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## DIVINE MERCY OVERVIEW

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There are three specific elements to the Celebration of the feast of Divine Mercy. They include the Image, the Chaplet and the Hour of Mercy.

### The Image

Jesus asked that a picture be painted of him as the merciful savior and directed that souls are to venerate this image. The hand of Jesus is raised in blessing. From the heart of Christ comes two rays. The white ray of water symbolizes baptismal water and makes the soul righteous. The red ray symbolizes the blood which is the life of souls. Sister Faustina was not happy with the original painting and like everything in this story there is an interesting twist that accompanies the journey of first painting. Jesus said: "These rays shield souls from the wrath of my father." (D. 299) By means of this image, I shall grant many graces for souls." (D 742)

### The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

The prayers are said as a rosary. The petitions offer the body and blood of Christ to the Father in atonement for our sins and the sins of the whole world. The Novena of Divine Mercy is a devotion that begins on Good Friday. The optimum time to say the prayers is at 3:00 because between 3:00 and 4:00 Jesus died and at that time the father is most open to the petitions of his children. Nine specific groups of people are prayed for. Very great graces are given for its recitation, especially for an in the presence of the dying.

### The Feast of Divine Mercy

Great graces are promised to those who pray the novena and participate in the Hour of Mercy that is celebrated on the Sunday after Easter. Jesus said: "On that day the very depths of My Tender Mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those loud who approached my mercy. The soul that will go to confession, receive Holy Communion, pray to the intentions of the Pope, recite the Our Father, the Creed and a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus before the blessed sacrament shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishments." (D. 699)

As the impending doom of war hung over mankind, God sent a Messenger of his love, Sister Faustina Kowalska, a young Polish nun, to his people. For all intents and purposes, she wasn't particularly clever, she was not physically strong, and she suffered from tuberculosis. Her years on earth would be the same as her Master's. Sister Faustina's greatest suffering would be that many would not believe her story and the assumption was held by her associates that she was only seeking attention when she spoke of her mystical experiences. Sister Faustina heard Jesus

speaking to her, through what are called interior locutions. She saw visions of Jesus at times when she did not comply with His wishes, she was at dawn admonished.

Through the support of the of wise and sympathetic superiors and priests, Sister Faustina was commanded to write what Jesus told her, and she did. She wrote four notebooks full of her conversations with her Savior. The writing was compiled and published in what is now known as the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska. The 644 page document was smuggled out of Europe and quickly became a popular devotion in the States. It was banned between the years 1959 and 1978. The issues were due to irregularities in grammar sentence structure punctuation and translation. Eventually Cardinal Wojtyla recognized the power and authenticity of the writing. The Cardinal would become Pope John Paul II and it would be he who would canonize St Faustina and proclaimed the feast of Divine Mercy. He encouraged believers to pray the chaplet at all times and especially for the dying for, “Out of Poland will come the precursor to my second coming.” (D. 1732)

In her writings, Sister Faustina spoke repeatedly and insistently about the fact that we are living in a time of God's Great Mercy. Jesus said: “This right this before I come as the Just judge. I am coming as the King of Mercy... Before the day of justice arrives, there will be given to my people a sign in the heavens... This will take place before the last day.” (D 83)