

St. Faustina



1905-1938

Feast Day:

October 5

Helena Kowalska was born in Poland. When she was 7, she went to Eucharistic Adoration. There she first felt called to be a nun. She wanted to enter a convent when she finished school but her parents would not allow it. So instead Helena worked to support herself and help her parents take care of her 9 siblings.

When Helena was 19, she saw a vision of Jesus suffering. She went into a nearby church to pray and saw Jesus again; He told her to go to Warsaw. She packed and left for Warsaw the next morning. There she entered a convent, and took the name Faustina, which means “blessed one.” Her tasks were gardening and cooking for the other sisters.

When she was 25, Jesus appeared to Sr. Faustina with light streaming out of His heart. He told her to have a painting made of what she saw, with the words “Jesus, I trust in you.” Jesus told Sr. Faustina that He wanted the Sunday after Easter to be devoted to His mercy. Sr. Faustina told all this to Fr. Sopocko, her spiritual director. Fr. Sopocko helped Sr. Faustina; he asked a friend to paint Faustina’s vision.

With the Archbishop’s permission, Fr. Sopocko set the painting in a church and offered Mass devoted to Divine Mercy on the Sunday after Easter. Jesus visited Sr. Faustina to teach her a prayer called the Divine Mercy Chaplet. He asked her to spread the news of His mercy for everyone. She wrote down what Jesus said to her, so we can read His words in her diaries. Sr. Faustina grew very sick, and she was sent to a convent near her family’s home. Jesus visited her there many times until she died at the age of 33.

Pope St. John Paul II kept a special devotion to St. Faustina and the Divine Mercy. He made the Sunday after Easter an official feast of the Church – Divine Mercy Sunday.