

EUCCHARISTIC AND MARIAN CENTER SPIRI-MARIA

# SUNDAY DAYS OF PRAYER

APRIL 11, 2021

## MARIAN HOUR

1. Rosary – 2. Consecration to Marie-Paule – 3. Conference

## Divine Mercy Sunday

Jesus said to Sister Faustina: *“My daughter, tell the whole world about my inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of my tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the Fount of my Mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to me, even though its sins be as scarlet.... 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.”* (Diary, no. 699)

Are not these promises from Jesus very appealing? Yes, appealing! For, if the devil tempts us in thousands of ways in order to cause us to stumble and fall, and thus keep us far from God and especially from the sacrament of forgiveness which re-establishes us or strengthens us in His divine grace, Jesus too, in the excessiveness of His love for us, wants to tempt us positively so as to attract us to the goods of Heaven. In this regard, Jesus declared one day to Maria Valtorta:

*“Do not say to Me: ‘Satan tempts us’ as an excuse for descending towards the low path. God also tempts us with His love, which is very strong, with His words, which are the most holy, with His promises, which are the most alluring. Why then should you allow yourselves to be tempted by only one of the two, by the most undeserving one to be listened to? Are God’s words, promises, love not sufficient to counteract Satan’s poison?”* (Maria Valtorta, *The Poem of the Man-God*, vol. 2, p. 169)

In fact, who can remain indifferent before so much love, mercy and kindness on the part of Jesus? The death sentence, the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the carrying of the cross, the crucifixion and death on a cross, Jesus deliberately accepted all of this for each one of us, for our salvation.

In this regard, Marie-Paule wrote: *“If it happens that I weep when the cross becomes too heavy, I likewise weep when meditating on the Passion, on the merciful goodness of my dearly Beloved. I am tasting a bit of Heaven and my soul wings its way towards Love.”* (Life of Love II, p. 83)

The feast of Easter shows us the great victory of Love over hatred, the victory of good over evil, the triumph of God over Satan and it is towards this triumph that Jesus strives to attract us. By instituting the feast of divine mercy on the Sunday after Easter, it is good to think that Jesus desires that this *“bit of*

*Heaven”* we experienced during the Holy Days not stop there. On the contrary, by opening the very depths of His tender mercy to us today, He wants to give us His grace beyond all hope, so that our souls may *“wing their way to Love”*.

What wounds Jesus’ Heart is not so much man’s sin as his being closed to grace which could so easily lift him up again. Jesus said to Josefa Menendez: *“Whatever the falls may be... I know the wretchedness of souls. What I desire is that they not be deaf to my appeals and that they not refuse my arms when I hold them out to them to help them get up again.”* (*Un Appel à l’Amour*, p. 130)

Genuine humility and trust, there you have two facets of love whereby the severity of divine Justice is transformed into an ocean of mercy in favor of the soul that, while striving to please God, stumbles along the way. *“When a soul ardently desires to be faithful to me,”* Jesus said to Josefa, *“I support its weakness, and its very falls are an even stronger appeal to my kindness and mercy. All I ask is that, forgetting itself, it humbles itself and makes an effort, not for its own self-satisfaction, but for my glory.”* (*Id.*, p. 131)

With regard to trust, Jesus said to Saint Faustina: *“I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in my mercy.”* (Diary, no. 687) *“Whoever places his trust in my mercy will be filled with my divine peace at the hour of death.”* (*Id.*, no. 1520) What a consoling promise!

Do we realize that when we go to confession, we render effective the Redemption accomplished by Jesus? It is as though an impressive mass of water being held back by a dike were suddenly being released so as to flow again and regenerate everything. Let us not allow the water of grace to be held back by a dike; let us open the floodgates of this dike through our trust in divine mercy and our humility of heart when we go to confession.

May the quality of our love be such that the first purpose of our confessions not be so much to “receive” as to “give”. Yes, let us give God the joy and power to be our Savior and, by that very fact, give Him our love, our gratitude and our trust by confiding our wretchedness, our imperfections, our sins to the transforming power of His divine grace. Let us courageously raise our heads again and say with Saint Paul: *“I can do all things in Him who strengthens me.”*

Of course, on this Divine Mercy Sunday, it is normal to want to benefit from the plenary indulgence Jesus so ardently desires to grant us. However, again this year, because of the measures implemented to fight against the pandemic, the usu-

al conditions to receive this indulgence will not all be possible for a large number of faithful. As a consequence, will they not receive it? Let us leave it to God to be the judge of that.

As for us, let us remain at peace and let us love. Yes, love in the manner of God, always keeping in mind this exhortation from our Mother: *“To want to love God is not feeling love; to truly love Him is, rather, to render good for evil. And God has us experience a void within ourselves which He then fills when*

*the charitable action has been completed well. That is what loving is; that is what sanctifying oneself is; that is what giving oneself to Him and belonging to Him is.”* (Mother Paul-Marie, letter of April 22, 1993) If we act in this way, dear brothers and sisters, how can we not hope in the full and complete indulgence of such a good God!

**Father Carl Beaupré**

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## EUCCHARISTIC HOUR

1. Rosary – 2. Vespers – 3. Conference – 4. Invocations – 5. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

# Divine Mercy

Divine mercy is considered to be the purest expression of God’s love, as the manifestation of the unconditional nature of His commitment towards Creation and more particularly towards man.

