

Chapter 1 : The Mercy of God in Superabundance! - Divine Mercy Sunday - Catholic Daily Reflections

"Divine Mercy, The Heart of The Gospel" is a compilation of essays on the theology of Divine Mercy. The essays were given at the first scholarly symposium sponsored by the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy, held in January of

It simply mentions one detail: The same thing happened to Thomas. Despite his lack of faith, we should be grateful to Thomas, because he was not content to hear from others that Jesus was alive, or merely to see him in the flesh. A God who is risen but remains distant does not fill our lives; an aloof God does not attract us, however just and holy he may be. How can we see him? Gazing upon those wounds, the disciples understood the depth of his love. They understood that he had forgiven them, even though some had denied him and abandoned him. This is the way. It is to realize that his heart beats for me, for you, for each one of us. Only thus can we go to the heart of the faith and, like the disciples, find peace and joy. I would like to reflect on the adjective that Thomas repeats: It is a possessive adjective. When we think about it, it might seem inappropriate to use it of God. As in a love story, we tell him: At the very beginning of the Ten Commandments, God said: Then, like Thomas, we no longer live as disciples, uncertain, devout but wavering. We too fall in love with the Lord! We must not be afraid of these words: How can we savor this love? How can we touch today with our hand the mercy of Jesus? Again, the Gospel offers a clue, when it stresses that the very evening of Easter. To experience love, we need to begin there: To let ourselves be forgiven. I ask myself, and each one of you: To experience that love, we need to begin there. Do I allow myself to be forgiven? Before God we are tempted to do what the disciples did in the Gospel: They did it out of fear, yet we too can be afraid, ashamed to open our hearts and confess our sins. When we feel ashamed, we should be grateful: Shame is a secret invitation of the soul that needs the Lord to overcome evil. The tragedy is when we are no longer ashamed of anything. Let us not be afraid to experience shame! Let us pass from shame to forgiveness! Do not be afraid to be ashamed! Do not be afraid. Resignation is always a closed door. The disciples experienced it at Easter when they recognized with disappointment how everything appeared to go back to what it had been before. We too might think: Then, in discouragement, we give up on mercy. But the Lord challenges us: Are you a backslider? Every time we are forgiven, we are reassured and encouraged, because each time we experience more love, and more embraced by the Father. And when we fall again, precisely because we are loved, we experience even greater sorrow – a beneficial sorrow that slowly detaches us from sin. This is how life goes: This is the Christian life. After the shame and resignation, there is another closed door. Sometimes it is even ironclad: When I commit a grave sin, if I, in all honesty, do not want to forgive myself, why should God forgive me? This door, however, is only closed on one side, our own; but for God, no door is ever completely closed. There God works his wonders. He never chooses to abandon us; we are the ones who keep him out. But when we make our confession, something unheard-of happens: There the God who is wounded by love comes to meet our wounds. He makes our wretched wounds like his own glorious wounds. There is a transformation: Because he is mercy and works wonders in our wretchedness. Let us today, like Thomas, implore the grace to acknowledge our God:

Chapter 2 : Divine Mercy: The Heart of the Gospel edited by Robert Stackpole

Robert Stackpole, STD, the Research Director of the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy, traces in chapter three the theological and devotional compatibility between the new forms of devotion to The Divine Mercy stemming from Saint Faustina, and the traditional devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The Mercy of God in Superabundance! It is the eighth and final day of the Octave of Easter. On this eighth day of Easter we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. It is a day when the flood-gates of mercy are opened wide and God lavishes us with more than we could ever hope for. Divine Mercy Sunday has been celebrated for years as a private devotion. She died in She came from a simple and poor family of farmers, had only three years of simple education and performed the humblest of tasks in her convent. But she also was a mystic who was privileged to have many private revelations from our Lord which she recorded in her diary of Divine Mercy. She writes of her experience on February 22, In the evening, when I was in my cell, I became aware of the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand was raised in blessing, the other was touching the garment at the breast. From the opening of the garment at the breast there came forth two large rays, one red and the other pale. In silence I gazed intently at the Lord; my soul was overwhelmed with fear, but also with great joy. Jesus, I trust in You. These two rays issued forth from the depths of My most tender Mercy at that time when My agonizing Heart was opened by a lance on the Cross. Fortunate is the one who will dwell in their shelter, for the just hand of God shall not lay hold of him. 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 grace flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity. There is no limit to how much we are loved by our God of perfect mercy. And today, on this the eighth day of Easter, we should especially be aware of the fact that the floodgates of Heaven are opened to us to an unimaginable degree. Turn your eyes toward our merciful Lord and be open to all that He wishes to bestow. Lord of Mercy, help me today to begin to understand what mercy is all about. Help me to first be open to the mercy You wish to bestow upon me. As I receive Your own Divine Mercy, help me also to be an instrument of that mercy for all to see.

