



SAINT OF  
THE WEEK

# Faustina Kowalska

August 25, 1905 – October 5, 1938

Feast Day—October 5

On Divine Mercy Sunday, celebrated the weekend after Easter, the Gospel tells the story of when Jesus appeared in a locked room where the disciples were hiding.

John 20:19-23

Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”

We recognize St. Faustina as the Saint of the Week this week, even though her feast is in October, because of her role in spreading the message of Divine Mercy. Jesus appeared to her many times and spoke of his great and unfathomable mercy to those who would trust in him. Jesus told St. Faustina that he wanted the Sunday after Easter to be celebrated as a “Feast of Mercy,” as a refuge for all souls, especially poor sinners.

**S**t. Faustina was born in 1905 into a poor Polish family and experienced a religious calling from a young age. She initially deferred pursuing a religious vocation to help her family with her earnings as a housekeeper. At age 19, after a vision of the suffering Jesus, she earnestly sought entrance into religious life. Initially turned away by many convents, she entered the order of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in August 1925. In April 1928, she took her first vows with her parents in attendance.

St. Faustina served the Congregation in Krakow, Plock, and Vilnius as a cook, gardener, and porter. While living a simple religious life, she grew in great union with God, experiencing profound sufferings as well as

consolations. She had many visions of Jesus and wrote a diary of her experiences. St. Faustina died from tuberculosis at the age of 33 in 1938.



In 1959, the Vatican suppressed the Divine Mercy devotion. But in 1978, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith lifted the suppression after new original documents were examined and texts were retranslated. Then-Cardinal Karol Wojtyla strongly promoted the message of Divine Mercy. Later, as Pope John Paul II, he canonized St. Faustina, in April 2000, and designated the Second Sunday of Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday. Because of her work fostering devotion

to Divine Mercy, St. Faustina is known as the “apostle of Divine Mercy.”