



Fraternity of Fatherhood

Volume 5

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YEAR of MERCY

No one is excluded from God's mercy. - Pope Francis

EDITION

A Gift of Divine Mercy

By: Brendan McVicker



I remember the times I have attended Holy Saturday Night Easter Vigil Mass, and watched as the Elect and Candidates (unbaptized and baptized) were received into the Church. Some received all three sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation all in this one service. And I would watch and think...How Lucky They Are...at this moment their souls are now perfect, clean slate and free from all punishment. If they died right now, they would go directly to heaven. And I would say, Wow! And I would ponder this as the priest approached the next Elect and then the next. Holy Saturday Night is a beautiful service, and knowing I have sinned much in my life somehow I wished that I could have that gift one more time. And then I remember the first time I heard about Divine Mercy Sunday and this gift of His Divine Mercy. My breath was almost taken away and I remember saying to myself, "Now wait a minute!" . And in my thoughts I was taken back to all the images of Holy Saturday Vigil that I used to ponder. Could it really be true...and I began to read and read.

...(continued page 10)

"For the sake of His sorrowful passion,
have mercy on us and on the whole
world."

"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."

Divine Mercy Chaplet



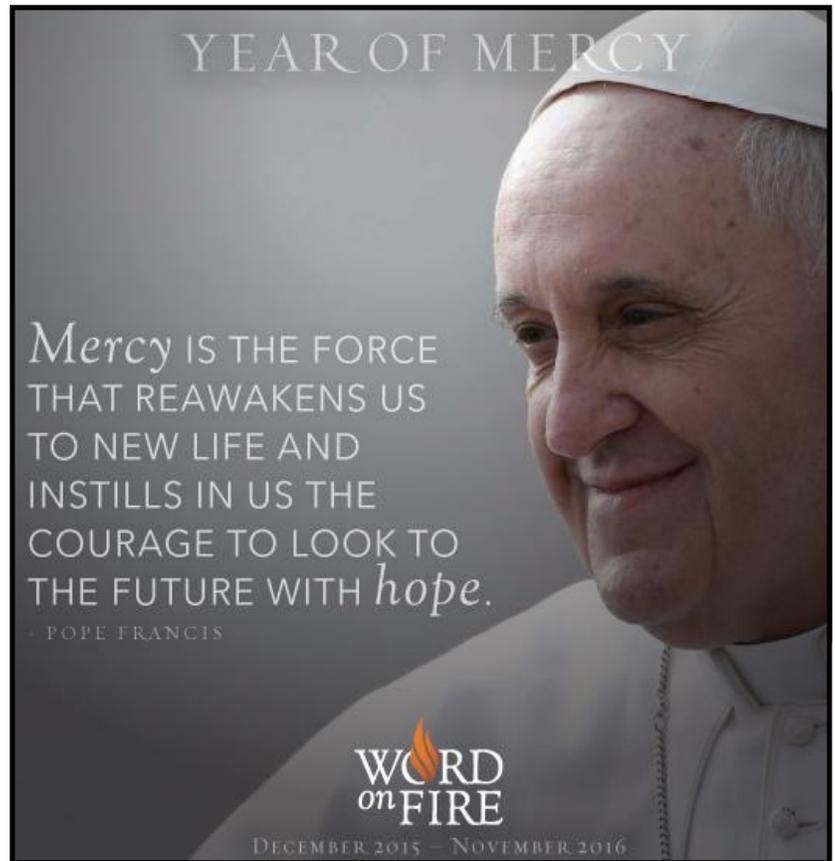
The Great Pardon

Pope Francis

During the penitential celebration in the Vatican Basilica Pope Francis proclaims a Holy Year of Mercy :

Dear brothers and sisters, I have often thought of how the Church may render more clear her mission to be a witness to mercy; and we have to make this journey. It is a journey which begins with spiritual conversion. Therefore, I have decided to announce an *Extraordinary Jubilee* which has at its center the mercy of God. It will be a *Holy Year of Mercy*. We want to live in the light of the word of the Lord: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (cf. Lk 6:36). And this especially applies to confessors! So much mercy!

This Holy Year will commence on the next Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and will conclude on Sunday, 20 November 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe and living face of the Father's mercy. I entrust the organization of this Jubilee to the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, in order that it may come to life as a new step on the Church's journey in her mission to bring the Gospel of mercy to each person.



