

ENCOURAGEMENT ENCOURAGEMENT

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The Host Apostolate

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Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia... He has Risen

Death has been conquered forever. We will live forever. Thanks be to God for his loving kindness and merciful love.

It is interesting that so many people can accept Jesus' death on the Cross but not his Resurrection. Just as they dispute the reality of his living presence in the Eucharist so they dispute that he rose on the third day.

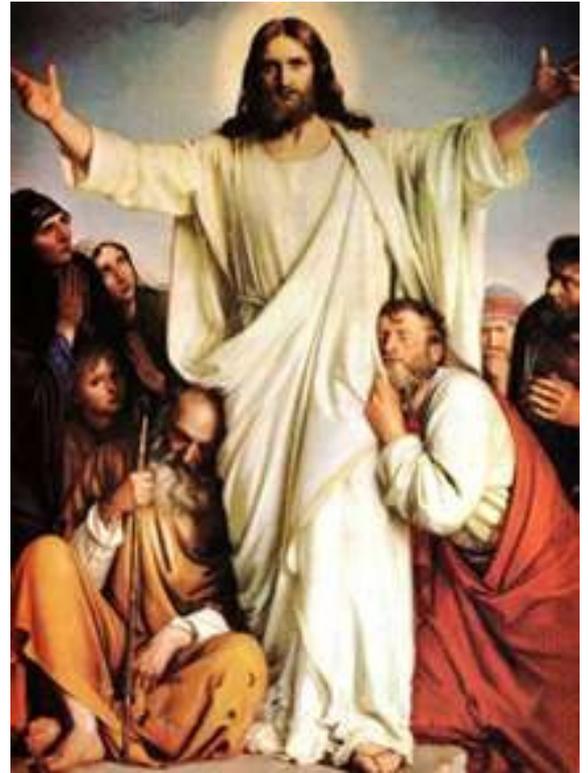
If he did not rise then the living bread is only as 'remembrance' and not the Body and Blood of a living Jesus. Yet Jesus showed us and gave us so many signs that we can return from the dead even to this life. There is the raising of Lazarus of course, but also the widow's only son, and Jairus' daughter. There is also the soldier's son.

We hear of many people who are returned to life through medical care and whose heart stopped. Now, they were not raised by their own power but that of Jesus in union with the Father and Spirit. If this can be done for others why should Jesus not be able to rise from the dead by this same power? We do not have a ghost but one who ate and drank and reproached the doubting Thomas, dare I say in all of us, by asking him to touch him.

The apostles did not believe Mary Magdalene but then saw Jesus for themselves. Jesus continues to reveal himself to many Mystics and Saints. Yet we find His resurrection so difficult to believe. Did Jesus not reveal His Glory on Mount Tabor as he was transfigured?

His resurrection is surely great news. All pain and suffering will end. Our suffering will end, our Lenten observances will end and we will live for all eternity. Is this not a reason to rejoice and be glad for this is the work of the Lord?

Happy Easter. He has indeed Risen. What a thing to look forward to with thanksgiving.



The way before me

I know not the way before me
But Jesus will guide me still:
And so, in His Mercy trusting,
I patiently wait His will.

I know not the cares or sorrows
That into my life may fall,
But Jesus, My loving Saviour
Will give me the grace for all.

I know not the way before me
But Jesus my Lord is near,
To shelter, protect and keep me;
Then why should I doubt or fear?

I know not the way before me,
But this to my soul is given -
The promise of life eternal,
A home and a rest in heaven.

Frances Crosby

50th International Eucharistic Congress
Dublin 10th - 17th June 2012 www.iec2012.ie

A reminder that if you plan to go for either 3 or 7 days you can book online until 9th May or telephone (from the UK: 00-353-1-2981122).

WHY JESUS CAME TO REVEAL HIS MERCY

One of the greatest attributes of God is His mercy...in a world that has now associated love with romantic love and lust as well as doing good to self rather than others there is still a very basic understanding of mercy. This quality often associated with kindness but different from it is seen in the donations made after a cataclysmic event and indeed in general alms giving. It is also demonstrated when we see innocent victims of war and violence. However, true mercy is deeper than this and is another expression of the total and forgiving love that Jesus so clearly shows us in the Gospels.

People often say that we have the image of pure love as revealed to St Margaret Mary Alacoque as The Sacred Heart. This is absolutely true but knowing our weaknesses he came to reveal another attribute of that same love to St Faustyna four hundred years later. He revealed Himself as Divine Mercy, the utterly loving, Compassionate and Forgiving God. At a time when, just preceding the second world war, the world was to see man's total inhumanity to man and the horror of domination, He came to show the power of being merciful as a counter effect of that crime.

It is no mistake that this feast has now become a universal feast as pronounced at the canonisation St Faustyna Kowalska. On the 30th April 2000 Bl. Pope John Paul announced that the first Sunday after Easter was to be Mercy Sunday. Interestingly he died as the vespers on the eve of that feast were being prayed (2nd April 2005).

But why a special feast day? First of all this was directly requested by Jesus Himself and given to the Saint. However, following on from Easter a time of great rejoicing it reminds us that to be Easter people and glorify the living Risen Jesus we must do what He did and extend His love and compassion to all people. It focuses us on mission and intention to be what the Gospels teach us to be. It is also a supreme gift for those who wish to use it. We are bound to make a confession at least once a year at Easter or thereabouts. This feast accentuates the fact and carries a promise of a complete remission of sins and punishment if we do so, a kind of clean slate.



Thus Jesus said to St Faustyna: *“I desire the first Sunday after Easter to be the Feast of Mercy. Ask of My faithful servant (her spiritual director) that, on this day. He is to tell the whole world of My great mercy that whoever approaches the Fount of mercy on this day will be granted complete remission of sins and punishment Mankind will not have peace until it turns in trust to My Mercy.”* Jesus continues: *“My heart rejoices in this title of Mercy. Proclaim that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. All the works of My Hands are crowned with mercy.”* (Diary notebook 1 para. 299-301.)

What is interesting is that Fr. (now Bl. Sopoćko) had reservations about Divine Mercy being the greatest attribute of God. He had spoken of mercy many times and was a very learned priest but as he says, he had spoken of it but not truly grasped its significance for the spiritual life. *“It was only when I encountered a simple holy soul who was in close communion with God who as I believe, with divine inspiration, told me of it that she impelled me to read research and reflect on this subject”* It was he who became its distributor and announcer after her death.

We too must reflect on this wonderful attribute for without God's merciful love we are lost.

Honour His Mercy in a Parish celebration of this feast (15th April).

The Divine Mercy Novena, as instructed by Jesus, begins on Good Friday, nine days before the Feast of Mercy. Further details can be obtained from:
Divine Mercy Apostolate, 1. Courtfield Gdns,
London, W13. 0EY Tel:+44-(0)-20-8998-0925
www.divinemercyapostolate.co.uk

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