

# APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY DECREE: Indulgences Attached to Devotion in Honor of Divine Mercy

## Plenary Indulgence

To ensure that the faithful would observe this day with intense devotion, the Supreme Pontiff himself established that this Sunday be enriched by a plenary indulgence, as will be explained below, so that the faithful might receive in great abundance the gift of the consolation of the Holy Spirit. In this way, they can foster a growing love for God and for their neighbor, and after they have obtained God's pardon, they in turn might be persuaded to show a prompt pardon to their brothers and sisters.

## Pardon of others who sin against us

Thus the faithful will more closely conform to the spirit of the Gospel, receiving in their hearts the renewal that the Second Vatican Council explained and introduced: "Mindful of the words of the Lord: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13,35), Christians can yearn for nothing more ardently than to serve the men of this age with an ever growing generosity and success.... It is the Father's will that we should recognize Christ our brother in the persons of all men and love them with an effective love, in word and in deed (Pastoral Constitution, ".../.../.../archive/ hist councils/ii vatican council/documents/vat-ii cons 19651207 caudium-et-spes en.html". n. 93).

## Three conditions for the plenary indulgence

And so the Supreme Pontiff, motivated by an ardent desire to foster in Christians this devotion to Divine Mercy as much as possible in the hope of offering great spiritual fruit to the faithful, in the Audience granted on 13 June 2002, to those Responsible for the Apostolic Penitentiary, granted the following Indulgences:

A plenary indulgence, granted under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the intentions of Supreme Pontiff to the faithful who, on the Second Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday, in any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, take part in the prayers and devotions held in honour of Divine Mercy, or who, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our Father and



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*"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)*

the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!");

A partial indulgence, granted to the faithful who, at least with a contrite heart, pray to the merciful Lord Jesus a legitimately approved invocation.

## For those who cannot go to church or the seriously ill

In addition, sailors working on the vast expanse of the sea; the countless brothers and sisters, whom the disasters of war, political events, local violence and other such causes have been driven out of their homeland; the sick and those who nurse them, and all who for a just cause cannot leave their homes or who carry out an activity for the community which cannot be postponed, may obtain a plenary indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday, if totally detesting any sin, as has been said before, and with the intention of fulfilling as soon as possible the three usual conditions, will recite the Our Father and the Creed before a devout image of Our Merciful Lord Jesus and, in addition, pray a devout invocation to the Merciful Lord Jesus (e.g.

Merciful Jesus, I trust in you).

If it is impossible that people do even this, on the same day they may obtain the Plenary Indulgence if with a spiritual intention they are united with those carrying out the prescribed practice for obtaining the Indulgence in the usual way and offer to the Merciful Lord a prayer and the sufferings of their illness and the difficulties of their lives, with the resolution to accomplish as soon as possible the three conditions prescribed to obtain the plenary indulgence.

## Duty of priests: inform parishioners, hear confessions, lead prayers

Priests who exercise pastoral ministry, especially parish priests, should inform the faithful in the most suitable way of the Church's salutary provision. **They should promptly and generously be willing to hear their confessions. On Divine Mercy Sunday, after celebrating Mass or Vespers, or during devotions in honour of Divine Mercy,** with the dignity that is in accord with the rite, they should lead the recitation of the prayers that have been given above. Finally, "Blessed are the merciful."

## JOHN PAUL II MISSION OF MERCY

In 1938, after Saint Faustina's death, this devotion spread like wildfire and this endured during the horrors the Polish people faced of World War II. At the front lines of this revelation stood a young Polish priest, Karol Josef Wojtyla.

Opposing forces tried to prevent the spreading of these holy revelations and Holy Mother Church with her prudence regarding unproved and uninvestigated spiritual occurrences.

Pope John XXIII and the Vatican, received erroneous, confusing translations of the Diary of Sister Faustina.

Consequently, The Holy See silenced it, and this in itself was prophesied by Saint Faustina. Twenty years later, by the great efforts of then Bishop Wojtyla, Pope Paul VI lifted the Vatican's ban. Our future Polish Pope dedicated himself to completing an accurate translation of *Sister Faustina's Diary*. It is an understatement to say his persistent influence singularly affected the approval of Christ revelations and this woman of Poland's Holy Journal.

The devotion to Divine Mercy was brought to America by Father Jarzebowski of the Immaculate Conception. With the forces of the Third Reichs Nazi regiments surrounding Poland and threatening an invasion, this faithful priest entrusted himself to Divine Mercy and safely smuggled Sister Faustina's writings across enemy lines and through his long journey into America.

Father Jarzebowski vowed to Father Michael Sopoko, Sister Faustina's spiritual director, that he would reproduce and distribute materials on Divine Mercy in America. With the help of the Saint Stanislaus Kostka province of the Marians, they started to actively proclaim, print and produce material on the Divine Mercy devotion. When the Vatican's ban was issued on Sister Faustina's writings, the Marians obediently ceased promoting the Divine Mercy devotion.

When Pope Paul VI lifted the ban on the diary, they immediately began promoting the devotion. On April 15, 1978, Cardinal Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II.