Year of Mercy Calendar

Encounter and Extend Mercy during the Year of Jubilee

Visit LiveMercy.org to sign up for daily Mercy inspiration on your email or iphone message. Each day the theme is different.



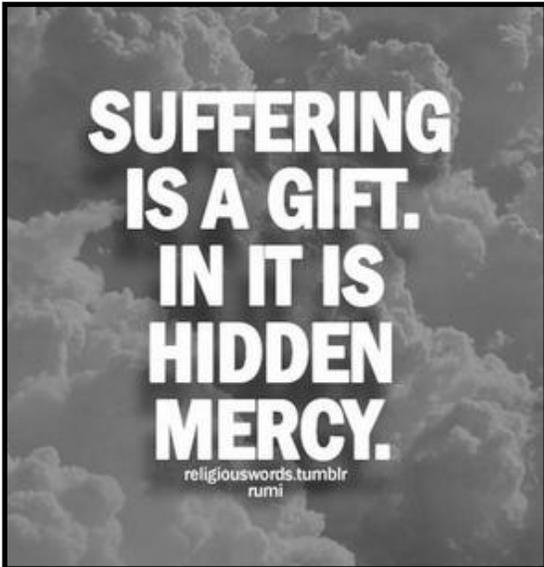
I am confident that the whole Church, which is in such need of mercy for we are sinners, will be able to find in this Jubilee the joy of rediscovering and rendering fruitful God's mercy, with which we are all called to give comfort to every man and every woman of our time. Do not forget that God *forgives all*, and God *forgives always*. Let us never tire of asking forgiveness. Let us henceforth entrust this Year to the Mother of Mercy, that she turn her gaze upon us and watch over our journey: our penitential journey, our year-long journey with an open heart, to receive the indulgence of God, to receive the mercy of God.

Suffering and Mercy

By: Mike Allison

The day God honored my free will and my stupidity all at once.

I was reminded of what Father Santan Pinto once said. "Jesus kept His eyes and His hope and confidence in the Father who has authority over heaven and earth and is Lord of all. All peoples in heaven and earth and under the earth will bow down before Him. The disciple should never forget this during the time of suffering".



December 17, 2015 is a day I will never forget. It was a day that God spared my life and changed it forever. It was 6 p.m. and I was in my backyard preparing to barbecue 30 pounds of chicken to celebrate my son-in-law's college graduation party the next day. This was going to take a long time so I invited my son to come over and hang out, enjoy a cold beer and do the cooking together.

It was getting cool out that evening and I decided a nice bonfire would be in order. So while the coals for the grill were getting hot, I grabbed some logs and put them on the fire pit. I got a small but inadequate fire going - very little flame. So I thought... " I need to juice this thing!"

Yep... Here comes the stupid part....

I went to the garage and got out my 5 gallon plastic gas can. It only had about an inch or two of gasoline in it. I thought this would be just enough to get a splash of gas on the fire to get the flame up and roaring. Deep down I knew I did not want my wife to see me do this - she might think it's not safe. (Brothers- lesson #1: don't ever hide anything from your wife. You might think you got away with something - you didn't and with God, nothing is ever hidden). Little did I realize that I held, right in my hands, a highly explosive bomb. Just enough gas; lots of vapor; compression and heavy air of the cool evening. I leaned over the fire pit, can in my arms and shook the can to splash a little gas onto the slight flame.

What resulted was a massive explosion!! The bomb went off in my hands, right toward my chest and face. The explosion was so loud it almost sounded like a power transformer blew up. It blew the can out of my hands and it landed on the side hill near where I stood. A flame shot up as high as our neighbors two-story house.

I was knocked back but kept my footing. I was disoriented and shocked. I then realized that I was on fire. Both pant legs from my shoes to my waist and both of my bare hands were aflame! (No.... I did not flash back to 4th grade and think stop, drop, roll. Trust me, it just does not occur to you when you are in this condition).

...(continued page 8)

"Suffering is a great grace; through suffering the soul becomes like the Savior; in suffering love becomes crystallized; the greater the suffering the purer the love."

Saint Faustina

Works of Mercy

The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are actions we can perform that extend God's compassion and mercy to those in need.

Corporal Works of Mercy

The Corporal Works of Mercy are these kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs.

- feed the hungry
- give drink to the thirsty
- clothe the naked
- shelter the homeless
- visit the sick
- visit the imprisoned
- bury the dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion, as listed below, by which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

- counsel the doubtful
- instruct the ignorant
- admonish sinners
- comfort the afflicted
- forgive offenses
- bear wrongs patiently
- pray for the living and the dead

Matthew 25:31-48

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. 34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' 40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' 44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' 45 "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' 46 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."



If ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive.

The Apostle of Divine Mercy

By: www.michaeljournal.org

The third of ten children, Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska was born into a pious peasant family in 1905, in Glogowiec, Poland. She was christened Helena. At the age of seven years, she first heard an interior call to the religious life. Thirteen years later she was to knock on many a convent door, before finally, on August 1, 1925, gaining admittance to the Convent of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Warsaw,



where she took the name Sister Maria Faustina. After a five-year-long novitiate in Krakow, she made her perpetual vows of chastity, poverty and unselfish love. Being a natural, cheerful person, Sister Faustina served as cook, gardener and doorkeeper at convents in Krakow, Pock and Vilnius. It was during these years that Jesus commissioned her to write her Diary. This extraordinary record reveals the depth and richness of her mystical life and union with God. She enjoyed great graces and a host of spiritual gifts: contemplative prayer, revelations, visions, prophecy, mystical espousals, invisible stigmata, the ability to read human souls, and a profound knowledge of the mystery of God's mercy.

During her lifetime, Faustina was virtually unknown, even to many sisters of her congregation. Only a few of her superiors and her confessor and spiritual director, were ever aware of her visions and revelations. She died of tuberculosis, mystically united with Christ, at the age of 33, on October 5, 1938, having been a religious for 13 years.

Faustina's mission to spread the message of Divine Mercy began on February 22, 1931. Having appeared to her in a vision, Christ commissioned her to paint an image of Him with red and pale rays radiating from His heart. The image was to bear the subscription: Jesus, I trust in You!

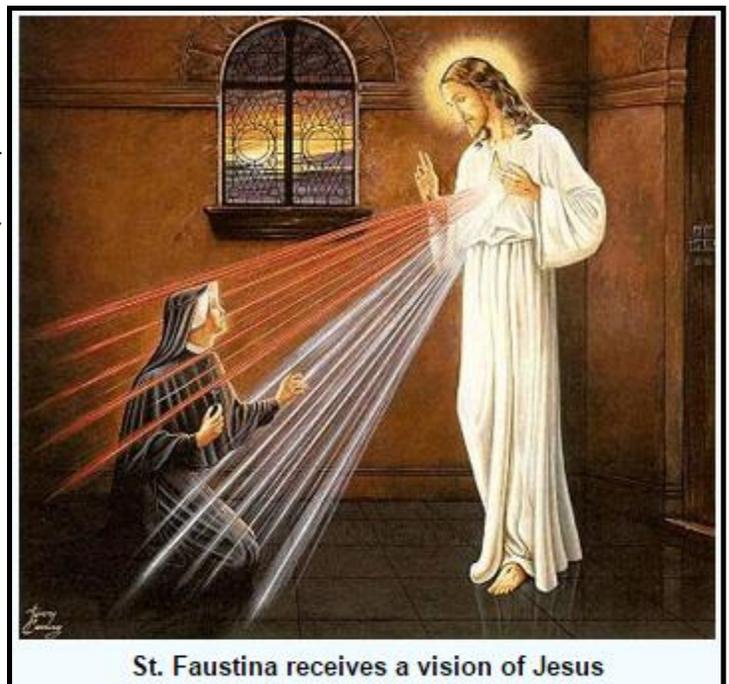
In her Diary, Faustina writes: *"I saw the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. (...) After a while, Jesus said to me; 'Paint an image according to the model you see, with the motto below: Jesus I trust in You. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and then throughout the world' "* (47).

"I promise that the soul that venerates 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" (48).

When Faustina's spiritual director learned of her visions, he had her submit to a psychiatric assessment. Having determined the soundness of her mental faculties, he placed an artist under the saint's direction with a view to producing a true copy of her vision of the Merciful Savior.

Jesus asked Faustina that the first Sunday after Easter be declared Mercy Sunday, the "Feast of Divine Mercy", a day when His graces would flow ...

(... continued on page 6)



St. Faustina receives a vision of Jesus

The Apostle of Mercy

... continued from page 5



“Jesus, I trust in You”

I promise that the soul that venerates 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.”

