

The Message of Divine Mercy

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Hello, and welcome back to the Pray More Novenas Retreat. My name is Emily Jaminet, and I'm so honored to be able to lead this session today, focusing on the importance of the Divine Mercy message, Saint Faustina, and allowing us to live out this true message of hope. So, let's begin in prayer.

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Come Lord, speak to our hearts and allow us to be vessels of love and mercy to others. Teach us to trust in you. Amen.

Encountering the Divine Mercy

I can still remember as a young girl learning my first Divine Mercy Chaplet. I remember my parents getting out this little pamphlet and beginning to tell us about this devotion and how important it is that we learn to trust in Jesus. As we prayed those prayers, as a young child, I found such hope in them. I found the beauty of hearing about the simplicity of this devotion and understanding that as we prayed as a family, that this could be a new lifeline for us, a new way for us to connect and grow closer to the Lord. Now, that experience as a young girl has really carried with me throughout the course of my life.

I remember clinging to my rosary beads, praying the Divine Mercy prayers as a young mother, seeing the significance of understanding that I need to trust Jesus in my vocation. I remember encountering Saint Faustina firsthand, you could say, for the first time that I, too, went to Poland and visited Krakow, visited her convent, experienced the sisters, and just saw that this tiny little convent, this message had significant meaning for the entire world.

Who is Saint Faustina?

Now, for some of you, this might be a new message of hope. You might be wondering what we're even talking about in this session, but I hope that you too are inspired to receive the mercy of God, live in that mercy, and share that mercy with others. So let me begin with telling you a little bit about Saint Faustina.

Saint Faustina was born in 1905. She was the third of 10 children. And actually, this family was a rural, from a rural part of Poland. They were a farming family, and they were very poor, so poor that the girls actually shared their Sunday dress, their Sunday best with each other. And they took turns going to mass to really, for us, that might be something as a mom that I find what you wear to Sunday is something that we can take for granted. But in that culture at that moment, they so wanted to honor the Lord. She was pious. She was holy. She was a good little girl, and they believe, and she believes that the Lord first started calling her to religious life at the age of seven.

Now, her parents rejected this idea, not because she was bad, but because she was such an important help in the family. She actually dropped out of school and had only a few years of formal education, or that she went on to be a domestic servant. She received money that she would then give back to her family to help support this big Catholic family. She did a number of jobs, but she always felt this calling to religious life.

At the age of 18, Jesus actually appeared to her and said, "How long will you keep putting me off?" And that moment was her real conversion, her real understanding of the importance of pursuing religious life. She joined the Sisters of Mercy in Krakow and began this beautiful journey of serving in what's called the second choir, a life of service similar to what she did outside of the convent of doing simple tasks, such as gardening, working in the kitchen, answering the door. Not tasks that required significant training such as forms of teaching, but rather her teachings have had such an impact on us and on the entire world through her writings that she wrote in her diary.

Saint Faustina's Diary

Her diary is over 600 pages long, and where she shares about her mystical and amazing experiences where Jesus appeared to her. We can all read her diary to this day, as it's been published. And for me, it's really provided me such a source of insight and understanding. And much of her words have really helped me in my vocation and in my faith life.

In my book that I co-authored with Michelle Faehnle, "Divine Mercy for Moms", we highlight that diary and making that connection to the importance of our vocation, how this message is not meant just to be held in a silo, but it's meant to penetrate each one of us. So, Saint Faustina is really an apostle of mercy. She taught us not just in her words and in her diary, but she revealed five aspects of the Divine Mercy message that I'd like to touch on in my talk today to help deliver a little bit of hope for you.

The Great Feast of Mercy

So first, the importance of the Great Feast of Mercy. I want you to know that there is a Great Feast coming up. This feast is the Sunday after Easter. So put away that Easter candy and know that there is something even greater coming after Easter. It is Divine Mercy Sunday. This is an opportunity for you to experience the Lord's mercy in a new way, to go to mass, go to confession, to really spend some time in prayer, and to receive the Lord's mercy. Jesus revealed to her the significance of Divine Mercy Sunday, and it is an official feast in the church. So, make sure that you not only go to mass on Divine Mercy Sunday, but you can even look up special Divine Mercy celebrations. The Marian's do an amazing job promoting this feast day.