Chapter 3 : Pope: Mercy is “the beating heart of the Gospel” | CNS Blog

Home / Events / The Divine Mercy Message is the Heart of the Gospel. The Divine Mercy Message is the Heart of the Gospel September 14, At the heart of the Gospel is an urgent message for our troubled times: the message of God's Divine Mercy.

It is the message of the person of Jesus Christ, who walked this earth years ago. To know and understand the Christian faith one must know Jesus, in his person, words and deeds. A Christian is a follower of Christ. This means believing in Jesus, entrusting your whole life to him, and following him in every area of your life. This picture is taken from a stained glass window in St. The essence of Christianity is a Person: That which is essential is the One Who is essential. To become truly real means to come to know Jesus Christ and to learn from Him what it means to be human. Our world has gotten off-course. It is not hard to see that something has gone terribly wrong “ that we do not live as God originally intended when he created the world as an expression of his love. We also discover that we cannot save ourselves no matter how hard we may try to eradicate poverty or disease or protect ourselves from war. We need a savior. The good news of Christianity is that God has sent his Son Jesus to save us from this condition of alienation from God and his loving plan for our lives. In order to better understand the Christian message, we need to know more about who Jesus is, what he has done for us and how he has called us to follow after him. Christians believe that Jesus was the fulfillment of long awaited prophecies of the Jewish religion. Central to this believe is the claim that Jesus was both God and man, and that he was, and is still today, the Savior of the world. Christians believe that accepting or rejecting Jesus, and his message of love and redemption, can affect our eternal destiny. These are bold claims. What could it mean for our lives if they are? Historical evidence supports the idea that Jesus is in fact a real historical person. It also supports the fact that he claimed to be not only a man, but God as well. It is hard to ignore someone who claims to be God “ the same God who created the universe! This is the type of claim which prompts a response. People today, who claim to be God, are usually labeled as being insane. If in fact Jesus made this claim, logic would suggest only three possibilities: If he was not God, and he knew it, this would make him a liar. If he was not God, but he thought he was, then he was crazy. If Jesus was God as he claimed, then his rightful place is as our Lord. This simple logic compels us to make a decision to either accept or reject the person of Jesus Christ and his gospel message of good news. Once one understands the bold claims made by Jesus, it is difficult to maintain that Jesus was merely a good person or a good prophet; but not what he claimed to be. Jesus claimed to be both God and man. He claimed to be the savior of the world. If we believe that his claims are true, then we would be foolish not to follow him! Everything else is an unfolding of that. Our faith is not a theory but an event, an encounter with the living God who is our Father, who in his Son Jesus Christ has assumed human nature, who unites us in the Holy Spirit and who, in all this remains the one and only God. One of the evidences for the validity of the message of Jesus Christ is that he did something no one has ever done before or since. He rose from the dead! Never before in the history of mankind have there been such signs and wonders as were done by Jesus Christ in a public manner for all to see. The blind, deaf and lame were healed and the dead raised to life! But how did Jesus give this message to his followers and how has it been handed down to us years later? What he did in fact, was to commission his closest followers called Apostles to spread this message to all mankind. He gave them his divine authority and power and established them as the leaders of his church. He gave them a divine promise to be with them and to protect his church. They acted in his name in leading his church and they worked miracles just as he had. In order to fulfill the command of Christ to carefully preserve his message and spread it to everyone, the Apostles established other men in the authority of Christ which had been given to them to lead his church. These were called bishops and are the successors of the Apostles. All Christians belonged to what has now become known as the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church also believes however, that all Christians who follow the teachings of Christ and who have been baptized according to the command of Christ, are part of this same Church in a mystical way even if they do not consider themselves to be Catholic. After a few centuries however, the leaders of this Church decided that some of the early writings of the followers of Christ should

