



Vox Episcopi

13 April 2023

Our celebrations of the Easter Vigil was the beginning of the season of Easter, a feast of rebirth and new beginnings.

While the Vigil marked the end of the paschal fast, the end of the celebration of Holy Week, and the end of repentance and conversion for which Lent prepared us all, it is now a time of joy and thanksgiving.

The Easter season is the longest of the special liturgical seasons of the Church. It extends right through to Pentecost Sunday, the 50th day after Easter, and encompasses the feast of Divine Mercy Sunday, this Sunday, 16 April, the Ascension of Our Lord on 21 May and then Pentecost on Sunday 28 May when we celebrate the Holy Spirit coming down on the Apostles and followers of Jesus who had gathered in the Upper Room, and the beginning of the Church.

Divine Mercy Sunday, this Sunday, is based on the private revelations of Sr Faustina Kowalska and focuses on the gift of mercy and love given through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

Sr Faustina, who became known as the Apostle of Mercy, was a Polish religious sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy who received the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy through visions and conversations with Jesus.

In her diary Sr Faustina wrote the chaplet's prayers for mercy, also said on beads like the rosary, are threefold – to obtain mercy, to trust in God's mercy, and to show mercy to others. The Chaplet can be said at any time but it is especially said on Divine Mercy Sunday at 3pm, recalling the time of Christ's death on the Cross.

Sr Faustina suffered from tuberculosis and died at just 33 years old. She was the first saint canonised in the new millennium by Pope John Paul II, 30 April 2000 who on the same day declared the second Sunday of Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday.