

One of the great events of our lifetime has been the unveiling of the Message of Divine Mercy by the Church through the life and teaching of Saint Faustina and our prior Holy Father, Pope John Paul II. Pope John Paul II spoke of our time as one where the need for God's mercy was especially great. He said that he wanted to give the message of divine mercy to the Church and the world for the third millennium. The Holy Father, on April 30, 2000, in the Mass of canonization of Saint Faustina, which happened to be the first of the new millennium, proclaimed that day, which was the second Sunday of Easter to be for the whole Church, Divine Mercy Sunday. Two years later, he authorized a plenary indulgence for the faithful who participate in Divine Mercy Sunday.



The promoters of the Divine Mercy message have given us a simple formula to remember the components of the Divine Mercy message. They are called the ABCs of mercy.

A stands for ASK. Jesus wants us to ask Him for his mercy, for ourselves and for the world. The Lord told Sister Faustina, "Souls that make an appeal to my mercy delight Me. To such souls I grant even more graces than they ask. I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to my compassion."

B stands for BE MERCIFUL. Part of this devotion is to practice mercy. What we have received, we are to give as a gift. Jesus told Sister Faustina: "I demand from you deeds of mercy which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse yourself from it...Even the strongest faith is of no avail without works. If a soul does not exercise mercy in some way, it will not obtain My mercy on the day of judgment."

C stands for COMPLETE TRUST in God's mercy. Trust is more than believing in the trustworthiness of God. Like mercy, it must be put into action. Our trust in Jesus means that we consciously turn away from sin because this is the life of one who trusts in Him. We trust that He will be merciful to us. We trust that He will take care of us, that He will care for the world. It is total: Jesus, I trust in you--in every way and for every good you desire for me and the world.

May the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday help us all to grow closer to God and cooperate with Him in sharing His gift of mercy with the world!