

Fast facts on Divine Mercy

How it started: In 1931, Sister Faustina Kowalska of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Poland received a vision of Jesus dressed as the "King of Divine Mercy." He was wearing a white robe, and from His heart poured forth streams of red and white.

Spreading the vision: In later visions, Jesus directed Sister Faustina to have an image of her vision painted and distributed; He told her, "By means of this image I shall be granting many graces to souls."

Message of mercy: The core of Jesus' message was a call for all believers to practice mercy out of love for Christ – in deed, word and prayer. "You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere," Jesus told Sister Faustina. "You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it. ... If a soul does not exercise mercy somehow or other, it will not obtain My mercy on the day of judgment."

John Paul II's role: Although a poor translation of Sister Faustina's diary led to a condemnation of the devotion early on, later, more accurate translations, as well as the lifelong love of Pope John Paul II for Divine Mercy, allowed the devotion to spread. The pope beatified Sister Faustina in 1993, and canonized her in April 2000.

In accord with Jesus' instructions to St. Faustina, the pope named the second Sunday of Easter "Divine Mercy Sunday." He also attached a plenary indulgence to that Sunday, which can be obtained under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the intentions of the pope).

Praying the chaplet: One Divine Mercy devotion is the Divine Mercy Chaplet, which can be said on ordinary rosary beads. Making the sign of the cross, those praying the chaplet recite an Our Father, a Hail Mary and the Apostle's Creed.

Then, on the large beads, the leader says, "Eternal Father, I offer You the body and blood, soul and divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ." The others respond, "In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world." On the smaller beads, the leader says, "For the sake of His sorrowful passion," and the others respond, "Have mercy on us and on the whole world." The prayer concludes with the triple recitation of "Holy God, holy mighty One, holy immortal One," and the response, "Have mercy on us and on the whole world."

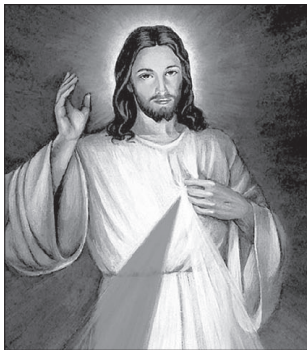
Image of Divine Mercy keeps spreading

Continued from Page 1

form of a conversation between the saint and Jesus. Our Savior asks her to have the Divine Mercy image painted, complete with rays of red and white emanating from His heart to symbolize the blood and water that poured from His pierced side on the cross. "By means of this image I shall be granting many graces to souls, so let every soul have access to it," Jesus told St. Faustina.

"One time, I was praying the Divine Mercy chaplet in my bedroom, and actual rays of red and white came out of my crucifix exactly as you see in the pictures," Endres said. "It wasn't startling; it was just a peaceful experience. But becoming a believer (in the devotion) doesn't take much more than that."

Endres said this devotion was something he simply couldn't



Jesus, I Trust In You!

CT/Contributed photo

With permission of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, Madison resident Mark Endres has reproduced the image of Divine Mercy on bumper stickers, magnets, and most recently, military-style dog tags. The items are available for purchase from www.divinemercydevotion.com.

keep to himself. "What really got me was that Jesus told St. Faustina several times that He wanted this picture to be promoted publicly," he said. "You place that image in church and it just draws people, it attracts people. It's such a beautiful image."

So, working with the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, whom he termed the "official

disseminators" of the devotion, Endres obtained permission to reproduce an image of Divine Mercy on bumper stickers, magnets, and most recently, military-style dog tags. "The image is not to be hidden away," he said.

"Just today I got an order for a couple hundred bumper stickers for a parish in Chicago," Endres said. "I've gotten inquiries from

Australia, South Africa, and all over the world. It's really neat to be contacted by people from all over the world who have a love for the Divine Mercy devotion and want to order materials to promote it."

Editor's Note: Endres' products, including bumper stickers, magnets and dog tags, are available from www.divinemercydevotion.com.

