

John Paul II

The Address Delivered in The Sanctuary of God's Mercy in Łagiewniki on 7 June 1997

Praised be Jesus Christ!

1. *Misericordia Domini in aeternum cantabo* (Psalm 89 [88], 2).

Here I come as a pilgrim to this sanctuary, in order to join the eternal song in praise of God's mercy. It was intoned by the Psalmist, thus expressing what all generations had treasured as the most precious fruit of faith. Nothing is as necessary for man as God's mercy – this compassionate, generous love that elevates man above his weaknesses, towards the endless regions of God's holiness. At this place we become particularly aware of that, since from here the message of God's mercy was spread. It was passed over to our generation by Christ Himself through the offices of Blessed Sister Faustina. This is a clear message – readable for anyone. Anyone can come here, look at the picture of merciful Christ and at His radiating Heart and to hear in the depth of one's soul what the Blessed one heard: *“Do not fear anything, since I am always with you”* (*Diary*). And if in his sincere heart one answers *“Jesus I trust in You!”*, he will find alleviation of all his fears. In this dialogue between man and Christ, a special bond of the liberating love is established. And *“There is no fear in love - writes St. John - (...) perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment”* (1 John, 4:18).

The Church reads the message of mercy anew in order to be effective in carrying the light of hope to the generation of the end of the second millennium and to the future generations. The Church also incessantly asks God for mercy for all people. *“In no period of time and history may the Church forget about the prayer, which is the call for God's mercy in the face of the multifarious evil looming over mankind and threatening it. (...) The more human awareness becomes secularised, thus losing the sense of the word «mercy», and the more it is separated from God and from the mystery of mercy, the more the Church is entitled and obliged to appeal to God's mercy with a «mighty cry”*. This is a quotation from *Dives in misericordia* (15). That is why the visit to your sanctuary

is a part of my pilgrimage itinerary. I come here in order to entrust all the worries of the Church and mankind to merciful Christ. At the threshold of the third millennium I come here in order to entrust to Him once again my papal ministration – “*Jesus I trust in You!*”

The message of God’s mercy has always been dear to me. History seems to have inscribed that message into the tragic experiences of the Second World War. In those difficult years it constituted a special support and an inexhaustible source of hope not only for the Cracovians, but also for the whole nation. This was my personal experience as well and I took with me to Rome. In a way it shapes the image of this pontificate. I thank the Divine Providence that I was allowed to have my personal contribution in executing the will of Christ through establishing the holiday of God’s Mercy. Here, near the relics of Blessed Faustina Kowalska, I also thank for the gift of her beatification. I always implore God for “*mercy for us and for the whole world*” (Litany).

2. “*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy*” (Matthew, 5:7). Dear Sisters! You have a special vocation. By choosing Sister Faustina from among you, Christ made your convent a guardian of this place, and at the same time He called for the special apostolate of His mercy. Please, take up this work. The people of today need your testimony of mercy, your acts of mercy and your prayers for mercy. Do not neglect any of these aspects of the apostolate. Act together with the Archbishop of Cracow, who is so much concerned with the worship of God’s mercy, and with the entire community of the Church over which he presides. May this common work bear fruit. May God’s mercy transform human hearts. May this sanctuary known in many parts of the world become the worship centre of God’s mercy radiating onto the whole world.

Once again I ask you to pray for the Church and for the support of my *ministerium Petrinum*. I know that this prayer is repeated here again and again. For that I thank you with all my heart. All of us really need it *tertio millennio adveniente*.

I bless all the people who are present here and all the worshippers of God’s mercy.

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Source: *Drogowskazy dla Polaków Jana Pawła II. Komputerowy zbiór wypowiedzi Ojca Świętego skierowanych do rodaków*, Wydawnictwo M, Cracow, 1999.