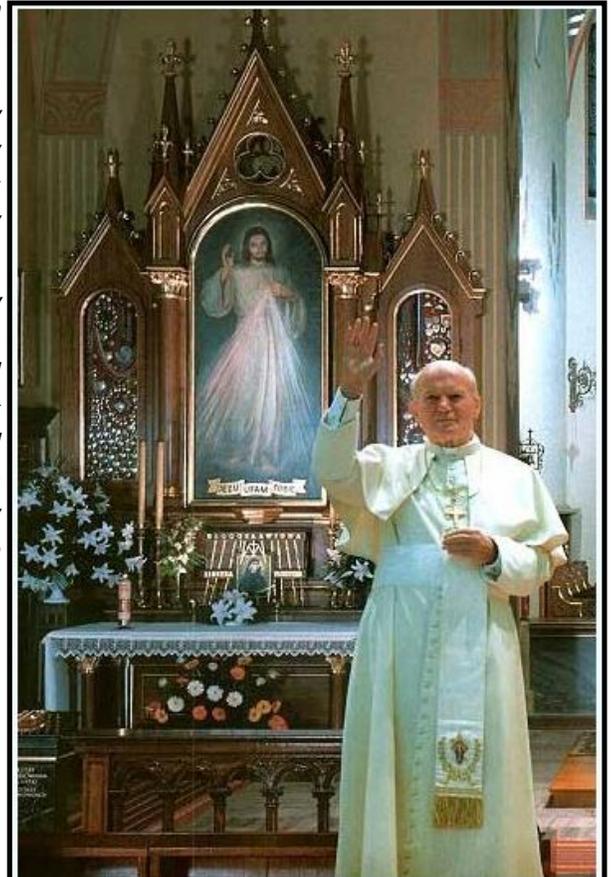
in an extraordinary way to all those who asked for them. He told Faustina: *“I desire that priests proclaim this great mercy of Mine toward the souls of sinners. Let no sinner be afraid to approach Me”* (50).

Mercy Sunday is now celebrated in thousands of Catholic parishes across the United States. It has already been designated a liturgical Feast Day of the Catholic Church in Poland. St. Faustina’s Diary describes the promise Jesus made to those who solemnly participate in the Feast of Divine Mercy: *“Whoever approaches the Fount of Life on this day will be granted complete remission of sins and punishment”* (300).

“I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and a shelter for all souls, especially poor sinners. On that day, the very depths of My tender mercy will be opened. I will pour out an entire ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the Fount of My Mercy. The soul that goes to Confession and receives Holy Communion will obtain complete forgiveness of sins and a remission of all punishment. (...) Let no soul fear to approach Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. (...) Humanity will not enjoy peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy” (699).

On being asked by Faustina about the significance of the two rays on the image, Jesus replied: “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 poured forth from the very depths of My tender mercy when My agonized Heart on the Cross was opened by the lance” (299).

Faustina’s mission consisted in: reminding the world of God’s merciful love towards every human being, even the greatest sinner; conveying new forms of devotion to the Divine Mercy; launching a great movement of devotees and apostles of Divine Mercy, who would lead people to a renewal of Christian life in the spirit of this devotion; i.e. in the gospel spirit of childlike confidence in God and love of neighbor.



Pope John Paul II at the shrine of Divine Mercy in Krakow on June 7, 1997, in front of the tomb of Sister Faustina and the image of the Merciful Jesus

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

The On September 13, 1935, Sister Faustina had a terrible vision of a destroying Angel ("the agent of divine wrath") about to strike some place on the planet. She began praying, begging him to put off the punishment until the world did penance. At first, her pleas seemed in vain, but presently she saw the Holy Trinity and felt the power of Christ's grace in her soul. Again she began to plead for the world in words that welled up out of the silence of her soul:

"Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and those of the whole world; for the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us" (475).

Her prayer was answered and the angel was prevented from carrying out the chastisement. The following morning, Sister Faustina heard these interior words: *"Every time you enter the chapel, start reciting the prayer which I taught you yesterday" (476).*

Later, she was instructed in the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy: *"This prayer will serve to appease My wrath. You will recite it for nine days, on the beads of the Rosary, in the following manner: first of all, you will say one Our Father and Hail Mary and the I Believe in God. Then, on the Our Father beads, you will say the following words: 'Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and those of the whole world.' On the Hail Mary beads you will say the following words: 'For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.' In conclusion, three times you will recite these words: 'Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world' " (476).*

Jesus Himself tells us why it is so important to recite this prayer: *"Recite the chaplet unceasingly that I have taught you. Whoever recites it will receive great mercy at the hour of death. Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even in the case of the most hardened sinner, if he were to recite this chaplet only once, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy. I desire that the whole world know My infinite mercy. I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls that trust in My mercy" (687).*

"Oh, what great graces I will grant to souls that say this chaplet; the very depths of My tender mercy are stirred for the sake of those who say the chaplet" (848). "At the hour of their death, I defend as My own glory every soul that will say this chaplet; or when others say it for a dying person, the indulgence is the same" (811).