Divine Mercy events in the diocese

Novenas begin April 6; Divine Mercy Sunday is April 15

"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 honor of Divine Mercy, with the dignity that is in accord with the rite, they should lead the recitation of the prayers ... Finally, since "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (*Matthew 5:7*), when they instruct their people, priests should gently encourage the faithful to practice works of charity or mercy as often as they can, following the example of, and in obeying the commandment of Jesus Christ, as is listed for the second general concession of indulgence in the 'Enchiridion Indulgentiarum.'"

– Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary

STEVENS POINT – St. Casimir Parish will conduct a novena on Good Friday, 7 p.m.; Holy Saturday, 5 p.m.; Easter Sunday, 8 a.m.; April 9-13 after Mass, 8 a.m.; and April 14, 3:30 p.m. On April 15, events will commence with Mass at 8:30 a.m., followed by exposition, adoration, the rosary, reconciliation, the Way of the Cross, and a Polish-language Mass at 2 p.m. Divine Mercy hour will include a procession

with the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. Refreshments will be served throughout the day, and a video on St. Faustina will be shown from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

MAUSTON – St. Patrick Parish's Divine Mercy Sunday events will commence with the 10:30 a.m. Mass, followed by a light lunch. At 12:30 p.m., the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed, and pastor Father Eric Berns will speak. The rosary will be recited at 1 p.m., followed by silent adoration or a video. After a break, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy will be sung at 3 p.m., and Deacon Juan Delgado will speak. Benediction and refreshments will follow. Reconciliation will be available throughout the day.

POLONIA – Sacred Heart Parish will celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday, April 15, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Father James Kurzynski will give a presentation. Other activities include Mass, Eucharistic adoration, sacrament of reconciliation, procession with the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. Call the parish at 715-592-4221 for details.

LA CROSSE – St. James Parish will conduct Divine Mercy events on April 15 from 12-3 p.m., including exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and recitation of the rosary. Divine Mercy devotions will begin at 2:45 p.m., and will be followed by Benediction.

PLOVER – St. Bronislava Parish will conduct a special Divine Mercy service on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 15, 1-4 p.m. Father James Genovesi will be the presenter, and a reception will follow.

EASTMAN – After the April 15 9 a.m. Mass, St. Wenceslaus Parish will expose the Blessed Sacrament. The chaplet will be prayed, ending with benediction.

BIG RIVER – On April 15, St. Mary's Parish will have exposition beginning at 1 p.m. All 20 mysteries of the rosary will be recited, followed by the chaplet, and the blessing of Divine Mercy images. Mass will be celebrated at 3 p.m., and confession will be available throughout the afternoon.

SOUTHEASTERN PORTAGE COUNTY – St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish will offer confession from 2-2:30 p.m. on April 15, followed by recitation of the rosary and the chaplet.

MARSHFIELD – Our Lady of Peace Parish will have exposition from 1-3 p.m. on April 15, with the sacrament of reconciliation offered. At 3 p.m., the Chaplet of Divine Mercy will be recited, followed by Benediction.

MARATHON – Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish

will host special Divine Mercy events beginning at 2 p.m. on April 15, including adoration, Benediction and the chaplet.

EAU CLAIRE – Sacred Heart of Jesus-St. Patrick Parish will host adoration beginning at 2:30 p.m. on April 15. The chaplet will begin at 3 p.m., followed by Benediction.

COLBY – St. Mary's Parish will pray a novena starting on Good Friday. On April 15, Divine Mercy devotions will commence at 2 p.m.

WAUSAU – On April 15, 3 p.m., Holy Name of Jesus Parish will expose the Blessed Sacrament, pray the rosary and chaplet, and have Benediction.

THORP – St. Bernard-St. Hedwig will host adoration ending with Benediction on April 15 from 12-5 p.m.

WAUSAU – St. Matthew's Parish will pray a novena from Good Friday through Divine Mercy Sunday after all parish Masses.

PITTSVILLE – St. Joachim Parish will pray a novena from Good Friday through the following week.

For tips on how to celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday at your parish, or for more about the Divine Mercy devotion, visit www.thedivinemercy.org.