Three O'clock Hour

The second point of Divine Mercy, the significance of the three o'clock hour. As Catholics, I think we know what the three o'clock hour is. It's the hour that our Lord died, and that hour holds such significance as we think to Good Friday, which is approaching during the Lenten season.

But we are all invited to remember the Lord at three o'clock every single day. He tells us that He's pouring out His mercy in a special way. He invites us through the words He shared with Saint Faustina to go to Him specifically to make requests of Him, to ask for those particulars that maybe are resting heavy on your heart.

Now, for most of us, like myself, the three o'clock hour is an hour of transition. I'm usually in the car picking up the kids from school right before three o'clock. But there is no reason why no matter where we are, if we're sitting at work, if we are picking up children, or if we are at home, allowing this to be a true moment of conversion. We can set in our alarm for three o'clock and to pray. If you can visit the church, obviously, that's a wonderful gift to start that habit. Maybe if picking up your children, there's a number of years that I was able to do that, of picking up the children and visiting Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, but even just praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet at the three o'clock hour is a real opportunity for me and for each one of you to experience hope, healing, and that transformation that comes from the Lord's mercy.

When we realize that He is pouring out His mercy on us, we are better able to receive that mercy, to live in that mercy, and to share that mercy with others. So that three o'clock hour is a real opportunity for conversion.

The Image of the Divine Mercy

Saint Faustina in her diary also shares about an amazing experience where Jesus appeared to her multiple times. And you can read in her diary the dialogue between Jesus and Saint Faustina. Now, in that dialogue, He requests that the image of Divine Mercy to be painted. That image is so significant because Jesus has from his heart pouring forth rays. These rays of red and white signify and remind us of the significance of our baptism, of the Eucharist, and the significance of our redemption, the healing that He's offering us through these rays.

I love that the rays pour forth from His heart, connecting the Divine Mercy devotion, connecting what we know, that Jesus has a heart full of love for you, for me, for each one of us, and from it, the rays pour forth. Those rays are healing rays. Saint Faustina speaks about the significance of those rays. Now, she had somebody with the permission, of course, of her spiritual director. They had an image painted; the first image painted of Divine Mercy. And Saint Faustina always said that it didn't fully capture the way she remembered it. But I like to think of it as a snapshot of maybe even a selfie that Jesus wants us to put in our minds so that we know what mercy looks like. We know that the person of Jesus is inviting each one of us into a personal relationship. That is so very important.

I can't say enough about how Divine Mercy is an opportunity to spread hope and healing to other people, especially those in our life that we already have a relationship with. So, the Divine Mercy image makes for a great gift. The other thing about the Divine Mercy image is that Jesus is stepping forward.

As He is stepping forward in the Divine Mercy image, it's like He's stepping towards us. His eyes are gazed down as if He's looking at each one of us. And I love to think of Him moving forward to us. Sometimes in situations in our life when we need mercy and hope and healing, somebody

sure needs to take that first step forward in those relationships. Now, when you are struggling with someone, as you know, when there's conflict and there's a need for mercy, somebody needs to be the initiator of mercy, taking that step forward. So, in the image of Divine Mercy, Jesus is that person always initiating, taking that step forward, inviting us to return to a relationship with God the Father, and allowing Him to be that mediator of love, that mediator of mercy into our life.

Now, at the bottom of the Divine Mercy image, there is actually the signature that He request of Saint Faustina have written, "Jesus, I trust in you." Now, those powerful but simple words can transform any situation in our life, and always be a source of hope and healing. Jesus, I trust in you is how Jesus wants us to remember Him. He wants to continue for us to turn to Him, even in our dark and difficult moments.

Showing Mercy to Others

Now, with the Divine Mercy devotion, there's another key aspect. And that's the significance of spreading the devotion to other people. How do you spread Divine Mercy, you might wonder, you might ask? It's through personal encounter. And what better way than encounter mercy than to live out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy? One of my favorite passages in the diary of Saint Faustina is where she speaks about the formula for mercy. She gives us an exact formula. This formula is based on showing others mercy through deeds, words, and prayers. Those deeds, words, and prayers give us a structure on how to express mercy to others.

When I first heard about this passage in the Divine Mercy diary by Saint Faustina, I was taken back by the formula. Really Lord, deeds, then words, then prayers? When I first heard about this passage in the Divine Mercy diary about the significance of our deeds, our words, and our prayers, I was taken back, wondering if I really read that correctly, but the more time I spent praying, learning, and reflecting on the message of Divine Mercy, I came to see the importance, the significance of how our little actions of love can mean in somebody else's life.

