

Second Sunday of Easter (or Sunday of Divine Mercy)
April 19, 2020

“... where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more” (Romans 5:20)

World War I, according to some estimates, would claim as many as 37 million deaths (military and civilian). World War II, again according to estimates, would see the number of deaths increase to approximately 70 to 80 million (military and civilian). Let us not forget, that sandwiched between these two horrific events many nations were suffering an economic depression. I chose to begin this way as a stark reminder of the dire situations many people, our parents and grandparents, lived through. It was also during this time of upheaval that Our Lord Jesus Christ chose to appear to a Polish religious sister, Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, offering to us, through her, the revelation of His Divine Mercy. It is this Divine Mercy of Jesus we are celebrating today.

We could rightly ask: “Why did Jesus choose to remind humanity of the Divine Mercy of God at this particular period in history?” Had He not already revealed this attribute of God during His three years of public ministry? Are we not living through times equally as destructive as that time? Although these questions are valid, and I could easily answer them with - “Yes, He did teach” and “Nothing makes that period any different from the suffering we experience at any other time,” I believe they fail to grasp the underlying reality that every generation needs a reminder of the mission of Jesus, which is a “Mission of Mercy.”

Have you ever driven home from work only to realize that you do not remember the drive? The human brain has the ability to receive millions of stimuli at any given moment. If the brain had no way of filtering these down to a particularly small number, we would quickly become overwhelmed. Researchers tell us that when moments occur, like forgetting how we managed to drive home, our brain goes into a form of slumber. It will wake up when either the action is complete or if something unexpected occurs which “wakes us up” and gets the adrenaline flowing. The same can be said concerning our spiritual relationship with God. We become so used to His teachings, His Presence, that sometimes it takes something extraordinary or tragic to wake us up and remind us of Him. Our Lord’s revelation of His Divine Mercy was not something new, rather it may have become something we had grown too accustomed to or something we had come to doubt. Jesus chose to remind us, through Saint Faustina, that He both loves us and is merciful towards us despite what suffering we are going through or, sadly, choose to inflict upon others. During this time when many may be struggling with questions of “Why?,” please remind yourself and them of God’s never-failing love and His mercy towards each one of us.