

FROM THE PASTOR

My brothers and sisters,

This week is the holiest week of the year. *These* are the high holy days of our Church. We begin with Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday, as we remember Jesus entering into Jerusalem. He enters amidst praise and cries of *Hosanna in the Highest!* We then read the Passion Narrative and see how quickly the *Hosannas* turn into “Crucify Him!”

Thursday is the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, as we remember the institution of the Eucharist and of the Priesthood, as well as how Jesus humbly washes the feet of His disciples, giving us an example of how we are always to serve others. At the end of the Mass, we process with our Lord into the “Garden” and have the opportunity of keeping Him company in His Agony. **Friday**, this mysterious day called “Good,” brings us deeper into the mystery of God’s love as we read the Passion according to St. John, and Venerate the Holy Cross of Jesus. **Saturday** leads us into rejoicing, as we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord through fire, song, an overview of salvation history (through the readings), the reception of new Catholics into the Church, and the first Mass of Easter. These high holy days, known as the Easter Triduum (literally, “three days”), show us what our Faith is about – the mercy and love of God.

On the Sunday after Easter, April 27, the Church celebrates **Divine Mercy Sunday**. What we all need is mercy, for we all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. On this day we remember in a special way how God has poured out that mercy. We also see how in the last century we have been reminded over and over again of that mercy, especially through St. Faustina and the revelations she had of Jesus. Pope Francis will be canonizing (declaring them “Saint”) Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II April 27. Pope John Paul II, of course was the one who established the universal Feast of Divine Mercy, and died April 2, 2005 on the eve of the Feast of Divine Mercy.

Jesus told St. Faustina that a Novena (9 days of prayer) of the Divine Mercy Chaplet should be prayed beginning on Good Friday and ending on Divine Mercy Sunday. As such, we will have novena booklets at the entrances of the Church for you to pray on your own or with your family. On Sunday, April 27, to celebrate Divine Mercy, I will be hearing confessions from 1:30-2:45, and then praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet in the Church at 3:00pm. All are invited to join me in this great celebration.

As we move toward the greatest celebrations of our Faith, let us prayerfully reflect on the grace of merciful love that Almighty God has poured upon us.