



Day 29: Mercy

Jesus, the Merciful One

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.” Matthew 5:7

Mercy is a love that desires communion in the face of rejection, judgment, and misunderstanding. It is a love that is fully willing to forgive when the offender does not even deserve it. This is why the love of Jesus is so revolutionary. He loves like this: “Father forgive them, for do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34) Jesus begs forgiveness for His enemies on the cross because He will not merely consign them to damnation. In the face of their utter rejection and condemnation of Him, Jesus chooses mercy. Mercy doesn’t keep score, measure, or calculate. Total offering. Total gift. All for the sake of the beloved, even in the face of sin. The beatitude, “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy,” invites the sons of God to a conversion to mercy, to love in a radically different way.

Mary, Mother of Mercy

On the famous Franciscan Cross of San Damiano, the artist portrays Mary gently pushing St. John the beloved to the Heart of Jesus on the cross. It is a bold posture for Mary as she knows that we need to approach Jesus in His suffering. To love like Him is not possible for us on our own but only in His presence and with His grace. For John who had just been through the trauma of Jesus' passion and death, Mary holds him close to the merciful Heart of Jesus. As trauma so often leads to despair, Mary’s tender hands invite John to drink deeply of the Heart of Jesus that is medicine and salve for his wounded and confused heart. Although he would have every right to run and hide like the other apostles, because he allows Mary to mother him in his suffering, he is able to remain at the cross and experience the mercy of Jesus at work. Mary knows that it is hard for God’s sons to remain when things are difficult and confusing. This is why her tender and loving hands hold us to her Son’s merciful heart, so we can learn to love like Him.

St. Juan Diego and Us

Do not be afraid of your sins. The Lord desires to meet us in our misery with His Mercy. The Latin word for mercy reveals this truth: *misericordia*. This word comes from two Latin words *miser* (miserable) and *cor* (heart) with the combined sense of having a “miserable heart” on account of another’s miseries, or as St. Augustine defines it, “mercy is

compassion (suffering with) in our heart for another's misery" (*City of God*, 9, 5). God's mercy, His love, meets us face to face is our weakness and sin. And oftentimes, this is why mercy is hard for us to receive. To forgive is hard. To seek forgiveness is hard. To love like Jesus is hard. And yet God knows this struggle, and this is why he sent Mary to St. Juan Diego and all the peoples - "I am truly your compassionate Mother, yours and of all the people who live together in this land, and of all the other people of different ancestries, my lovers, those who cry to me, those who seek me, those who trust in me" (*Nican Mopohua*, 29-32). We can't love like this on our own. The world needs mercy. If it needed something else, Jesus would have acted in a different way. It doesn't need vengeance, retaliation, or violence. It needs the tender mercy of God that comes through His Beloved Son Jesus. Our Lady of Guadalupe holds us to the open heart of her Son, where we get to drink deeply of the mercy that is always offered to us, especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. She showed, and continues to show, that it is her Son who has sacrificed himself to nourish us. Flooded with the merciful love of Jesus, the world will start to change around us. Brother, shame says you cannot and should not be forgiven. This is an absolute lie. Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God" (Rom 8:38-39). If God ever stopped loving you, you would cease to exist! May Mary give you the courage to seek the mercy of God and to be made new in His love.

Prayer

O Jesus, we adore You, we love You, and we thank You for the gift of Your presence. You are the beloved Son of the Father, who is a perfect revelation of the Father's Mercy. As sons after Your own heart, help us drink deeply of fount of mercy so we can give it to others. We ask You now to hear this prayer.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of God and Mother of us, draw us close to your heart. You are the riverbed of God's mercy to St. Juan Diego, and the whole world. Every time we see your image, may we thirst for the mercy of your Son, Jesus. Please fill us with your love.

Amen.

After reading today's reflection, [pray the Litany of Restoration of Sonship.](#)