"Through the chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask is compatible with My will" (1731).

The Chaplet

Of The Divine Mercy

(0) Begin with the Sign of the Cross

(1.) Our Father,
(2.) Hail Mary,
(3.) The Apostles Creed.

(4) Then on the Our Father Beads say the following: 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.

(5) On the 10 Hail Mary Beads say the following: For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

(6.) Conclude with (three times): Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Jesus I trust in You.

Jesus said later to Sister Faustina:

...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".

<http://lasTresAveurias.blogspot.com>

Suffering and Mercy

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I ran towards the sliding kitchen door it was locked. I pounded on the glass and my horrified, dear wife quickly open the door and I ran inside the house. (Yes - more stupidity, I know, but give me a break- I was on fire!) My wife told me to roll - I hit the floor and rolled to no avail and realized that the house could catch fire, so I stood up and ran back outside which further fanned the flames. I rolled on the grass and was able to finally put the fire out. think this all lasted about a minute or so.

I peeled off my pants shoes and shirt and only by God's grace, miraculously, only my hands and one leg were burned. No burns to my face, neck, chest or arms. I did not gasp and breathe in the vapor, which would have burned my lungs out. Remember, this explosion happened in my face!! My son and a neighbor came in the house - we quickly ran water on my body- wrapped the burns in wet towels and drove to the hospital emergency ward.

I can't describe the immensity of the pain I was feeling. We arrived at the emergency room and I still reeked of gasoline. I answered the battery of questions before they hooked me up to an I. V. with some really serious pain killers so they could begin to treat my injuries and reduce enough pain to hold me until the next mornings trip to the burn center. Again, it was miraculous that I was not killed or burned even more severely. I did not require any skin grafts.

A Mothers Powerful Prayer

I found out the next day that my mother had prayed an unusual request; that God would send my guardian angel to give me special protection that day. And he certainly did. I know that my angel threw himself between me and that flame that day to spare me of much more severe injuries.

The treatments that followed for the next several weeks were extremely painful and difficult. This experience was actually a great gift of God's mercy to me. As I reflected on this incident I know for certain and it was of God's providence and that He gave this to me for a purpose. During this time of my healing, I read from the diary of Saint Faustina regarding Divine Mercy.

Entry #57:

"Suffering is a great grace; through suffering the soul becomes like the Savior; in suffering love becomes crystallized; the greater the suffering the purer the love."

God showed me enormous mercy miraculous mercy and protection.

Permitting what by His grace, allowed for purification of my very being. In my soul He increased the capacity to love and to share in the mystery of His redemptive act of salvific love from the cross. I cannot describe it. He permitted it. It is not by chance but by the grace of the merciful God who gives all as gift.

I was by His grace ready for this gift. Yes; I can thank Him for what happened and for an ocean of countless graces He has given me. I was brought to a joyful well-spring of tears as the way my body could express gratefulness to God, coupled by sorrow for my sins and of those I love and the sins of others; my fellow brothers and sisters in the world who sometimes repel Love itself and choose destruction over life.

...(continued page 9)

Suffering and Mercy

....continued from page 8

I learned in a real way that Mercy and suffering are inseparable. Suffering is the very means by which God Himself manifested His mercy for His children in all of creation. Offering Jesus on the cross as the means of salvation for the world.

Mercy and suffering are BOTH love. He is Mercy. He is Love. He accepts suffering and in that suffering, when united to the cross of Jesus, the Heart of redemption is found. It is what He chose. Why? I do not know; but He did and He is. He is!

My brothers, if and when you experience any difficulty or suffering do not run from it. Do not run from Love. Do not ask WHY this is happening. Ask HOW? How can I use this that You have given for the glory of God and the salvation of souls? My wounds were completely healed and I am scared only with the mark of His love which I pray I never waste. I thank God for giving me this story of His Mercy to share with you.

Your brother in Christ,

Mike

A Fraternity for All Men

The Fraternity of Fatherhood is for men of all ages. Our desire is to serve the Lord in all areas of our lives and to especially model our gift and responsibilities as fathers after the example of God the Father and His goodness. We support men; meeting them where they are. We engage in one-on-one friendships and provide opportunities for group activity, support and formation.

