



# Archdiocese of Newark

## Office for Evangelization

Entering the  
Third Millennium,  
proclaiming in faith and love  
the mission of  
Christ the Redeemer!

January 30, 2007

Dear Pastor,

Some parishes in our archdiocese have expressed interest in guidelines for celebrating the Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday. In many cases, this is in response to the growing interest of the laity.

I am very pleased to send you a guide called, "Celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday in Your Parish," which has been prepared by the Congregation of Marians of the Immaculate Conception. The Marians administer the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA, and have been leaders in spreading the message of Divine Mercy throughout the world.

This guide explains the significance of Divine Mercy Sunday (citing various documents from the Holy See) and offers some ideas and practical suggestions for celebrating the Octave of Easter.

The Marians are providing this guide as a gift to the parishes in our Archdiocese. I encourage you to review it and to make it available to your staff.

There is a questionnaire for you to complete, and I encourage you to offer your feedback, which will help the Marians make this resource for parishes as valuable as possible.

Please note the following from the Church's Directory on Devotions:

*The faithful should be made conscious of the preeminence of the Liturgy over any other possible form of legitimate prayer. While sacramental actions are necessary to life in Christ, the various forms of popular piety are properly optional. Such is clearly proven by the Church's precept which obliges attendance at Sunday Mass. No such obligation, however, has obtained with regard to pious exercises, notwithstanding their worthiness or their widespread diffusion. (p.23)*

Outside of the celebration of the Eucharist on Divine Mercy Sunday, the Divine Mercy forms of devotion are optional. People who choose not to use these worthy devotions should be free to do so.

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It should be especially clear that these devotions are not to distract from or compete with the liturgies of Holy Week or the Easter Triduum.

Thank you for the good work you are doing to make our parishes instruments of Evangelization, bringing the Gospel of Christ to our world so much in need of love, compassion and mercy.

With kindest personal regards, I am sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edgar M. da Cunha". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, SDV  
Vicar for Evangelization

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