

The Divine Mercy

The Divine Mercy is a form of God's compassion, an act of grace based on trust or forgiveness. In Catholicism, it refers specifically to a devotion which had its origin in the apparitions of Jesus Christ reported by St. Faustina Kowalska, in the early 20th century, in Poland. This devotion is multifaceted and has many different components: it involves:

1. **Divine Mercy Sunday - A solemn feast day with attached indulgences (The Sunday after Easter).**
2. **Image - A divinely inspired image of Jesus with attached promises for its veneration**
3. **Divine Mercy Novena**
4. **Holy Hour - A Holy Hour (usually at 3:00 PM),**
5. **The Divine Mercy Chaplet**

Some commentators offer more facets and in different order but all mention the above five components.

.....Souls who spread the honor of My mercy I shield through their entire life as a tender mother her infant, and at the hour of death I will not be a Judge for them, but the Merciful Savior" {Diary, 1075).

....."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" {Diary, 742}.

Divine Mercy Sunday (and Special Indulgence)

It ranks highest among all the elements of The Divine Mercy devotion revealed to [St.] Faustina. Its institution was requested by the Lord Jesus for the first time in Plock, in 1931, while He was communicating His will regarding the painting of the Image: "I desire that there be a Feast of Mercy. I want this image, which you will paint with a brush, to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter; that Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy".

The Catholic Church celebrates Divine Mercy Sunday the Sunday after Easter. Christ appeared to Saint Faustina over the course of four years. In one of the visions, He told Faustina about the Divine Mercy Promise. We find the promise in her diary: "Our Lord Jesus said, '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...Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy.'"

An ordinary plenary indulgence generally come with a list of conditions. In order to receive the indulgence, you must receive the Eucharist, go to confession within 20 days, pray for the intentions of the Holy father, and be detached from all sin.

Christ's promises for Divine Mercy Sunday removes the requirement for the soul to be detached from all sin for a plenary indulgence. The special graces promised by Christ come through receiving Communion, being in a state of grace, and trusting in Divine Mercy.

The Image of Divine Mercy - (also called the Image of the Merciful Jesus)

The earliest element of the devotion to the Divine Mercy revealed to St. Faustina was the painted image (shown below). She writes, "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. After a while Jesus said to me, "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 page 47)

She also records the following words of Jesus in relation to the image he commissioned her to have painted and venerated:



"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 page 48)

"I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this image with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You." (Diary page 327)

"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)

"Not in the beauty of the color, nor of the brush, lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace." (Diary page 313)

"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 page 742)

Our Lord said to Saint Faustina:

Encourage souls to say the Chaplet which I have given you.

Whoever will recite it will receive great mercy at the hour of death.

When they say this chaplet in the presence of the dying, I will stand between my Father and the dying person, not as the Just Judge but as the Merciful Savior ... Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this chaplet only once, he would receive grace from my infinite mercy. I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in My mercy ... Through the Chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will. "I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish," Jesus told Faustina, according to her diary.

"Jesus, I trust in You"

Chaplet of Divine Mercy

This Chaplet was dictated to St. Faustina by the Lord Jesus Himself in Vilnius on September 13-14, 1935, as a prayer of atonement and for the appeasement of God's wrath (see Diary, 474-476). Not only will the people who say the Chaplet receive graces, but also the dying at whose side others will recite this prayer. The Lord said: "When this chaplet is said by the bedside of a dying person, God's anger is placated, unfathomable mercy envelops the soul" (Diary, 811).

The Chaplet of Mercy is recited using ordinary rosary beads of five decades.

Optional Opening Prayers:

(especially when prayed at the 3 o'clock hour)

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.

And/or

O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You!

(repeat 3 times)

Begin with the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Apostle's Creed:

(If said as a novena, add intention for the day here see page15)

The Our Father

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Then, on the large bead before each decade:

***Eternal Father,
I offer you the Body and Blood,
Soul and Divinity,
of Your Dearly Beloved Son,
Our Lord, Jesus Christ,
in atonement for our sins
and those of the whole world.***

On the ten small beads of each decade, say:

***For the sake of His sorrowful Passion,
have mercy on us and on the whole world.***

Conclude with (Say 3 Times):

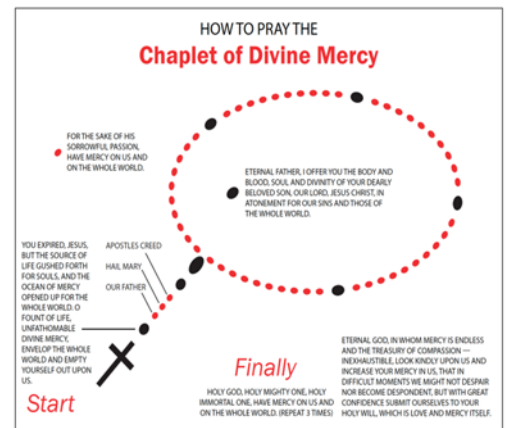
Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Optional Closing Prayer

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

Chaplet of Divine Mercy as a Novena

The Chaplet can be said anytime, but the Lord specifically asked that it be recited as a novena and asked that the Feast of the Divine Mercy (the Sunday after Easter) be preceded by a Novena to the Divine Mercy which would begin on Good Friday. He gave St. Faustina an intention to pray for on each day of the Novena, saving for the last day the most difficult intention of all. He promised, "By this Novena (of Nine Chaplets one per day), I will grant every possible grace to souls."



