

## *Today is the Second Sunday of Easter - Divine Mercy Sunday*



Today we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday; it is based on the private revelations of St. Faustina Kowalska, which recommended a particular devotion to the Divine Mercy. In 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized St. Faustina and, during the ceremony, he declared: It is important then that we accept the whole message that comes to us from the word of God on this Second Sunday of Easter, which from now on throughout the Church *will be called "Divine Mercy Sunday"*.

In the various readings, the liturgy seems to indicate the path of mercy which, while re-establishing the relationship of each person with God, also creates new relations of fraternal solidarity among human beings

The Divine Mercy image depicts Jesus at the moment he appears to the disciples in the Upper Room, after the Resurrection, when he empowers them to forgive or retain sins.

This moment is recorded in John 20:19-31, which is the Gospel reading for this Sunday in all three yearly Sunday liturgical cycles (A, B, and C)

This reading is placed on this day because it includes the appearance of Jesus to the Apostle Thomas (in which Jesus invites him to touch his wounds). This event occurred on the eighth day after the Resurrection (John 20:26), and so it is used on the liturgy eight days after Easter.

**Prayers:** Please remember in your prayers: The Pope, Bishops, Priests especially Fr. Philip, Religious, Deacons, our Parish Family, loved ones and all throughout the country.

Those who are sick both physically and mentally, in our parish, families and throughout the world; those suffering from Coronavirus and those who have asked for our prayers.

Those who have died recently, and all whose anniversaries are at this time. Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them, may the rest in peace. Amen.

The priests and parishioners of St Margaret Mary Coleford, Our Lady of Victories Cinderford, Our Lady of Newent with Blaison.

**Diocesan Prayer Link:** I gather that a couple of weeks ago, that some of those watching the Mass at Clifton Cathedral were concerned that prayers were asked for Fr Philip in Cirencester. That weekend prayers should have been requested for Fr Philip together with the Parishioners of St Peter's Cirencester and St Michael's Tetbury; Fr Thomas, Deacon Steve and parishioners of St Aldhelm's Malmesbury., We do not normally necessary put the priest names because they could have died, retired or moved to another Parish.

**Coronavirus-19:** We have been told that the lockdown in this country has been extended at least for another three weeks. It is a difficult time for us and nothing that has been experienced before. It is important that we accept the guidelines that we are being given, so that we have the restrictions lifted as soon as possible. If anyone needs anything or someone to talk to, please email me and I will contact you.

The days can be confusing at present!

Looking at the Liturgical diary, this week we celebrate the Solemnity of St George, Martyr and Patron of England; the Feast of St Mark, the Evangelist.

**Mass Obligation:** There is no Sunday or weekday Mass – the Sunday obligation has been lifted for the time being. We can still pray together and look after one another. We can take care of those around us who might be in need. We can build up a sense of community in the area in which we live and maybe we relearn the simple things of faith whilst we hunger for the Bread of Life in the Eucharist.

**Mass Livestreamed:** Several parishes throughout the country are livestreaming the Mass each day: Clifton Cathedral Sunday Mass is @ 9.30am; there are also weekday Masses but please check their website.

St John The Evangelist Church, Bath Sunday Mass is at 10.00am. Please check their website for weekday Mass times and also the Rosary and other services.

### **Prayer for Spiritual Communion**

Lord Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things, and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul, so that I may unite myself wholly to you, now and forever. Amen

We can still be instruments of peace, of joy, of faith and love in so many ways. We are a community of hope and faith and love, and we can still be proclaimers of the Gospel even when our normal, everyday routine is upset. May God watch over each and every one of us, and remind us – always – that he is near.

Please stay well and stay safe. God Bless.