



THE DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
**Office of Human Life,  
Family and Bioethics**



Highlights of this newsletter:

- ❖ The Easter Message of Love and Mercy
- ❖ Praying with St. Gianna

April 2022

Dear Friends for Life,

## THE EASTER MESSAGE OF LOVE AND MERCY

*Christ is risen from the dead!  
Dying, he conquered death;  
To the dead, he has given life.<sup>1</sup>*

By His Resurrection, we know our faith is not in vain and, by the gift of grace, we are called as brothers and sisters of Christ to live for Him, no longer for ourselves. Easter, the “Feast of feasts,” reminds us of this most incomprehensible love God has for every one of us.<sup>2</sup> It is no surprise that on the Octave of Easter, we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday where those, receiving His Body in the Sacrament of Communion and approaching the Sacrament of Penance with full trust and repentance, may receive a plenary indulgence: total forgiveness of sins and remission of punishment—no matter how awful the sin.<sup>3</sup> Jesus tells St. Faustina:

**“When you approach the confessional... Here the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy. Tell souls that from this fount of mercy souls draw graces solely with the vessel of trust. If their trust is great, *there is no limit to My generosity.* The torrents of grace inundate humble souls.”<sup>4</sup> (italics mine)**

In the work we do defending and protecting the sanctity of life, Divine Mercy must animate all our endeavors. There *is* reason to hope for the woman who is contemplating an abortion, or the mother (or father) who regrets an abortion many years ago, and even the physician performing abortions or participating in some form of euthanasia today. But how will any of these individuals know the infinite love God has for him or her if we, as instruments of His Divine Mercy, do not radiate love, compassion and

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<sup>1</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, 638.

<sup>2</sup> Catechism 651, 654, 655, 1169.

<sup>3</sup> [Mercy Sunday: Absolutely Liturgically Correct \(divinemerseysunday.com\)](http://divinemerseysunday.com)

Historically, the Church Fathers taught this is the most important day of the Octave. On May 5, 2000, Pope St. John Paul II officially established the Feast of the Divine Mercy Sunday based on the private revelations of Jesus to St. Faustina.

<sup>4</sup> Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul, #1602

mercy in our words and actions with them? We must live the message of Divine Mercy and spread the Good News!

In this, I want to thank all those who participated in the 40 Days for Life campaign during Lent and especially those who continue this work throughout the year. Your steadfast witness is so important as a visible testimony of love and mercy in a world preoccupied with power and death. Although only rarely may you directly know the fruits of your efforts, do not forget: "...whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."<sup>5</sup> Saint Faustina reminds us, too: "...even if all my undertakings and efforts should be thwarted or should come to naught. If I do all that is in my power, the rest is not my business."<sup>6</sup>

Please see our website or contact us for more information if you are interested in training for sidewalk counseling that truly reflects our call to mercy, or if you or someone you know is suffering the pain of a past abortion and is ready to know genuine healing that comes only through the Divine Physician. We have resources to help you!

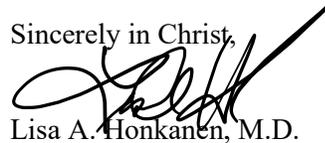
## PRAYING WITH ST. GIANNA

This week we celebrate the Feast of St. Gianna Beretta Molla a devoted wife, mother and physician who died at 39 years of age on April 28, 1962. She gave glory to God in her daily works and special concern for the vulnerable, but most especially, in the beautiful witness she gave in the last days of her life. She refused the abortion recommended by the doctors to save her own life, but instead, chose without hesitation to give the hope of life to her unborn daughter. As the patron saint of mothers, the unborn, those suffering with infertility, and physicians, let us pray with her:

My most sweet Jesus, infinitely merciful God, most tender Father of souls, and in a particular way of the most weak, most miserable, most infirm which You carry with special tenderness between Your divine arms, I come to You to ask You, through the love and merits of Your Sacred Heart, the grace to comprehend and to do always Your holy will, the grace to confide in You, the grace to rest securely through time and eternity in Your loving divine arms.<sup>7</sup>

Please continue with unceasing prayer! Consider joining us in a day of prayer and fasting on May 22 as we approach the Supreme Court decision of *Dobbs v. Jackson*, and/or for our monthly Rosary for Life (by zoom) on the fourth Friday, May 27 at 3:00 p.m. And let us live each day filled with the grace of and exuberant with the joyful witness of the Resurrection!

Sincerely in Christ,



Lisa A. Honkanen, M.D.

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<sup>5</sup> James 5:20

<sup>6</sup> Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul, #952

<sup>7</sup> [Prayer of St. Gianna Molla -- Aleteia](#)