

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY – The Second Sunday of Easter – 19th April 2020

On this Divine Mercy Sunday, St Peter (in our Second Reading – 1 Peter 1 v 3-9) presents us with the “full – programme” of God’s Divine Mercy and plan of salvation. The Origin and Source of our salvation is, “God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”; the motive – “Who in His great mercy”; the result – “has given us new birth”; the means – “ by raising Jesus Christ from the dead”; and the consequence – “a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never fade away”. Here is the whole gospel of Christ succinctly summarised in just two verses. All God’s mercies flow to us from the Sufferings and Death of Christ (from the “precious Blood” of Jesus – 1v19) and from His Glorious Resurrection from the Dead, and so, during this Octave of Prayer between Easter Sunday and Divine Mercy Sunday we have been praying for a deeper repentance and a deeper consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the Merits of His Precious Blood.

“For the sake of His Sorrowful Passion have mercy on us and on the whole world”

It seems possible, even probable, that the present pandemic may be followed, in the next few months, by the deepest economic recession since the 1920s, and that the pandemic itself (in successive waves) may be with us as part of our daily lives for at least the next eighteen months or, perhaps, even longer. We will need therefore to reach deep down within ourselves for the inner strength to resolutely face and patiently endure whatever trials may lie ahead of us with the grace and strength and power which comes to us (and is exemplified for us) in the Death and Resurrection of Christ, Who is our Anchor in the storms of life, our Fortress in times of pain and distress, and our Comforter in the ups and downs of life and through its joys and sorrows.

If death should come for us – and (remember) death will come for us – then God does us no wrong! He inflicts no injustice on us when He withdraws what He so generously gives to us from moment to moment, from breath to breath, from heart-beat to heart-beat. In the Last Days – of plague and famine and war – as in the days of the Ten Plagues of Egypt, many will harden their hearts against God (Exodus 7 v 13 & 14) and raise their fists against heaven, whilst others will allow themselves to be broken, confessing the truth that, “ the Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord”. God is not in our debt. He does not owe us life. He is not obliged to give us tomorrow. So let us, by God’s grace, allow ourselves to be reminded of these truths of His Divine Mercy in this present pandemic, and we resolve to live out these truths, if God spares us, in living lives that are more thankful, more generous, more worshipful. And if others harden their hearts, we pray (especially during this pandemic),

“ Eternal Father, we offer to 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. For the sake of His Sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world”

*“ Eternal Father, through the prayers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, I offer to You the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with all His Love, with all His Merits, with all His Sufferings, **to atone for all the sins I have committed** throughout my whole life and especially in the last forty-eight hours. Glory be*

*Eternal Father, through the prayers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, I offer to You the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with all His Love, with all His Merits, with all His Sufferings, **to purify the good I have done badly** throughout my whole life and especially in the last forty-eight hours. Glory be*

*Eternal Father, through the prayers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, I offer to You the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with all His Love, with all His Merits, with all His Sufferings, **to compensate for all the good I have failed to do** throughout my whole life and especially in the last forty-eight hours. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen”.*

May God grant us a holy and blessed Eastertide, full of Divine Mercy leading us to a New Pentecost. Amen!