be collected and given special reverence as a sure standard of this deposit of faith. They could only presume to do this because they were the successors of the Apostles and had thus been given the authority to act in the name and authority of Christ. We call this collection of writings the New Testament of the Bible. For a more comprehensive explanation of Christian beliefs in an organized format, refer to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. To read the inspired Word of God which remains the solid norm for all Christians, turn to the Holy Bible.

Chapter 4 : Divine Mercy is at the heart of the Gospel | Umatuna Si Yu'os

These eight essays provide an excellent foundation to the study of the Divine Mercy. They expound into the gospel of St. Luke, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Octave Day of Easter, and Mary's role as the "Mediatrix of Mercy".

In this way you will console Me in the bitter grief into which the loss of souls plunges Me. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon all mankind and especially upon poor sinners, all enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion show us Your mercy, that we may praise the omnipotence of Your mercy for ever and ever. It was they who gave me strength to endure My bitter Passion. Through them as through channels My mercy flows out upon mankind. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the company of chosen ones in Your vineyard -- upon the souls of priests and religious; and endow them with the strength of Your blessing. For the love of the Heart of Your Son in which they are enfolded, impart to them Your power and light, that they may be able to guide others in the way of salvation and with one voice sing praise to Your boundless mercy for ages without end. The wording adapted here is intended to make the prayer suitable for universal use. These souls brought me consolation on the Way of the Cross. They were a drop of consolation in the midst of an ocean of bitterness. We beg this grace of You by that most wondrous love for the heavenly Father with which Your Heart burns so fiercely. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon faithful souls, as upon the inheritance of Your Son. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, grant them Your blessing and surround them with Your constant protection. Thus may they never fail in love or lose the treasure of the holy faith, but rather, with all the hosts of Angels and Saints, may they glorify Your boundless mercy for endless ages. Fourth Day " Today bring to Me those who do not believe in God and those who do not know Me, I was thinking also of them during My bitter Passion, and their future zeal comforted My Heart. Immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of those who do not believe in God and of those who as yet do not know You. Let the rays of Your grace enlighten them that they, too, together with us, may extol Your wonderful mercy; and do not let them escape from the abode which is Your Most Compassionate Heart. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls of those who do not believe in You, and of those who as yet do not know You, but who are enclosed in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Draw them to the light of the Gospel. These souls do not know what great happiness it is to love You. Grant that they, too, may extol the generosity of Your mercy for endless ages. As they return to unity with the Church My wounds heal and in this way they alleviate My Passion. Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of those who have separated themselves from Your Church. Draw them by Your light into the unity of the Church, and do not let them escape from the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart; but bring it about that they, too, come to glorify the generosity of Your mercy. Do not look upon their errors, but upon the love of Your own Son and upon His bitter Passion, which He underwent for their sake, since they, too, are enclosed in His Most Compassionate Heart. Bring it about that they also may glorify Your great mercy for endless ages. Every pope since the Council has reaffirmed that usage. Saint Faustina herself, her heart always in harmony with the mind of the Church, most certainly would have agreed. O my Jesus " I give priority to the voice of the Church over the voice with which You speak to me" The Lord confirmed her action and praised her for it. These souls most closely resemble My Heart. They strengthened Me during My bitter agony. I saw them as earthly Angels, who will keep vigil at My altars. I pour out upon them whole torrents of grace. I favor humble souls with My confidence. They are a sweet-smelling bouquet before the throne of God; God Himself takes delight in their fragrance. These souls have a permanent abode in Your Most Compassionate Heart, O Jesus, and they unceasingly sing out a hymn of love and mercy. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon meek souls, upon humble souls, and upon little children who are enfolded in the abode which is the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. These souls bear the closest resemblance to Your Son. Their fragrance rises from the earth and reaches Your very throne. Father of mercy and of all goodness, I beg You by the love You bear these souls and by the delight You take in them: Bless the whole world, that all souls together may sing out the praises of Your mercy for endless ages. These souls sorrowed most over my Passion and entered most deeply into My

