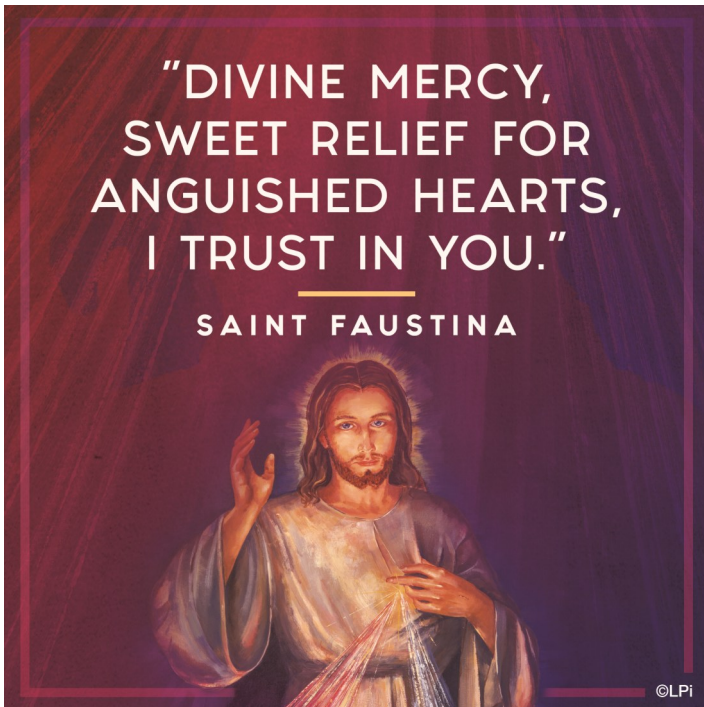


## FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Lord has risen! Alleluia! On this Divine Mercy Sunday, the octave of Easter, the Church places us once again before the empty tomb and the open side of Christ. The same Lord who appeared to the frightened disciples in the upper room now stands in our midst and says: “Peace be with you.” He shows us His wounds, not to accuse, but to heal. “Put your finger here and see my hands... Do not be unbelieving, but believe.” In these wounds flows the river of mercy that the Father has prepared for us from all eternity.

We have just walked the long road of Lent, confronting our poverty, our sin, our inability to save ourselves. Many of us have discovered, perhaps for the first time, that the Lord was not waiting for us to become perfect. He was waiting for us to let Him love us as we are. This is the kerygma we proclaim every time we celebrate the Mass: Christ died for our sins and rose for our justification. **His mercy is not a feeling; it is a Person.** It is Jesus Himself, alive and present,

who today wants to pour the blood and water from His side into the depths of our life.

St. Faustina heard the Lord say: “My mercy is greater than your sins.” On this day the Church repeats it with the voice of the whole People of God: the gates of Paradise are wide open. Whoever approaches the fountain of mercy with a contrite heart, confesses their sins in the Sacrament of Confession, receives the Body of the Risen One and trusts in His love, receives the grace of complete forgiveness and the remission of all temporal punishment. **Heaven is not earned; it is received.**

Do not be afraid to believe. The same mercy that raised Lazarus, that converted the good thief, that called Peter after his betrayal, is here today for you. Come to the celebration with the simplicity of children. Let the songs, the silence, and the breaking of the Bread become for you the real encounter with the Risen Lord. Jesus, I trust in You! **These words are not a pious slogan.** They are the accent of the poor one who allows himself to be saved. Say them with all your heart today, and you will begin to walk in the new life of the baptized.

Let this trust bear fruit in concrete life. Let us become witnesses of mercy in our families, in our workplaces, in the places where we live. The world does not need more condemnation; it needs the announcement that mercy has triumphed. As the Lord said to St. Faustina, “Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to My mercy.”

**Today, as we celebrate Divine Mercy, the Easter Mission begins in our parish.** This is a graced time when the Risen Lord wants to go out with us to the streets, to the homes, to the people who still live in darkness and in the shadow of death. The same mercy we have received, we are now called to announce. Let us not keep this treasure for ourselves. **Let us invite our relatives, our neighbors, our friends, and even those who seem far away, to come and see that the Lord is alive.** The Easter Mission is not an extra activity; it is the natural fruit of having encountered the mercy of God. When we have tasted how good the Lord is, we cannot remain silent.

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, keep us in this Easter joy and teach us to be merciful as the Father is merciful.

Peace,