



# WHY IS MERCY IMPORTANT TO OUR CATHOLIC FAITH?



### GOSPEL



### ANSWERS

JESUS TOOK PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN AND LED THEM UP A HIGH MOUNTAIN APART BY THEMSELVES. AND HE WAS TRANSFIGURED BEFORE THEM, AND HIS CLOTHES BECAME DAZZLING WHITE, SUCH AS NO FULLER ON EARTH COULD BLEACH THEM. THEN ELIJAH APPEARED TO THEM ALONG WITH MOSES, AND THEY WERE CONVERSING WITH JESUS. .... FROM THE CLOUD CAME A VOICE, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON. LISTEN TO HIM." SUDDENLY, LOOKING AROUND, THEY NO LONGER SAW ANYONE BUT JESUS ALONE WITH THEM. AS THEY WERE COMING DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN, HE CHARGED THEM NOT TO RELATE WHAT THEY HAD SEEN TO ANYONE, EXCEPT WHEN THE SON OF MAN HAD RISEN FROM THE DEAD. SO THEY KEPT THE MATTER TO THEMSELVES, QUESTIONING WHAT RISING FROM THE DEAD MEANT. -MARK 9: 2-10

## SAINTS & INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

### ST FAUSTINA

Sister Faustina is the one responsible for spreading the devotion to Divine Mercy, after Christ appeared to her. She wrote the Divine Mercy Chaplet and brochures were made about praying to this special image of Christ.. Now this famous Divine Mercy picture of Christ and the Chaplet of Mercy is said by millions.



### ST JOHN PAUL II

John Paul II believed in the mercy of God and he wrote an entire encyclical called Dives Et Misericordiae which is about God's divine mercy. While Pope, he was known to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet often. He also declared the Sunday after Easter to be Divine Mercy Sunday. That is the day he actually died.



TALK ABOUT IT!

## TEAM DISCUSSION

After reading over the YOUCAT numbers on the following pages, how do you think the Youth Catechism answers the question of the week? Were there any words or ideas that you did not fully understand that you would like to understand better?

## ANSWER IN YOUR OWN WORDS:



## YOUCAT NUMBERS FOR THIS WEEK



### **#9: WHAT DOES GOD SHOW US ABOUT HIMSELF WHEN HE SENDS HIS SON TO US?**

God shows us in Jesus Christ the full depth of his merciful love. Through Jesus Christ the invisible God becomes visible. He becomes a man like us. This shows us how far God's love goes: He bears our whole burden. He walks every path with us. He is there in our abandonment, our sufferings, our fear of death. He is there when we can go no farther, so as to open up for us the door leading into life.

**#70 HOW DOES GOD DRAW US OUT OF THE WHIRLPOOL OF EVIL?** God does not just look on as man gradually destroys himself and the world around him through the chain reaction of sin. He sends us Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer, who snatches us from the power of sin. "No one can help me"—this maxim of human experience is no longer accurate. Wherever man may have strayed by his sins, God the Father has sent his Son there. The consequence of sin is death (cf. Rom 6:23). Another consequence of sin, however, is the marvelous solidarity of God, who sends us Jesus as our friend and Savior. Therefore original sin is also called *felix culpa* (= happy fault): "O happy fault . . . which gained for us so great a Redeemer!"

**#241 WHY DID JESUS SHOW SO MUCH INTEREST IN THE SICK?** Jesus came in order to show God's love. He often did this in places where we feel especially threatened: in the weakening of our life through sickness. God wants us to become well in body and soul and, therefore, to believe and to acknowledge the coming of God's kingdom. Sometimes a person has to become sick in order to recognize what we all—healthy or sick—need more than anything else: God. We have no life except in him. That is why sick people and sinners can have a special instinct for the essential things. Already in the New Testament it was precisely the sick people who sought the presence of Jesus; they tried "to touch him, for power came forth from him and healed them all" (Lk 6:19).

**#282: DOES SACRED SCRIPTURE SPEAK ABOUT A WAY TO HAPPINESS?** We become happy by trusting in Jesus' words in the Beatitudes. The Gospel is a promise of happiness to all people who wish to walk in God's ways. Especially in the Beatitudes (Mt 5:3-12), Jesus has told us specifically that eternal blessedness is based on our following his example and seeking peace with a pure heart.

**#283: WHAT ARE THE BEATITUDES?** Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Mt 5:3-12)



**#338 WHAT IS GRACE?** By grace we mean God's free, loving gift to us, his helping goodness, the vitality that comes from him. Through the Cross and Resurrection, God devotes himself entirely to us and communicates himself to us in grace. Grace is everything God grants us, without our deserving it in the least. "Grace", says Pope Benedict XVI, "is being looked upon by God, our being touched by his love." Grace is not a thing, but rather God's communication of himself to men. God never gives less than himself. In grace we are in God.

**#339: WHAT DOES GOD'S GRACE DO TO US?** God's grace brings us into the inner life of the Holy Trinity, into the exchange of love between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It makes us capable of living in God's love and of acting on the basis of this love. Grace is infused in us from above and cannot be explained in terms of natural causes (supernatural grace). It makes us—especially through Baptism—children of God and heirs of heaven (sanctifying or deifying grace). It bestows on us a permanent disposition to do good (habitual grace). Grace helps us to know, to will, and to do everything that leads us to what is good, to God, and to heaven (actual grace). Grace comes about in a special way in the sacraments, which according to the will of our Savior are the preeminent places for our encounter with God (sacramental grace). Grace is manifested also in special gifts of grace that are granted to individual Christians (CHARISMS) or in special powers that are promised to those in the state of marriage, the ordained state, or the religious state (graces of state).

**#340: HOW IS GOD'S GRACE RELATED TO OUR FREEDOM?** God's grace is freely bestowed on a person, and it seeks and summons him to respond in complete freedom. Grace does not compel. God's love wants our free assent. One can also say No to the offer of grace. Grace, nevertheless, is not something external or foreign to man; it is what he actually yearns for in his deepest freedom. In moving us by his grace, God anticipates man's free response.

**#451 WHAT ARE THE "SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY"?** The spiritual works of mercy are: to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, admonish the sinner, bear wrongs patiently, forgive all injuries, and pray for the living and the dead.

**#314 HOW DO WE KNOW THAT GOD IS MERCIFUL?** In many passages in Sacred Scripture God shows that he is merciful, especially in the parable of the merciful father who goes out to meet his prodigal son, accepts him unconditionally, and celebrates his return and their reconciliation with a joyful banquet. Already in the Old Testament God says through the prophet Ezekiel: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek 33:11). Jesus is sent "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt 15:24), and he knows that "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick" (Mt 9:12). Therefore he eats with tax collectors and sinners, and then toward the end of his earthly life he even interprets his death as an initiative of God's merciful love: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28).

**#449 WHAT SIGNIFICANCE DO THE POOR HAVE FOR CHRISTIANS?** Love for the poor must be in every age the distinguishing mark of Christians. The poor deserve not just a few alms; they have a claim to justice. For Christians there is a special obligation to share their goods. Our example in love for the poor is Christ. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:3)—that is the first sentence in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. There is material, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual poverty. Christians must look after the needy of this earth with great consideration, love, and perseverance. After all, on no other point will they be evaluated by Christ so decisively as on their way of treating the poor: "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me"

**#450 WHAT ARE THE "CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY"?** To feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and the imprisoned, and bury the dead.