

Devotion to the Divine Mercy

In connection with the octave of Easter, recent years have witnessed the development and diffusion of a special devotion to the Divine Mercy based on the writings of Sr. Faustina Kowalska who was canonized April 30, 2000. It concentrates on the mercy poured forth in Christ's death and resurrection, fount of the Holy Spirit who forgives sins and restores joy at having been redeemed. Since the liturgy of the Second Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday - as it is now called - is the natural locus in which to express man's acceptance of the Redeemer's mercy, the faithful should be taught to understand this devotion in the light of the liturgical celebrations of these Easter days. Indeed, "the paschal Christ is the definitive incarnation of mercy, his living sign which is both historico-salvific and eschatological. At the same time, the Easter liturgy places the words of the psalm on our lips: "I shall sing forever of the Lord's mercy" (Ps 89[88] 2)".

The Annual Blessing of Family Homes

The annual blessing of families takes place in their homes during Eastertide - or at other times of the year. This pastoral practice is highly recommended to parish priests and to their assistant priests since it is greatly appreciated by the faithful and affords a precious occasion to recollect God's constant presence among Christian families. It is also an opportunity to invite the faithful to live according to the Gospel, and to exhort parents and children to preserve and promote the mystery of being "a domestic church".

Blessing of Homes During Eastertide

*Intercessions may be made while going from room to room or around the outside of the house.
This prayer may be said at the front door:*

O God,

Make the door of this house wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship, narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride, and strife. Make its threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling-block to children, nor to straying feet, but rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter's power. God, make the door of this house the gateway to your eternal kingdom.

Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen

The house and rooms and family may be sprinkled with holy water, a reminder of baptism during the Easter season.

Lord,

We rejoice in the victory of your Son over death: by rising from the tomb to new life he gives us new hope and promise. Bless all the members of this household and surround them with your protection, that they may find comfort and peace in Jesus Christ, the paschal lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sources:

DIRECTORY ON POPULAR PIETY AND THE LITURGY: PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

Vatican City December 2001

Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1989