

FROM THE PASTOR

My dear brothers and sisters,

Last week, we reflected on the generosity of God, as He pours out His great gift of Divine Mercy. The acronym **FINCH** helped us remember the ways Jesus showed St. Faustina that we can enter into this great gift of Mercy – **F**east, **I**mage, **N**ovena, **C**haplet, and **H**our. This week’s second reading from the Letter to the Hebrews speaks about how Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself is an offering for sins. **“By one offering he has made perfect forever those who are being consecrated”** (Hebrews 10:14). Jesus washed us clean, He **MADE US HOLY**, by dying on the Cross for us! We did not deserve this – it is total grace and mercy of God! So, how do we enter into this Divine Mercy? As Fr. Michael Gaitley says, it is as easy as **A-B-C** – Ask for God’s mercy, Be merciful to others, Completely trust in Jesus.

Ask for God’s mercy. God wants to forgive us. As Pope Francis has said, God never tires of forgiving us; it is we who tire of asking for His forgiveness. Jesus told St. Faustina, which she recorded in her *Diary*, **“I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to My compassion”** (*Diary*, 1146), and **“I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My Merciful Heart”** (1588). He so longs to forgive us! When we go to Confession, He works miracles! Jesus says to St. Faustina:

Tell souls where they are to look for solace, that is, in the Tribunal of Mercy [the Sacrament of Reconciliation]. There the greatest miracles take place.... It suffices to come with faith to the feet of My representative [a priest] and to reveal to him one’s misery, and the miracle of Divine Mercy will be fully demonstrated. (1448)

Sometimes, though, we are afraid to go to Confession. Jesus encourages us: **“When you approach the confessional, know this, that I Myself am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest, but I Myself act in your soul. Here the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy”** (1602). So, if we are to receive God’s mercy, we have but to ask, specifically in Confession, as we meet our God!

Be merciful to others. Once we receive mercy, it must flow through us to others. Remember the parable of the servant who was forgiven a great debt. His lack of mercy to others showed that he did not fully receive the gift of mercy, and so it was taken from him (Matthew 18:23-35). We are called to be God’s merciful love to the people around us (**“As I have loved you, so you must love one another”** John 13:34). The **SPIRITUAL AND CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY** are ways to exercise mercy.

<u>SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY</u>	<u>CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach the ignorant 2. Pray for the living and the dead 3. Correct sinners 4. Counsel those in doubt 5. Console the sorrowful 6. Bear wrongs patiently 7. Forgive wrongs willingly 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feed the hungry 2. Give drink to the thirsty 3. Clothe the naked 4. Shelter the homeless 5. Comfort the prisoners 6. Visit the sick 7. Bury the dead

Completely trust in Jesus. Lack of trust in God was the sin of Adam and Eve, the Original Sin. The serpent convinced them that God did not love them, that God was their rival, and that they needed to set themselves up as “other gods”. We still struggle with this today, as we question whether God will *really* take care of us. We so often lack the trust in God that is needed to receive His greatest gifts. Jesus says to St. Faustina, **“Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to My mercy”** (300). Do we trust Him? Jesus gives us great hope that we can trust Him:

I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this image with the signature: “Jesus, I trust in You” (327). **The graces of My mercy are drawn by means of one vessel only, and that is – trust. The more a soul trusts, the more it will receive** (1578). **Most dear to Me is the soul that strongly believes in My goodness and has complete trust in Me. I heap My confidence upon it and give it all it asks”** (453).

May we live out the ABCs of Divine Mercy every day!