

## FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we continue our joyful celebration of the Resurrection, I would like to thank all who participated in our Divine Mercy Sunday devotions last Sunday. So many have turned from the road of sin to the Lord through this devotion. Many people have been asking me for some clarification about the promises offered by the Lord on Divine Mercy Sunday. One question that keeps coming up is, "How soon before Divine Mercy Sunday can you go to Confession, and have it count toward Divine Mercy Sunday?" Well, this question requires a little explanation. If we are talk-

ing about the plenary indulgence offered by the Church for the carrying out of certain types of Divine Mercy Sunday devotions, the answer is that the Church traditionally recommends that you make your Confession not more than 20 days in advance of performing the indulgenced work.

**But**, we need to remember that this plenary indulgence instituted by the Church for Divine Mercy Sunday **is not the same** as the extraordinary graces for Divine Mercy Sunday that Jesus promised to St. Faustina. After all, in the Diary of St. Faustina, entry 699, Jesus promised her: "The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened." To receive those special graces, "the complete forgiveness of sins and punishment," in other words, a complete renewal of baptismal grace in our hearts, all we need to do is to receive Holy Communion in a state of grace on Divine Mercy Sunday, with trust in our Lord's great mercy.

Whether your last Confession was 10, 20, 30, or even more days before Divine Mercy Sunday, as long as you do not have the stain of unconfessed mortal sin on your soul, then you are spiritually alive in Christ and able to receive His special grace from Holy Communion on that great feast day! Divine Mercy Sunday could just as easily be termed 'Divine Generosity Sunday,' when we consider how little our Lord requires from us in order that we may be able to receive this extraordinary outpouring of His love. A plenary indulgence, on the other hand, is a bit more complicated to participate in and to obtain.

Sin without repentance is the only obstacle that prevents Jesus Christ from deeply healing and sanctifying our souls on these great feast days. That's why it is best not to count the days before these feasts and try to abide by some minimum requirement about when to make your Confession. Rather, take an inventory of your heart. If there is anything in your heart that is impeding your love for Jesus and His for you - any grudge still held, any despair or mistrust, any kind word left unsaid, any duty seriously neglected - this is the time for a 'spring cleaning of the soul.' Make a good Confession, and then try your best, with the help of grace, to keep your soul clean, open, and ready to receive our Savior in Holy Communion on the first and second Sundays of Easter. Even if you have not committed any mortal sins that need confessing, confessing venial sins also removes obstacles to all that our Lord wants to do in your heart. So clean them out, too! The time for fulfilling the Paschal Precept (Easter Duty), that is the obligation of receiving the Eucharist for Easter, extends to the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity, May 26. No one conscious of committing a serious or mortal sin should receive Holy Communion until they have first gone to the Sacrament of Penance, also known as Confession. Go to Confession as often as you need, or at least once a month!

Please begin to pray for our 13 First Holy Communicants who will receive the Body and Blood of our Risen Lord under the appearance of bread and wine for the first time on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Please keep them and their families in your prayers. To them and to their families, may they be like the disciples in today's Gospel who recognize the Lord in the breaking of the bread.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Jason".