For each of the nine days, our Lord gave Saint Faustina a different intention: all mankind, especially sinners; the souls of priests and religious; all devout and faithful souls; those who do not believe in God and those who do not yet know Jesus; the souls who have separated themselves from the Church; the meek and humble souls and the souls of little children; the souls who especially venerate and glorify His mercy; the souls detained in purgatory; and souls who have become lukewarm.

"I desire that during these nine days you bring souls to the fountain of My mercy, that they may draw therefrom strength and refreshment and whatever grace they have need of in the hardships of life, and especially at the hour of death."

We, too, can make a novena of prayer for these intentions and others, especially by praying the Chaplet of The Divine Mercy.

Intentions for Each Day of the Novena

First Day

Today bring to Me **ALL MANKIND, ESPECIALLY ALL SINNERS**

Most Merciful Jesus, whose very nature it is to have compassion on us and to forgive us, do not look upon our sins but upon our trust which we place in Your infinite goodness. Receive us all into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart, and never let us escape from it. We beg this of You by Your love which unites You to the Father and the Holy Spirit.

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. Amen.

Second Day

Today bring to Me **THE SOULS OF PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS**

Most Merciful Jesus, from whom comes all that is good, increase Your grace in men and women consecrated to Your service, that they may perform worthy works of mercy; and that all who see them may glorify the Father of Mercy who is in heaven.

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. Amen.

Third Day

Today bring to Me **ALL DEVOUT AND FAITHFUL SOULS**

Most Merciful Jesus, from the treasury of Your mercy You impart Your graces in great abundance to each and all. Receive us into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart and never let us escape from it. We beg this 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. Amen.

Fourth Day

Today bring to Me **THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IN GOD AND THOSE WHO DO NOT YET KNOW ME**

Most compassionate Jesus, You are the Light of the whole world. 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. Amen.

Fifth Day

Today bring to Me **THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAVE SEPARATED THEMSELVES FROM MY CHURCH**

Most Merciful Jesus, Goodness Itself, You do not refuse light to those who seek it of You. 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.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the souls of those who have separated themselves from Your Son's Church, who have squandered Your blessings and misused Your graces by obstinately persisting in their errors. 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. Amen.

Sixth Day

Today bring to Me **THE MEEK AND HUMBLE SOULS AND THE SOULS OF LITTLE CHILDREN**

Most Merciful Jesus, You yourself have said, "Learn from Me for I am meek and humble of heart." Receive into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart all meek and humble souls and the souls of little children. These souls send all heaven into ecstasy and they are the heavenly Father's favorites. 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. Amen.

Seventh Day

Today bring to Me **THE SOULS WHO ESPECIALLY VENERATE AND GLORIFY MY MERCY**

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. Amen.

Eighth Day

Today bring to Me **THE SOULS WHO ARE DETAINED IN PURGATORY**

Most Merciful Jesus, You Yourself have said that You desire mercy; so I bring into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart the souls in Purgatory, souls who are very dear to You, and yet, who must make retribution to Your 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. I beg You, by the sorrowful Passion of Jesus Your Son, and by all the bitterness with which His most sacred Soul was flooded: 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. Amen.

Ninth Day

Today bring to Me **SOULS WHO HAVE BECOME LUKEWARM**

Most compassionate Jesus, You are Compassion Itself. 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. Father of Mercy, I beg You by the bitter Passion of Your Son and by His three-hour agony on the Cross: Let them, too, glorify the abyss of Your mercy. Amen.

Divine Mercy Holy Hour (Typical Format)

The Hour of Mercy. In October, 1937, in Cracow, under circumstances that are not fully described by [St.] Faustina, the Lord Jesus recommended that she honor the hour of His death:

“...as often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it; invoke its omnipotence for the whole world, and particularly for poor sinners; for at that moment mercy was opened wide for every soul” {Diary, 1572}.

The Lord Jesus also determined the prayers that are appropriate for this form of the Divine Mercy devotion: “...try your best to make the Stations of the Cross in this hour, provided that your duties permit it; and if you are not able to make the Stations of the Cross, then at least step into the chapel for a moment and adore, in the Blessed Sacrament, My Heart, which is full of mercy; and should you be unable to step into the chapel, immerse yourself in prayer there where you happen to be, if only for a very brief instant” {Diary, 1572}.

Prof. Rozycki enumerates three conditions for prayers offered in this hour to be granted:

1. They are to be addressed to Jesus.
2. They are to be said at three o'clock in the afternoon.
3. They are to appeal to the value and merits of Christ's Passion.

The Lord Jesus promised: “In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world - mercy triumphed over justice” {Diary, 1572}

Suggested Format

0-8 Minutes: Enter into Prayer.

8-18 minutes: Adoration.

18-25 minutes: Contrition.

25-45 minutes: Contemplation.

45-50 minutes: Thanksgiving.

50-55 minutes: Petition.

55-60: Closing.