

Keysis Schedule
4/11/07
Indulgences and Divine Mercy Sunday

Saint of the Day: St. Faustina

What did God reveal to St. Faustina: His Divine Mercy

Feast of Divine Mercy

The Image of Divine Mercy: Jesus instructed Faustina to have this image painted

- *Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus I trust in You. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and throughout the world. (Diary 47)*
- *I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over its enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I myself will defend it as My own glory. (Diary 48)*
- *The two rays denote Blood and Water. the pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls. These two rays issued forth from the very depths of My tender mercy when My agonized heart was opened by a lance on the Cross. These rays shield souls from the wrath of My Father. Happy is the one who dwell in their shelter, for the just hand of God shall not lay hold of him. (Diary 299)*
- *By means of this image I shall grant many 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. (Diary 742)*

- First Sunday following Easter
- Jesus instructed through a message that he wished this to be a celebration of his mercy and the Pope instituted that it should be so.

*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.*** [our emphasis] 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. Everything that exists has come forth from the very depths of My most tender mercy. Every soul in its relation to Me will I contemplate My love and mercy throughout eternity. 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.*

Why do we need God's mercy?? St. Faustina's visions of hell

"I, Sister Faustina Kowalska, by the order of God, have visited the Abysses of Hell so that I might tell souls about it and testify to its existence...the devils were full of hatred for me, but they had to obey me at the command of God, What I have written is but a pale shadow of the things I

saw. But I noticed one thing: That most of the souls there are those who disbelieved that there is a hell." (Diary 741)

"Today, I was led by an angel to the Chasms of Hell. It is a place of great torture; how awesomely large and extensive it is! The kinds of tortures I saw:

The First Torture that constitutes hell is:

The loss of God.

The Second is:

Perpetual remorse of conscience.

The Third is

That one's condition will never change.

The Fourth is:

The fire that will penetrate the soul without destroying it. A terrible suffering since it is a purely spiritual fire, lit by God's anger.

The Fifth Torture is:

Continual darkness and a terrible suffocating smell, and despite the darkness, the devils and the souls of the damned see each other and all the evil, both of others and their own.

The Sixth Torture is:

The constant company of Satan.

The Seventh Torture is:

Horrible despair, hatred of God, vile words, curses and blasphemies.

These are the Tortures suffered by all the damned together, but that is not the end of the sufferings.

Indescribable Sufferings

There are special Tortures destined for particular souls. These are the torments of the senses. Each soul undergoes terrible and indescribable sufferings related to the manner in which it has sinned.

I would have died

There are caverns and pits of torture where one form of agony differs from another. I would have died at the very sight of these tortures if the omnipotence of God had not supported me.

No One Can Say There is No Hell

Let the sinner know that he will be tortured throughout all eternity, in those senses which he made use of to sin. **I am writing this at the command of God, so that no soul may find an excuse by saying there is no hell, or that nobody has ever been there, and so no one can say what it is like...**how terribly souls suffer there!

Consequently, I pray even more fervently for the conversion of sinners. I incessantly plead God's mercy upon them. O My Jesus, I would rather be in agony until the end of the world, amidst the greatest sufferings, than offend you by the least sin." (Diary 741)

The Punishment of Purgatory and Indulgences

- Review Purgatory: A state of final purification after death and before entrance into heaven for those who died in God's friendship, but were only imperfectly purified; a final cleansing of human imperfection before one is able to enter the joy of heaven (CCC 1031: cf 1472)
 - 2 Maccabees 12:43-46
 - Mt 12:32
 - 1 Cor 3:11-15
- purgatory exists because we are fallen creatures and God is merciful

- We suffer the repercussions of our sinfulness both in this life and the next—
Temporal punishment
- Temporal punishment: purification of the unhealthy attachment to creatures, which is a consequence of sin that perdures even after death. We must be purified either during our earthly life through prayer and conversion which comes from fervent charity, or after death in purgatory (CCC1472)
- Temporal punishment is like being grounded for something you did wrong even after you've been forgiven by your parents.

What can lesson the effects (i.e. time grounded) of our temporal punishment?

