Indulgence (Pardon)

The remission of temporal punishment due to sin, granted to the faithful who recite specified prayers, visit a specified place of pilgrimage, or engage in a specified act of charity; punishment is remitted through the power of the Church and in the mutual exchange of spiritual goods, particularly the merits of Christ and the saints.

The Necessity of Healing

Every sin has consequences. It disrupts our communion with God and the Church, weakens our ability to resist temptation, and hurts others.

The necessity of healing these consequences, once the sin itself has been forgiven, is called temporal punishment. Prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and other works of charity can take away entirely or diminish this temporal punishment. Because of the fullness of redemption obtained for us by Christ, the Church attaches to certain prayers and actions an indulgence or pardon, that is, the full or partial remission of temporal punishment due to sin. Christ, acting through the Church, brings about the healing of the consequences of sin when an individual uses such as prayer or engages in such an action.

Obtaining Indulgences

An extract from: The Handbook of Indulgences – Norms and Grants

An indulgence is the remission in the eyes of God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose culpable element has already been taken away [through Sacramental Confession]. The Christian faithful who are rightly disposed and observe the definite, prescribed conditions gain this remission through the assistance of the Church.

A person must be baptized, contrite, and in the state of grace at the time the works for the indulgence are completed. They must have at least a general intention of gaining the indulgence and perform acts enjoined at the time and manner prescribed. There are many works that are available to gain an indulgence (for example, those offered with Divine Mercy Sunday).

Partial Indulgence: frees a person from some of the temporal punishment due to sin. See ‘Plenary Indulgence’ for guidance on obtaining a partial indulgence.

Plenary Indulgence: frees a person from all of the temporal punishment due to sin. A person must be unattached to sin, even venial sin and do a prescribed work, such as offered through Divine Mercy Sunday. Three conditions must be met:

- Sacramental Confession
- Eucharistic Communion
- Prayer for the intention of the Holy Father

➢ If a person is not fully disposed or if the prescribed work and the three mentioned conditions are not fulfilled, the indulgence will only be partial.

All are to be performed within days of each other if not at the same time.