGrassa, Jim Lewis, Joyce Loechner, Frank Salomone, Chad Larivee, Dick Wentworth, Nuvia Downs, Karen Mary McNulty, Olivia Hart, Alex Haas, Patrick Devine, Gerry Csaposs, Peggy Carson, Addie Priess, Frank McCarthy, Andree Yager, Loretta Reiter, Paul Kascsak, Patty Camarra, James Manley, Betty Babcock, Thomas Murphy, Chris Frazier, Melissa K., Baby Lillian Thoman, Jessica O., Fran McDonagh, Donna Hibbert, Margaret Royce, Beth Nixon, Anne O'Brien, Ben McMahan, Gerry Moynihan, Martha Moynihan, Richard Paskiewicz, Mary Rodrigues, Emily Sparks, Stephen Moreau, Paula Madeiro, Paul Brandon, Rita Folger, Gerri DiCristina, Kathleen Kilmer, Marguerite Forren, Mary Pickard, Deepthi Moola, Steve Novick, Ernie T., Eleanor Symecko, Susanne Albert, Joseph Wignot, Hector Pelletier, Bob Cunnane

PRAY FOR OUR ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

Brandy Nelson, Timothy Horigan, Scott Doucette, Michael Wilson, David Lucas, Sean Lucas, Peter Civita Shayne, Peter Cabral, Gregory DeLuca, Joshua Schmitt, Joseph Long, Brad Howard, Thomas Scudder, Jeffrey Stebbins, Phillip McDonough, David Wilcox, John Amick, David McDonald, Lt. Edward J. Maloney, Andrew Kelley, William James Miller, David Orloski, Stephen Tammaro, Michael L. Hamilton, Thomas Crawford, Aaron Charette, Nicholas McGahey, Edward Prufer, Brandon Stubbs, Christian P. Goodman, Trevor Lafontaine, Connor Lafontaine, Colin Bracken, Michael Bracken