

The Life of Saint Faustina Kowalska

“ At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.” (St. Luke 10:21)

WEEK TWO



Saint Faustina Kowalska is "a gift from God for our times", a great mystic, a teacher of spiritual life, who recalls the biblical truth of God's merciful love for every man and calls to announce it to the world with the witness of life, with action, word and prayer. Apostle of Divine Mercy, Prophet of our times, great mystic and teacher of spiritual life. Such titles usually accompany the name of Saint Sister Faustina Kowalska of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy. Saint Faustina belongs to the best known and most loved saints in the history of the Church. She was born on 25 August 1905 as the third child of ten children in the family of Marianna and Stanislaw Kowalski, farmers from the village of Głogowiec. Two days later at Baptism, she was given the name Elena. At the age of nine she received her First Communion. She attended school for just a scant three years and later served with wealthy families in Aleksandrów and Łódź. From the age of seven she felt a religious vocation to serve God, but her parents did not give her consent to enter the convent. However, in July 1924 prompted by the vision of the suffering Christ, she left for Warsaw to look for a place in a convent. Thus she wrote in her diary: "I once went to a dance with one of my sisters. When everyone was having a great time, my soul began to feel intimate torments. At the moment in which I began to dance, I suddenly saw Jesus next to me, Jesus scourged, stripped of his clothes, all covered with

wounds, who said these words to me: "How much longer will I have to endure you? How long will you make me wait? ". Instantly the cheerful sound of music died away; the company I was in disappeared from my sight. We were left alone Jesus and I. I sat next to my dear sister, making what had happened inside me look like a headache. Soon after, I left the company and my sister without being noticed and went to the Cathedral of St. Stanislaus Kostka. It was almost dark. There were few people in the cathedral. Without paying any attention to what was happening around me, I prostrated myself, my arms outstretched, before the Blessed Sacrament and asked the Lord to deign to let me know what I had to do. Then I heard these words: "Leave immediately for Warsaw; there you will enter the convent ". I got up from prayer, went home and did the necessary things. As I could, I informed my sister of what had happened in my soul, I asked her to say goodbye to our parents for me and so, with only one dress, with nothing else, I arrived in Warsaw "

Not knowing the city, he entered a church and the parish priest gave her the address of a family, where she could stay until she was welcomed in a convent.

"At that time - she noted in the Diary - I began to look for a convent, but at any door I knocked, I met a clear refusal. The pain gripped my heart and I said to Jesus: Help me. Do not leave me alone. For a year she still worked as a domestic help to earn her modest dowry and on 1 August 1925 she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy in Warsaw.

In this Congregation she spent thirteen years in various houses of the Congregation, of which the longest period in the convent in Krakow, here in the photo, then in Płock and Vilnius, working as a cook, shop assistant in the bakery, gardener and concierge. She was ill with tuberculosis and the digestive system and therefore spent over 8 months in the Prądnik hospital in Krakow.



She endured greater sufferings than those inflicted by tuberculosis such as voluntary offering for sinners and the Apostleship of Divine Mercy.

Her union with Jesus was very significant, so much so that she wrote in her diary that Jesus called her "Secretary of Divine Mercy" and his favorite wife. In 1938 she adds that she had had a dialogue with God, in which she complains that her congregation does not even have a saint, and receives this answer: "... You are" Saint Faustina received many extraordinary graces in her life: the revelations, the visions, the hidden stigmata, the participation in the passion of the Lord, the gift of ubiquity, the gift of reading in souls, the gift of prophecy and the rare gift of betrothal and of the mystical marriage; living contact with God, with Our Lady, with angels, with saints and with the souls in purgatory. Despite the gift of so many extraordinary graces she wrote in the "Diary": "Neither the graces, nor the revelations, nor the ecstasies, nor any other gift bestowed on her make her perfect, but the intimate union of my soul with God. they are only an ornament of the soul, but they do not constitute its substance or perfection. My holiness and perfection consists in a close union of my will with God's will "



Sister Faustina's main task was to pass on to the Church and to the world the message of Mercy, which is the remembrance of the biblical truth about God's merciful love for man, the exhortation to entrust one's life to him and to the active love of neighbor. Jesus showed Faustina not only the depth of His mercy, but he transmitted to her new forms of worship: the image of Merciful Jesus with the inscription Jesus I trust in You, the Feast of Divine Mercy, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and prayer. in the moment of Jesus' agony on the cross, called the Hour of Mercy. To each of them, and also to the spread of the message of Mercy with the testimony of life, Jesus associated great promises, soliciting in return a behavior permeated by trust in God and aimed at the fulfillment of His will and the witness of mercy towards others. .

Saint Faustina was so involved in consoling the suffering Jesus in his passion and death that, when she could, she did the Via Crucis, physically or spiritually, so much so that God the Father did an incredible thing for her. God the Father sent one of his Seraphim 14 times for 14 consecutive days to Saint Faustina to give her Holy Communion, as she was immobilized in her bed with tuberculosis. This was to honor the 14 stations of the cross that she had done daily.

Sister Faustina died on 5 October 1938 in the convent of Krakow at the age of just 33. From his charism and mystical experience the Apostolic Movement of Divine Mercy was born, which continues its mission, announcing the message of Mercy to the world through the witness of life, action, word and prayer. On April 18, 1993, the Holy Father John Paul II raised her to the glory of the altars, and on April 30, 2000, he included her in the community of Saints of the Church. Her rests can be found at the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Krakow. Holy Father John Paul II wrote that in the age of the great totalitarianisms Sister Faustina became the spokesperson for the message that only one force is able to balance their negativity: it is the truth about God's merciful love. "Diary" "gospel of mercy written in the perspective of the twentieth century" which forced men to endure very painful experiences. This message - according to the Holy Father Benedict XVI - is truly the main message of our times: mercy as Divine power, as God's limit to the evil of the whole world.

INVITATION

After we learned how saint Faustina let God lead her to fulfill His Will in her life, here are some questions, so we can ponder where we stand on this challenge.

1. In what ways do we see God's finger leading us to paths very different to our wills?
2. Are we frightened?



Pope Francis at the tomb of Saint Faustina, in the chapel of the sanctuary of the Divine Mercy in Krakow, on 30th July 2016 during the GMG in Poland.

3. If we are frightened, where do we stand in putting our trust in God?
4. Are we like little children, who Trust in the Will of God?

Lets always pray to be attentive to what God has in store for us and cause Jesus to rejoice in our littleness.

Let us pray the Holy Spirit to help us discerning God's Will in our life, by connecting to the Divine Spirit, the way saint Faustina did:

Prayer to the Divine Spirit



*O Divine Spirit, Spirit of truth and of light,
Dwell ever in my soul by Your divine grace.
May Your breath dissipate the darkness,
And in this light may good deeds be multiplied.*

*O Divine Spirit, Spirit of love and of mercy,
You pour the balm of trust into my hearth,
Your grace confirms my soul in good,
Giving it the invincible power of constancy.*

*O Divine Spirit, Spirit of peace and of joy,
You invigorate my thirsting hearth
And pour into it the living fountain of God's love,
Making it intrepid for battle.*

*O Divine Spirit, my soul's most welcome guest,
For my part, I want to remain faithful to You;
Both in days of joy and in the agony of suffering,
I want always, O Spirit of God, to live in Your presence.*

*O Divine Spirit, who pervade my whole being
And give me to know Your Divine, Triune Life,
And lead me into the mystery of Your Divine Being,
Initiating me into Your Divine Essence,
Thus united to You, I will live a life without end. Amen*

(Diary #1411)

On our third week, we will talking about the image of the Divine Mercy.