Indulgences explained

- The remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sin whose guilt has already been forgiven.
- *Baseball analogy: A boy playing ball breaks a window of his home. Contrite and sorrowful he goes to his father, who forgives him. However, despite the forgiveness the window is still broken and must be repaired. Since the boy's personal resources are insufficient to pay for a new window, the father requires him to pay a few dollars from his savings and forego some of his allowance for several weeks, but that he, the father, will pay the rest. This balances justice and mercy (generous love). To ask the boy to do nothing, when it is possible for him to make some reparation, would not be in accordance with the truth, or even the boy's good. Yet, even this temporal debt is beyond the boy's possibilities. Therefore, from his own treasury the father generously makes up what the child cannot provide.*
- God has left us a Church which dispenses his mercy. It can be compared to a bank in which God places the merits of his own sacrifice on the cross (big bucks) with all the merits of the Saints (also big bucks) that they freely give for us to pay our debt (sin) **Rd Mt 5:25-26**
- The boy had to pay at least part of it. What must we do to gain an indulgence?

Partial vs Plenary Indulgence

Plenary indulgence: removes all punishment due to sin.

- Be in a state of grace
- Complete detachment from the affection for a sin
- Sacramental communion and confession (within 20 days)
- Pray for the intentions of the Pope (such as an Our Father and Hail Mary)
- Act of indulgence

Partial indulgence: removes part of the punishment (time off)

Myths about Indulgences

Myth 1: A person can buy his way out of hell with indulgences.

This charge is without foundation. Since indulgences remit only temporal penalties, they cannot remit the eternal penalty of hell. Once a person is in hell, no amount of indulgences will ever change that fact. The only way to avoid hell is by appealing to God's eternal mercy while still alive. After death, one's eternal fate is set (Heb. 9:27).

Myth 2: A person can buy indulgences for sins not yet committed.

The Church has always taught that indulgences do not apply to sins not yet committed. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* notes, "[An indulgence] is not a permission to commit sin, nor a pardon of future sin; neither could be granted by any power."

Myth 3: A person can "buy forgiveness" with indulgences. **An indulgence does not forgive sins...they are already forgiven.**

The definition of indulgences presupposes that forgiveness has already taken place: "An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has *already been forgiven*" (*Indulgentarium Doctrina* 1, emphasis added). Indulgences in no way forgive sins. They deal only with punishments left after sins have been forgiven.

Myth 4: Indulgences were invented as a means for the Church to raise money.

Indulgences developed from **reflection on the sacrament of reconciliation**. They are a way of shortening the penance of sacramental discipline and **were in use centuries before money-related problems appeared**.

Myth 5: An indulgence will shorten your time in purgatory by a fixed number of days. The number of days which used to be attached to indulgences were references to the period of penance one might undergo during life on earth. The Catholic Church does not claim to know anything about how long or short purgatory is in general, much less in a specific person's case.

Myth 6: A person can buy indulgences.

The Council of Trent instituted severe reforms in the practice of granting indulgences, and, because of prior abuses, "in 1567 Pope Pius V canceled all grants of indulgences involving any fees or other financial transactions" (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). This act proved the Church's seriousness about removing abuses from indulgences.

Myth 7: A person used to be able to buy indulgences.

One never could "buy" indulgences. The financial scandal surrounding indulgences, the scandal that gave Martin Luther an excuse for his heterodoxy, involved alms—indulgences in which the giving of alms to some charitable fund or foundation was used as the occasion to grant the indulgence. There was no outright selling of indulgences. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* states: "[I]t is easy to see how abuses crept in. Among the good works which might be encouraged by being made the condition of an indulgence, almsgiving would naturally hold a conspicuous place. . . . It is well to observe that in these purposes there is nothing essentially evil. To give money to God or to the poor is a praiseworthy act, and, when it is done from right motives, it will surely not go unrewarded."

A plenary indulgence for Divine Mercy Sunday

The plenary indulgence is granted (under the usual conditions of a sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and a prayer for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff) to the faithful who, on Divine Mercy Sunday, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, recite the *Our Father and the Creed*, and also adding a devout prayer (e.g. *Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!*).

To learn more about indulgences, visit <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07783a.htm>

To learn more Divine Mercy Sunday, visit <http://www.divinemicysunday.com/>