We entrust the Fatherhood Fraternity to the patronage of Saint Joseph.

Our Mission

To serve as men dedicated to the Lord in all aspects of our lives. To encourage and support men / fathers throughout the world in their gift and responsibilities as fathers. To encourage and support fathers "to respond" to their vocation, to protect and remain strong carrying their families in their hearts. Our desire is to be united to The Lord and fulfill our holy mission as fathers.

What is it we hope to do?

Bring men / fathers, closer to God by inviting them to learn their faith, challenging them to live their faith and encouraging them to love and share their faith. In addition, we invite those not married as this is a time to discern their vocation and calling in the Church.

As Fraternity of Fatherhood members, we are committed to grow and be formed spirituality, to support each other, to be active and supportive in our parishes. We are committed to learn who we are as Catholic men, to be discovered through our life experiences, prayer, studying Scripture and the documents of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, obedience to the Holy Roman Pontiff, our Roman Catholic Bishops and our parish Pastors. The formation of "Fatherhood" takes place in our hearts. Being a father means understanding that it is a call. When Fatherhood is received as a gift, it is accepted in humility and gratitude. Humility comes from the fact that we are weak. The pressures of the world are strong and flesh seems to have its way. Gratitude comes from the fact that the Lord is our Shepherd and He is with us always. With Him all things are possi-

A Gift of Divine Mercy

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And then I read this.

"Regarding Divine Mercy Sunday, Jesus told St. Faustina, *"The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment"*(699). Now, that's a big deal. It means that if we were to die right after receiving this grace, then we wouldn't have to go to purgatory! In other words, our slate is wiped clean. In fact, the theologian who was assigned by the future Pope John Paul II to investigate the question "What is the grace of Mercy Sunday?" likened the grace to a second baptism. Of course, it's not the same as Baptism, but it is an extraordinary grace of being cleansed of sin and the punishment due to sin. " (www.marian.org)

I was so excited. I was so thankful. I couldn't believe it. I was on cloud nine. And then I thought. So what am I really thankful for here. St. Faustina didn't reveal any new revelation. She didn't find a new teaching of the church that I was never made aware. So what grabbed my heart? What took hold of my heart was that I was re-introduced to the degree of Jesus' love for me. I was re-introduced to hope. I was re-introduced to His depth and boundless compassion for me. I was once again reminded that His love and forgiveness is greater than any sin. The Lord had heard my heart ponder during those Holy Saturday Vigil masses and He reminded me of the gift that I already had. "My son, the father said, 'you are always with me and everything I have is yours'" Luke 15:31

"John Paul II died on Saturday, April 2, 2005, at the end of the vigil Mass of Divine Mercy Sunday, the feast that he himself instituted five years earlier for the universal Church. A few minutes before his death, at 9:37 p.m. Rome time, a Mass had been celebrated in the Pope's private apartments, during which he was given the Holy Viaticum and the Anointing of the Sick." (michaeljournal.org)

"John Paul II had prepared a short homily from his deathbed that was to be read on Divine Mercy Sunday. It was indeed read, not by him but by a Vatican official after the Mass at St. Peter's for the eternal repose of Pope John Paul II. It was an urgent plea for a greater understanding of Divine Mercy and was read as follows: "As a gift to humanity, which sometimes seems bewildered and overwhelmed by the power of evil, selfishness, and fear, the Risen Lord offers His love that pardons, reconciles, and reopens hearts to love. It is a love that converts hearts and gives peace. How much the world needs to understand and accept Divine Mercy! (michaeljournal.org)

"Lord, who reveal the Father's love by Your death and Resurrection, we believe in You and confidently repeat to You today: Jesus, I trust in You, have mercy upon us and upon the whole world. Amen." (michaeljournal.org)

So once again in the span of 40 days we are reminded again of His endless mercy. Divine Mercy Sunday is a special gift. It is a gift I don't deserve, I did not earn it, I am not owed it. His merciful love is a gift to all us. And as Fr. Pinto taught me, the only appropriate response to receiving a gift, is with humility and gratitude. And gratitude for His divine mercy I will give until the day He calls me home. Happy Easter.

POSTAGE

Fraternity of Fatherhood

We entrust the Fatherhood Fraternity to the patronage
of St. Joseph.



St. Joseph ...Pray For Us.



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