

Divine Mercy Brings True Peace, Pope Says

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Staff Writer

(March 31, 2008) “From divine mercy, which brings peace to hearts, arises authentic peace for the world, peace between peoples, and among various cultures and religions,” said Pope Benedict XVI on the Feast of Divine Mercy.

Speaking from Castelgandolfo, where he spent a few days of rest, Pope Benedict XVI announced that he will preside over a Mass on April 2 in memory of John Paul II, which will open the First World Congress on Apostolic Divine Mercy in Rome.

Pope Benedict recalled how, during the Jubilee Year 2000, the “Servant of God John Paul II ordained that throughout the Church the Sunday after Easter, apart from being ‘in Albis’ Sunday, should also be called Divine Mercy Sunday. The pronouncement coincided with the canonization of Faustina Kowalska, a humble Polish nun, who was born in 1905, died in 1938, and was a zealous messenger of the Merciful Jesus.

“Mercy,” he added, “is the central nucleus of the evangelical message. . . . Merciful love also illuminates the face of the Church and shows itself both through the Sacraments - especially the Sacrament of Penance - and through works of charity. . . .”

Like Sister Faustina, Pope John Paul II was also an apostle of Divine Mercy, he said. “That unforgettable Saturday of April 2, 2005, when he closed his eyes to this world, was the eve of the second Sunday of Easter. And many people remarked upon the singular coincidence which brought together two dimensions: the Marian (the first Saturday of the month), and that of Divine Mercy.”

Pope Benedict said that the message of Divine Mercy was at the heart of John Paul II’s long and multi-faceted pontificate and that his entire mission was summed up in the statement he made while inaugurating the Shrine of Divine Mercy at Krakow-Lagiewniki in 2002. “Apart from God’s mercy there is no other source of hope for human beings.”

“His message, then, like that of St. Faustina, leads us back to the face of Christ, the supreme revelation of God’s mercy,” Pope Benedict said. “Constantly contemplating that face is the legacy he left us and that we joyfully accept and make our own.”

The First World Apostolic Congress on Divine Mercy will be held in Rome this week, to be inaugurated with a Mass in St. Peter’s Square on Wednesday 2 April, the third anniversary of the death of John Paul II.

“We place the congress under the celestial protection of Most Holy Mary ‘Mater Misericordiae,’” Pope Benedict said. “To her we entrust the great cause of peace in the world, that God’s mercy may achieve that which is impossible for merely human efforts, and infuse hearts with the courage for dialogue and reconciliation.”

After these remarks, he blessed the pilgrims who had gathered in St. Peter's Square to celebrate the Feast of Divine Mercy.

“May the intercession of St. Faustina and of Servant of God John Paul II help you to be true witnesses of merciful love,” he said.

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