



## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for April

### Young People

That young people may respond generously to their vocations and seriously consider offering themselves to God in the priesthood or consecrated life.



Easter is a time of new life. For some, a new life is begun at Easter as they become Catholic and become full members of the Church. Holy Trinity is the home of many converts to the faith. This Easter will be no exception as we welcome new members to the parish. We pray for those who are preparing to enter the Church, and we continue to pray for the third graders of our parish who will also soon receive our Lord in Holy Communion this month!

### **Growing in Faith: A Conversion Story** by Mrs. Donahue, HTS teacher

I was raised in a faith filled home full of love and respect. My father was Catholic and my mother, Lutheran. My parents were married in the Catholic Church and my brother and I were both baptized Catholic. My father was and still is a very faithful man; however, for reasons of his own, he did not practice his faith. My mother, on the other hand, practiced her faith and was determined to raise my brother and me in a Christian home. We prayed together as a family, my brother and I attended Sunday school each week, and along with our parents, we cultivated friendships and became active members of our church community. We were taught to follow the ten commandments and the golden rule, to accept and respect others, to always try to walk in someone else's shoes, and to remember that it is easier to love than to hate and easier to forgive than to hold on to hurt or anger.

It was not until I was married and had children of my own that I considered converting to Catholicism. When I married my husband, we agreed that we would be married in my church, but that we would raise our children in the Catholic faith. Shortly after our daughter was born, I felt a strong desire to become more connected with the faith we had agreed to raise our children.

In the end, my conversion to Catholicism became more of a re-examination/rediscovery of my faith. Through the RCIA process I gained a deeper understanding and appreciation for the gifts I had been given as a child...the love of Jesus in my heart, a love for others and the desire to share that love. There was no single moment where it all made sense or where the light bulb suddenly went on, it was simply a peaceful awakening or perhaps a deeper awareness of something that was already within me.

## Fast Facts of the Faith

# What is Divine Mercy Sunday about?

Jesus appeared to a nun named Faustina Kowalska touching his Sacred Heart with red and white rays shining from it. He asked her to have a painting made of his image with the words "Jesus, I trust in You." The red and white rays represent blood and water that flowed from his heart when he was pierced through his side on the cross. The red rays further symbolize the cross and the Eucharist, while the white rays mean baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

On April 30, 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized Saint Faustina as 'the great Apostle of Divine Mercy' and approved the Divine Mercy message and devotion by declaring the Second Sunday of Easter as "Divine Mercy Sunday". Pope John Paul II died on April 2, 2005, on the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday 5 years after he had helped to establish it as a feast day.

Starting on Good Friday, pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet as a novena that ends on Divine Mercy Sunday. It is shorter than the rosary and is beautiful to sing!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_\\_RbWgxA2G0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__RbWgxA2G0) and  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5TGfisOKMM>

### Optional Opening Prayers

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.

*(Repeat 3 times)* O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You!

### Our Father, Hail Mary and the Apostle's Creed

*For each of the five decades (On each "Our Father" bead of the rosary, pray)*

Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

*(On each of the 10 "Hail Mary" beads, pray)*

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

### Concluding prayer *(Repeat 3 times)*

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

### Optional Closing Prayer

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.



Easter is such a major feast day that the Church celebrates it for an octave – 8 days. The last of these is Divine Mercy Sunday, so celebrate it with your family by making **Divine Mercy Sundaes!**



Scoop ice cream into a bowl and create the rays with 2 long squirts of whipped cream. Embelish them with red and blue toppings of your choice, such as Kool-Aid powder, strawberries and blueberries, or red and blue sprinkles. Don't forget the cherry on top for His Sacred Heart!

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