spirit. They are living images of My Compassionate Heart. These souls will shine with a special brightness in the next life. Not one of them will go into the fire of hell. I shall particularly defend each one of them at the hour of death. Most Merciful Jesus, whose Heart is Love Itself, receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls of those who particularly extol and venerate the greatness of Your mercy. These souls are mighty with the very power of God Himself. In the midst of all afflictions and adversities they go forward, confident of Your mercy; and united to You, O Jesus, they carry all mankind on their shoulders. These souls will not be judged severely, but Your mercy will embrace them as they depart from this life. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls who glorify and venerate Your greatest attribute, that of Your fathomless mercy, and who are enclosed in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. These souls are a living Gospel; their hands are full of deeds of mercy, and their hearts, overflowing with joy, sing a canticle of mercy to You, O Most High! I beg You O God: Show them Your mercy according to the hope and trust they have placed in You. Let there be accomplished in them the promise of Jesus, who said to them that during their life, but especially at the hour of death, the souls who will venerate this fathomless mercy of His, He, Himself, will defend as His glory. This explains their close union with the Savior and the extraordinary efficacy that their invisible activity has for others. In the second prayer, directed to the Father from whom comes "every worthwhile gift and every genuine benefit," we recommend the "active" souls, who promote devotion to The Divine Mercy and exercise with it all the other works that lend themselves to the spiritual and material uplifting of their brethren. Eighth Day " Today bring to Me the Souls who are in the prison of Purgatory, and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy. Let the torrents of My Blood cool down their scorching flames. All these souls are greatly loved by Me. They are making retribution to My justice. It is in your power to bring them relief. Draw all the indulgences from the treasury of My Church and offer them on their behalf. Oh, if you only knew the torments they suffer, you would continually offer for them the alms of the spirit and pay off their debt to My justice. May the streams of Blood and Water which gushed forth from Your Heart put out the flames of Purgatory, that there, too, the power of Your mercy may be celebrated. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls suffering in Purgatory, who are enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Manifest Your mercy to the souls who are under Your just scrutiny. Look upon them in no other way but only through the Wounds of Jesus, Your dearly beloved Son; for we firmly believe that there is no limit to Your goodness and compassion. These souls wound My Heart most painfully. My soul suffered the most dreadful loathing in the Garden of Olives because of lukewarm souls. They were the reason I cried out: I bring lukewarm souls into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart. In this fire of Your pure love, let these tepid souls who, like corpses, filled You with such deep loathing, be once again set aflame. O Most Compassionate Jesus, exercise the omnipotence of Your mercy and draw them into the very ardor of Your love, and bestow upon them the gift of holy love, for nothing is beyond Your power. Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon lukewarm souls who are nonetheless enfolded in the Most Compassionate Heart of Jesus. Let them, too, glorify the abyss of Your mercy.

Chapter 5 : THE DIVINE MERCY

By Father Joel de los Reyes Divine Mercy Moments. The message of the Divine Mercy represents the truth and the call of the Gospel. In his encyclical, "Dives in Misericordia" (Rich in Mercy), St. John Paul II proclaimed that the Divine Mercy is a message of God in our time.

Divine Mercy is at the heart of the Gospel. The Church considers it as one of her principal duties at every age of every people, at every land, at every stage of history to proclaim and to introduce into life the truth and the mystery of Divine Mercy revealed in Jesus Christ on the cross. Over and over again our Lord expressed his desire to St. Faustina that the whole world be convinced of His mercy, and He promised to defend throughout their lives those who would proclaim His mercy. In her Diary, St. Do not be discouraged by the difficulties you encounter in proclaiming My mercy. These difficulties that affect you so painfully are evidence that this work is mine. He said to St. You must not shrink from it or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it. The spreading of the honor of the Divine Mercy does not require many words, but always the Christian attitude of faith, of trust in God, and of becoming ever more merciful. In her lifetime, St. Faustina gave the example of just such apostolic work. What God wants of us is to turn to Him with trust. And the first act of trust is to receive His mercy. To trust God is to rely on Him who is mercy itself. Jesus said to St. Indeed Jesus cured illnesses and all human infirmities, forgave faults, and cared for His followers incessantly. His love was and is close to every hardship, be it physical or moral. He loves everybody, but he offers exceptional care to the poor and to sinners. He shows more compassion toward those whom the world overlooks or even despises. This the example of the merciful attitude that he left for us. Jesus Christ taught that man not only receives and experiences the mercy of God, but that he is also called to practice mercy towards others. One positive thought in the morning can change your whole day. Did I hear someone say that success is endless, and failure is never final? Always be humble because humility glorifies God, pride glorifies oneself. Amen on that folks! Pray the Divine Mercy prayer very 3 pm, daily recite the Chaplet of Mercy for peace in the world.

