



The Holy See

EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION
FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOUL OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

REGINA CAELI

*Feast of Divine Mercy
Second Sunday of Easter, 3 April 2005*

Pope John Paul II died peacefully on the evening of 2 April, 9: 37 p.m. Rome time. The last gift of the Holy Father for Divine Mercy Sunday, 3 April (also the Second Sunday of Easter), was the Regina Caeli, read by Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, Substitute of the Secretariat of State, at the end of the Holy Mass celebrated that day in St Peter's Square for the deceased Pope. "I have been charged", Archbishop Sandri said, "to read you the text that was prepared in accordance with his explicit instructions by the Holy Father John Paul II. I am deeply honoured to do so, but also filled with nostalgia".

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. Today the glorious Alleluia of Easter resounds. Today's Gospel from John emphasizes that on the evening of that day he appeared to the Apostles and "*showed them his hands and his side*" (Jn 20: 20), that is, the signs of the painful passion with which his Body was indelibly stamped, even after the Resurrection. Those glorious wounds, which he allowed doubting Thomas to touch eight days later, reveal the mercy of God who "*so loved the world that he gave his only Son*" (Jn 3: 16).

This mystery of love is at the heart of the liturgy today, the Second Sunday of Easter, dedicated to the devotion of Divine Mercy.

2. As a gift to humanity, which sometimes seems bewildered and overwhelmed by the power of evil, selfishness and fear, the Risen Lord offers his love that pardons, reconciles and reopens hearts to love. It is a love that converts hearts and gives peace. How much the world needs to understand and accept Divine Mercy!

Lord, who reveal the Father's love by your death and Resurrection, we believe in you and confidently repeat to you today: Jesus, I trust in you, have mercy upon us and upon the whole world.

3. The liturgical solemnity of the Annunciation that we will be celebrating tomorrow urges us to contemplate with Mary's eyes the immense mystery of this merciful love that flows from the Heart of Christ. With her help, we will be able to understand the true meaning of Easter joy that is based on this certainty: the One whom the Virgin bore in her womb, who suffered and died for us, is truly risen. Alleluia!

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