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# A reflection for Divine Mercy Sunday

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How can anyone argue against Divine Mercy Sunday?

Divine Mercy is hope wrapped up in a loving God, ever ready to embrace us and forgive even our gravest sins. Believing in God, but not in Divine Mercy, would be a depressing and burdensome faith to bear.

At the core of the Gospel story of the good thief is unconditional love and compassion. Today, you will be with me in paradise. Not, okay your sins are forgiven; now do this and this and this, and you will be saved. But today - now - you will enter into glory with me. Welcome!

Divine Mercy is often associated with the visions and private revelations of St. Faustina. Pope John Paul II had a great devotion to this Polish nun. When he declared the Second Sunday of Easter to be Divine Mercy Sunday, many took it as a papal decree to promote the devotions described in Faustina?s ?Diary,? such as venerating the Divine Mercy image and praying the Chaplet.

As Catholics, we have a soft spot for devotions and devotionals. It?s part of our hands-on, sacramental nature. But, we are also a diverse bunch. What speaks to one, may not speak to another. Devotions and belief in private revelations ? even if approved and recommended by the Church ? are not mandatory. Offering a special Mass that includes the Divine Mercy devotions for those who wish it is a good thing.

Presenting the devotions as an obligatory form of worship for the Second Sunday of Easter is not. Even some Divine Mercy websites [1] are careful to stress that this Sunday is not meant to be a ?party for devotees.? The focus, they say, should be on bringing ?hardened sinners? back into the fold.

Perhaps we, as a Church, need to spend less time worrying about bringing back the ?hardened sinners,? and more time showing mercy to those struggling to stay despite personal hurts and rejection. We need to reach out to those who have one foot out the door, or who have already had the door closed on them.

As we meditate in gratitude for God?s gracious mercy shown to us, we should look honestly at the mercy that we show to others. Our God is a God of mercy. Are we a Church of mercy?

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**Links:**
[1] http://www.divinemercysunday.com/Is_Your_Parish_Correctly_Celebrating_Divine_Mercy_Sunday.htm