Chapter 6 : The Divine Mercy Novena

Divine Mercy Sunday has been celebrated for years as a private devotion. But in the year , Pope Saint John Paul II, who himself was an extraordinary instrument of God's mercy, put this feast on the Church's official calendar as he raised Sister Faustina to sainthood.

But mercy is at the heart of the Gospel, Father Joseph M. The pastor of St. Bernard Parish at St. Camillus de Lellis Church, he is credited with enhancing this tradition, which organizer Joan Catalfamo said has expanded in content and number of participants since Father Dolan arrived. Catalfamo said the tradition here goes back at least to the mids, when she organized, with Father Richard P. Lewandowski, Divine Mercy celebrations at St. Father Lewandowski, now retired, was then pastor of St. Camillus and chaplain of the Newman Center. Camillus kept holding an annual celebration. Father Dolan came to St. When the parish was merged with St. Bernard Parish in , he became pastor of the newly established parish. Faustina, a Polish nun who received revelations of Jesus between and , reported that Jesus asked that the first Sunday after Easter be the feast of mercy. In Divine Mercy Sunday became a universal Church feast day. In his homily at St. When we love and encounter sin in ourselves, love reveals itself as contrition, he said. When we love and encounter sin outside of ourselves, love reveals itself as mercy. The Divine Mercy revelations to St. Seeing how far the world has drifted away from the Gospel, people can become angry, he noted. But that admonishment must be an act of love, given in a way that the other person can hear it, or we run the risk of being self-righteous. Faustina, a petition basket and a hot meal. The basket is available in the chapel, adjacent to the sanctuary, year-round, for people to put prayers in it. Adorers who go on pilgrimage take the petitions with them to holy sites. So the former tradition of coffee and cake grew, as people donated food, and money, some of which pays for a catering service. Catalfamo said she appreciates the input participants have given, and now people like the celebration the way it is.

Chapter 7 : The Sacred Page: The Readings for Divine Mercy Sunday

The heart of the Gospel. learn more. Play Video. Fr. Michael Gaitley on Divine mercy. You are being. Called. Make Marian Consecration. Spread Divine Mercy.

Pope Francis said in the document that he wants the year, which will begin Dec. The Holy Door at St. In Rome the last two years, the pope has opened the celebration with a penance service in St. Usually, the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican court, handles those cases. Venerating the cross before vespers in St. Screen grab And he urged all Catholics to spend more time practicing what traditionally have been called the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The corporal works are: Feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, visiting the imprisoned, giving drink to the thirsty and burying the dead. The spiritual works are: Converting sinners, instructing the ignorant, advising the doubtful, comforting the sorrowful, bearing wrongs patiently, forgiving injuries and praying for the living and dead. At the same time, we ask for the grace of the conversion of our own hearts so as to move from indifference to compassion. Paul reminds us that we have been saved through the mystery of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He is the reconciler, who is alive in our midst offering the way to reconciliation with God and with each other. The Apostle recalls that, notwithstanding the difficulties and the sufferings of life, the hope of salvation which Christ has sown in our hearts nonetheless continues to grow. The mercy of God is poured out upon us, making us just and giving us peace. Many question in their hearts: Why a Jubilee of Mercy today? This is not the time to be distracted; on the contrary, we need to be vigilant and to reawaken in ourselves the capacity to see what is essential. This is a time for the church to rediscover the meaning of the mission entrusted to her by the Lord on the day of Easter: A Holy Year to experience strongly within ourselves the joy of having been found by Jesus, the Good Shepherd who has come in search of us because we were lost. A year in which to be touched by the Lord Jesus and to be transformed by his mercy, so that we may become witnesses to mercy. Here, then, is the reason for the Jubilee: It is the favorable time to heal wounds, a time not to be weary of meeting all those who are waiting to see and to touch with their hands the signs of the closeness of God, a time to offer everyone the way of forgiveness and reconciliation. May the Mother of God open our eyes, so that we may comprehend the task to which we have been called; and may she obtain for us the grace to experience this Jubilee of Mercy as faithful and fruitful witnesses of Christ.