Mercy is divine intention at work. It is God getting involved, sacrificing himself, giving of himself; it is God who goes to the utmost limit of what is possible in order to convince us of His love and draw us to Him in the desire to welcome us in His bosom one day in spite of our littleness, our frailty and, at times, even in spite of our malice.

God cannot deny what He is, and what He is, is at the same time what He wants, that is, LOVE.

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Mercy is Jesus choosing Judas as His apostle; mercy is Jesus washing the feet of the apostle who would betray Him.

Mercy is Jesus who wants to save even those who do not want to be saved. This does not mean that He can also save them, but that He will have done everything that is possible in order to save them as well.

Mercy is Jesus healing the ear of a soldier who had come to arrest Him. Mercy is instantaneous, it does not hesitate; its love is from all time and immediate.

Mercy is Jesus, when He was also a prisoner, reassuring the tormented conscience of Pontius Pilate by saying to him: *“He who handed me over to you is guilty of the greater sin.”* (Jn 19:11)

Jesus does not mitigate evil, but, being a victim himself, He speaks to the sinner’s heart so that this latter will not get discouraged and know that even if he no longer likes himself, Love always loves him.

Mercy is Jesus building His Church on Peter even if this latter denied Him three times. God knows man’s heart, its instability, but He also knows the good man is capable of doing, and it is in the dawning of this good that God incessantly invests His holy and benevolent Providence.

Mercy is Jesus falling three times under the weight of His heavy cross and who decides to get up again each time, not for himself, for He did not have to prove anything. It was not either out of a fear of being struck by the soldiers which, at this point, would only have had as a result to make Him die more quickly. No, Jesus got up again three times out of love, because He had His eyes fixed on the salvation of our souls.

Mercy is Jesus freely stretching out His hands and His feet on the cross in order to facilitate the task of the executioners. To the hatred being unleashed against Him, Jesus opposed an

even greater love, as He had taught us: *“Whoever strikes you on the left cheek, show him the right cheek as well.”*

Mercy is Jesus who, as He was dying on the cross, detached himself from His pain and said in a rasping voice: *“Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.”*

Mercy is also the risen Jesus who goes to meet the unbelieving Thomas so that this latter may put his hands in His wounds and have faith.

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Two thousand years later, we have been given another revelation of the greatness of mercy, for now, we also know mercy under another name, that of Marie-Paule.

In the second volume of *Life of Love*, she wrote: *“For more than thirty years there has not been a single day without its sufferings – physical, moral or other kinds. If there were signs of improvement it was only so that I might experience more fully the pangs of another illness never diagnosed by the doctors. I have spent my life helping those who suffer. And there is not one member, not one organ of my body which has not known the worst pain. And in such a condition I would go to help those who called upon me, smiling in order not to weep, singing so that I would not cry out from the pain.”* (*Life of Love II*, p. 528)

Four years later, in 1971, four years with just as much if not worse suffering, she wrote: *“April 11 and 12 are days of dreadful darkness. Everything is an intolerable burden, and I must say that, humanly, I would like to drop everything, for I can take no more of this... I seem to be at the bottom of a pit... Everything is dark, terribly dark, and I can do nothing to banish all of this from my mind...”*

*“All the acts that I have performed with so much love throughout my life, now take on an evil hue and seem reprehensible. My whole life appears to me as an exercise in futility. The recitation of my prayers and the breviary, to which I must steel myself, become something stale and insipid. It is all so black, so horribly black!...”*

*“I no longer have faith in anything... Everything has become so burdensome to me... I would like so much to be alone in the depths of a forest in order not to have to talk or smile anymore.”* (*Id. VII*, pp. 391-392)

Mercy is the fact that Marie-Paule did not withdraw. On the contrary, she even accepted in that same year to be at the head of the Army of Mary. She accepted to stay on the cross for another forty years and more, in order to encourage us through her words and her smiles, but more particularly to save us; in order to be present in a tangible way within the people

of God. Suffering, adversity, the hatred of the enemies, all of this was prompting her to flee, to withdraw, but she decided to stay out of love.

This is mercy at its apogee! It is God who through her, in her and with her is telling us: "Understand just how much you are loved!"

Marie-Paule experienced all the sufferings and all the betrayals... but never, not even one single time, did she refuse to suffer or refuse to love. Never. She always resisted evil, as Jesus did in other times. And so, as we say at Mass: "*She experienced the same transformation as He did: a Woman, she joined the Man in the Eucharist.*"

And finally, the Eucharist... this is mercy taking on a material form; it is the crystallized Gift which Jesus and Marie-Paule made of their lives. To be able to receive Communion is an incredible privilege. It is Love coming to us. In this regard, Marie-Paule wrote that it is "*a God giving himself to us in order to divinize us, in spite of our littleness and our sins.*" (*Le Royaume*,

no. 110, March-April 1996, p. 21)

Of course, we cannot mention the Eucharist without speaking of confession. In confession, the Fire of Love left by Marie-Paule and Jesus Christ comes to burn the dross in our soul. Their Fire comes to renew us, reassure us, liberate us and encourage us so that we stay on the road of perfection.

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Soon, when everything will seem hopeless, when humanity will think it is lost and will suffer the just consequence of its laxity of conduct, mercy will triumph once again and the Kingdom we do not deserve but which Marie-Paule merited for us, will come down from Heaven, like a morning dew, and everything – truly everything – will be renewed in the love of the Redeemer Couple.

So let us have confidence! For, "*soon,*" Marie-Paule said, "*the ocean of mercy will pour forth over the world.*" (*Life of Love II*, p. 222)

**Father Leander Van Renterghem**