

## Pope John Paul II was Beatified on May 1<sup>st</sup> Divine Mercy Sunday

Pope Benedict XVI beatified the Venerable Pope John Paul on May 1<sup>st</sup>, Divine Mercy Sunday 2011.

On Vatican Television, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican press office, reflected on John Paul's life and 26-year pontificate, "characterized by the passion to make known to the world in which he lived — the world of our tragic history in the course of two millennia — the consoling and enthusiastic greatness of God's mercy."

"This is what the world needs," Father Lombardi said. "That is why we will have the joy of celebrating the solemn beatification on the day in which he himself wanted the whole Church to fix her gaze and prayer on this Divine Mercy."

Regarding the upcoming beatification of John Paul II, Benedict XVI is affirming, "We are happy!" "As you know," he said, "on May 1st I will have the joy of beatifying Venerable Pope John Paul II, my beloved predecessor."

The beatification was announced when the Pontiff authorized the promulgation of a decree regarding the miracle attributed to the intercession of Venerable Servant of God John Paul II.

Benedict XVI explained that the date that had been chosen for the beatification "is very significant." He said that "It will be the Second Sunday of Easter," which John Paul II entitled "Divine Mercy Sunday" and "on the eve of which his earthly life ended."

The Pontiff concluded, "Those who knew him, those who esteemed and loved him, cannot but rejoice with the Church for this event." Those who really knew Pope John Paul II well, need no explanation of why the Holy Father chose Divine Mercy Sunday as the date for the beatification in Rome.

The Vatican was prepared for record attendance which was much more than just a beatification of a very saintly Pontiff. Those in the know, knew that Divine Mercy Sunday, would in part, fulfill the wishes of Pope John Paul II, that the world come to a better understanding of Divine Mercy Sunday.

From his death bed came his last written words that he had prepared to be read on Divine Mercy Sunday, the day after his passing. They were read, as follows, directly on Divine Mercy Sunday:

*"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 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... Jesus, I trust in You, have mercy upon us and upon the whole world. Amen."*

Parishes throughout the world were prepared for this great event on Divine Mercy Sunday, which must have brought about understanding of we celebrate the feast and how to use it as a great evangelization tool, especially to get the Easter-only and fallen-away Catholics back to the practice of their faith.

Pope John Paul established the feast in 2000, saying that he had fulfilled the will of Christ.

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