Chapter 8 : The Sacred Page: Living the Life of Mercy: Readings for Divine Mercy Sunday

Divine Mercy gets to the heart of Sacred Scripture. In fact, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "The Gospel is the revelation in Jesus Christ of God's mercy to sinners" (). Right there: That summarizes it.

Friday, April 06, The Readings for Divine Mercy Sunday Behind the readings for this Sunday lies a Gospel text which is never read, but whose influence is felt and whose concepts and images serves as a link between the texts that are read. That passage is John The blood and water flowing from the side of Christ is the background for the Divine Mercy image seen by St. Ezekiel 47 and other passages from the OT prophets foresaw a river of life which one day would flow from the heart of the New Temple in the age to come. Our Lord identifies himself as the New Temple John 2: Ancient Jewish readers would have recognized the significance of the bloody flow from the side of Christ as Temple imagery. During festival seasons prior to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70, huge amounts of animal blood were generated by the Temple sacrifices. The blood was ducted out of the Temple precincts by a plumbing system which emptied out of the side of the Temple mount, creating a stream of blood that flowed down and joined the Brook Kidron that flowed along the ravine between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives. This bloody brook had to be crossed if one entered Jerusalem near the Pool of Siloam. This phenomenon helped identify the body of Jesus as the New Temple. Furthermore, throughout the Gospel of John, water is employed with reference to Baptism, and blood is only discussed in the Eucharistic discourse of John 6. So the Fathers were right to see in the bloody flow from the side of Christ the River of the Spirit, which comes to us through the sacraments, Baptismal Water and Eucharistic Blood. Now for the readings of this Sunday. The First Reading is Acts 4: The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need. Significantly, this Jubilee was proclaimed on the Day of Atonement. The Jubilee was the socio-economic sign of a spiritual reality. Likewise, the early Church here is expressing socio-economically the forgiveness and equality that has been established among them spiritually through the Cross. That is why the collection plate, which is often the butt of jokes or regarded as an intrusion into worship, is actually an important part of Eucharistic worship. The collection plate or basket, or bag-on-pole, etc provides us the opportunity to share our excess goods with the needy. It is an important symbolic gesture, even if our primary giving may be through internet donations or regular withdrawals from our bank account to various charities. For this reason, I always try to bring some cash to Mass, and encourage my students to do the same, so that we may participate in this important rite by giving visible sign to the communion of goods that expresses a real aspect of the communion of the saints. The mercy we have received from Christ can and should take tangible form in acts of mercy toward the needy. One of the reasons this Psalm occurs so frequently in the lectionary during this liturgical season is that it formed part of a collection of Psalms known as the Hallel Praise Psalms Pss that were sung during the Passover ritual. The Thanksgiving Sacrifice is a theologically very significant Old Testament form of worship. Unlike many other forms of sacrifice, the Todah was not offered to expiate sin or guilt, but to express thanks to God for a particular act of deliverance. In the context of the Passover, the act of deliverance that Psalm expressed thanks for was the Egyptian exodus. Let the house of Israel say, "His mercy endures forever. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting. I was hard pressed and was falling, but the LORD helped me. My strength and my courage is the LORD, and he has been my savior. The joyful shout of victory in the tents of the just: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; let us be glad and rejoice in it. God does not show mercy to us arbitrarily: The Second Reading is a famous passage about the basics of salvation in Christ from the Apostle John: In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not

burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith. Who indeed is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the one that testifies, and the Spirit is truth. Through these sacraments, we are filled with the Spirit who is Truth. Here the Apostle provides an answer: On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you. Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name. First, we see that Jesus appears to the disciples and bestows on them the reality of which the bloody river from his side was only a sign—namely, the river of the Holy Spirit. Significantly, the first thing mentioned about the Holy Spirit given to the disciples is that it will empower them to forgive sin—so we come back to this theme of mercy which is so intimately tied up with the ministry of the Spirit. Next we see the Lord having great mercy on Thomas, the doubter. Significantly, Thomas is invited to thrust his hand into the side of Christ—the very wound from which the mercy-flow of blood and water came forth. The Apostle is leading us to the point that we, too, can make this whole-hearted confession with Thomas. After all, for the most part Our Lord looked normal. No halo followed him around. He did all the things other people did. He performed miracles—but so had other prophets who were not divine. So we should not underestimate the demands on the faith of the first Apostles. Likewise, we should not exaggerate the demands on our faith today. In many ways we are blessed with a long tradition and a great deal of truth and insight that the Church has been given over two thousand years. This intellectual framework is a help to faith, as is the clarity and coherence of teaching readily available to us in, for example, the Catechism. Embrace of Christ and his claims always has required an act of faith, both for Thomas and for us. Christ gave him helps for his faith—but he gives us helps, too.

Chapter 9 : Reflection Entering the Heart of Our Lord - Daily Reflections on Divine Mercy

Celebrations of Divine Mercy Sunday may be varied as the individuals planning them. For example: An afternoon celebration of Holy Eucharist, with an appropriate homily, ending with the praying of the Divine Mercy Chaplet at the Hour of Great Mercy.

In the message of Divine Mercy, Jesus expresses His intimate desire to enter into the temple of our heart, but for Him to be able to enter we first must open the door of our heart to His Divine Love. Jesus gently knocks at our door and awaits our response, reassuring us not to be afraid but rather to trust always in Him. Since the fourth century, Saint Augustine has taught the Christian Faithful that the Living Water pouring eternally forth from the Heart of Jesus is none other than the birth waters of the Church in the Sacrament of Baptism. The cleansing waters of Baptism, alongside the passionately loving water of the Most Holy Eucharist, flow sacramentally from the Heart of Christ to water the souls of the People of God, bringing us to realize the steadfast and saving hope found only in a personal encounter and relationship with our All-Merciful Lord. The newly beatified John Paul II the Great considered his preaching on the love and mercy of our Lord to be central to the mission of his pontificate, as we see in his great encyclical letter on Divine Mercy, *Dives in misericordia* DM. The words of the Blessed Apostle of Divine Mercy echo now for all future generations concerning our celebration of the profound mercy of our Lord: Not only for the Church herself as the community of believers but also in a certain sense for all humanity, this mystery is the source of a life different from the life which can be built by man. May the Risen Lord be with you always! It is a love that converts hearts and gives peace. How much the world needs to understand and accept Divine Mercy! Aprite, anche spalancate le porte a Cristo! Open wide the doors to Christ! Peace be with you! Receive the Holy Spirit! In celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday, the Blessed had passed into eternal life on the vigil of this liturgical feast six short years ago. All that I have is yours, O Virgin Mary. Mary, give me your heart! Our Holy Father, in continued reference to *Redemptor hominis*, shared in his homily that even in suffering, Blessed John Paul remained a rock in the footsteps of Peter. Benedict XVI emphasized that John Paul II indeed is blessed because he believed and has strengthened us to believe, helping us not to fear the Truth, for Truth is the guarantor of our freedom, our genuine liberty. This reality is expressed not as a command in the imperative tense but rather in the indicative, as a point of true and existing fact: Christians rejoice as part and parcel to our faithful belief in Jesus the Risen Lord! *Santo Padre, ci benedica*. Holy Father, bless us! Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life -- the Source of our hope, where we are called to immerse ourselves in the Love and Mercy of His Sacred Heart -- pours forth sacramentally upon us the Holy Spirit to nourish us in sacrament and in prayer. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God forever and ever. He earned his S. That priests, who experience fatigue and loneliness in their pastoral work, may find help and comfort in their intimacy with the Lord and in their friendship with their brother priests.