So, as we want to express mercy to others, it first begins with the desire. It first begins with opening our hearts to others, seeing the people around us. If it is our own family members, if it's our neighbors, if it's those in our parish community or even in our broader community, who is the Lord calling me to share mercy to in deeds? Those deeds can be doing works of mercy.

One of the things that I have found is most significant when it comes to practicing deeds of mercy is getting a prayer partner. Who can you team up with to do that work of mercy, such as bringing a meal to a family in the parish? It could be just doing those little works of mercy, going down to the soup kitchen and volunteering. Having a friend can sure help you to follow through with that deed of mercy and making sure that you enjoy the process of doing that work of mercy as well. Next, the significance of our words. Let's spread love in mercy to others during this Lenten season and beyond. Who are the people in our life that if we could adjust how we speak, sharing words of mercy, sharing the importance of encouraging others to better live out their faith to come to know Jesus Christ, think of the impact that can have.

Our words can be in a text form. Our words can be leaving voicemails, sharing important, just words of kindness to others, and even writing old-fashioned letters. But don't allow this opportunity of Lent to go past where you don't express the importance of God's mercy in your life and share that mercy with others.

Now, there might be some people in our life that it's time for us to forgive the hurts that they have caused us. This is a beautiful way to live out the Divine Mercy message. When we allow ourselves to be forgiven and to seek that forgiveness of others, the Lord can work in a really special way. We will leave with a healing, as this retreat is focusing on healing, like we've never had before. So, the importance of our deeds, our words, and then our prayers.

Prayer Changes Us

So, prayer is so important. Prayer changes us, right? It allows us to see life in maybe a way we never have before, growing in gratitude, interceding for others. It's such a beautiful work of mercy when we pray for others. So, do you have a prayer list? Do you have a list of people that you pray for, that you say that you're going to pray for, and then you do pray for?

Now, praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet is a powerful way to spread mercy, hope, and healing to others. What's beautiful about this prayer is it doesn't take very long. It takes about seven minutes to pray the complete chaplet. And when we pray the chaplet of Divine Mercy, we are praying for us and the whole world. So, I love to think of, who is my us? Who are the people that I'm praying for? I'm sure my family, my friends, but we also have a beautiful privilege of being able to pray for the whole world to know that our prayers are powerful, and to understand that Jesus dying on the cross is the most significant event in history. And it is one we're sharing for others.

Pray with Others

So, I invite you to come and experience the love and mercy of Jesus. I invite you to know that every day is a new beginning. So, whatever has held you bound in the past, may you experience the healing love of Jesus in a new way, in a transforming way. May you see that Jesus uses everyone. Look at Saint Faustina, this woman, this Helen who was born in 1905 who had a tremendous message of mercy to spread throughout the whole world, and really a mission. She invites us to also partake in that mission by spreading mercy and love to others, and understanding the significance of Jesus dying on the cross.

When we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet, we say these simple words, have mercy on us and on the whole world. I think that's such a beautiful reminder that we do want the Lord to have mercy on us, that we need to have a meek and humble heart. We want to forgive those. And we want to know that we need to be forgiven, but we also want to intercede for the whole world. So may we be united in prayer, knowing that others are interceding as well. And if you are in a moment, and if an opportunity to pray with someone else, if you have somebody that's sick in your life, offer to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet. It's one of the most meaningful things that I have ever had experiences praying with other people. In my book, "Our Friend Faustina", I share a story about the opportunity I had to pray in a nursing home with a gentleman. That opportunity of prayer

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took place not because it was a beautiful situation. It was one in which there was a gentleman who was really struggling and didn't know where he was in his life. And I was able to offer the gift of prayer. Shortly after we prayed those prayers, he went and passed on to the Lord. And I always hold that story in my heart to remember that you never know if that opportunity to pray with someone will come again.

So, I encourage you to invite others to come to know Jesus through Divine Mercy devotion, spread hope and healing to others, and never allow that hope and healing, that hope to be removed from your heart. Always keep the hope of Christ in your heart in this message. This Divine Mercy message is such a beautiful way. So let us close in prayer.

Closing Prayer

For the sake of a sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world. For the sake of the sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world. And for the sake of the sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world. Jesus, I trust in you.