

# Coronavirus Update Diocese of Joliet

April 11, 2020

Dear Priests and Deacons:

I have been contacted by some of our brothers inquiring about indulgences for Mercy Sunday.

The Apostolic Penitentiary provided information on the Divine Mercy Plenary Indulgence in a document issued on June 29, 2002. It made references to cases wherein individuals were unable to attend Mercy Sunday services in a Church. The coronavirus situation would qualify since it was not foreseen in 2002. The text reads:

“[A]ll who for a just cause cannot leave their homes or who carry out an activity for the community which cannot be postponed, may obtain a plenary indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday, if totally detesting any sin, as has been said before, and with the intention of fulfilling as soon as possible the three usual conditions, will recite the *Our Father* and the *Creed* before a devout image of Our Merciful Lord Jesus and, in addition, pray a devout invocation to the Merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you).

If it is impossible that people do even this, on the same day they may obtain the Plenary Indulgence if with a spiritual intention they are united with those carrying out the prescribed practice for obtaining the Indulgence in the usual way and offer to the Merciful Lord a prayer and the sufferings of their illness and the difficulties of their lives, with the resolution to accomplish as soon as possible the three conditions prescribed to obtain the plenary indulgence.”

Therefore, for all of those who cannot pray in a church or chapel, the actions outlined above in bold would be applicable. To receive the plenary indulgence, a person would have to:

1. recite the *Our Father* and the *Creed* in front of a devout image of the Merciful Lord Jesus;
2. meet these three conditions, or have the sincere intention to fulfill them as soon as possible:
  - a. Being truly repentant and receiving absolution in the Sacrament of Penance
  - b. Reception of Holy Communion
  - c. Praying for the Holy Father’s intentions.
3. and have total detachment from any inclination (desire) to sin, even venial sins.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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Most Reverend Richard E. Pates  
Apostolic Administrator  
Diocese of Joliet