

The Gaze from the Cross, Part 2

Day 17 of our [40 Days of Mercy Fast](#)

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The Gaze from the Cross, Part 2 (Please also read [Part 1](#), [Part 3](#) and [Part 4](#))

‘Remember My Passion; if you don’t believe My Words, at least believe My wounds!’
(379)

We meditate on the Cross, or Passion, of Jesus because His Cross is His most exquisite and profound manifestation of Mercy for us. St. Faustina says it best: ‘The greater the suffering, the purer the love.’ (53) He endured a slow, agonizing death to give us everything He had: His water for washing away our sin (or the burden of another’s), His blood as the source of our new life.

Such Mercy deserves meditation. Understanding its concept in words is not enough. We learn through seeing, so Mercy’s visual witness matters as well. For many, the image of the Cross suffices, for others, the crucifix.

St. Faustina received a glorious, life-giving image of Christ Crucified that may help another group. Its uniqueness lies in His wounds flowing with colorful, healing power.

The wounds matter. Isaiah prophesied that ‘by His wounds we are healed.’ (Is. 53:5) The marks of God’s suffering have a unique healing power; the visual reminder of them can meet us in our misery, draw us out of isolation, and unite us with Himself, the Source of our healing.

There we wait, often in pain, for the Mercy that meets us in our suffering. We can know that in the depths of our grief or loss or shame His Mercy for us is deeper still.

That is where meditation upon the Passion is crucial. Alone with my twisted thoughts and emotions, prayer can become a torturous exercise in rehearsing the suffering at hand. Yet with eyes and

heart open before the visual witness of His Passion, we can hand over the unbearable weight.

We entrust it to Him. That is why Jesus told St. Faustina to write at the bottom of her image of Christ Crucified, 'Jesus, I trust in You.' We are agreeing with Him: 'Jesus, Your Mercy is greater than my sin (or wound, loss, etc.); I trust You and Your Mercy more than my capacity to work it out alone.'

Then we can listen for His healing word, as St. Faustina beautifully models throughout her diary. Our hearts are unencumbered, able and ready to receive. We can attend to His still, small voice; we wait expectant of the encouragement, wisdom, or insight we need from our good Father.

Trusting in Mercy is the key to a clear and free heart, a heart that can attend to others' need for Mercy. As we learn to meditate upon His Passion, allowing His wounds to assume ours, we lay the ground for becoming genuinely merciful. St. Faustina received this word from Jesus: 'By mediating upon My Passion, your soul acquires a distinct beauty.' (1657)

'Those who look to the Lord are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.' (Ps. 34:5)

'Jesus, we ask for the grace to meditate upon Your Passion. Help us to witness in Your suffering a place to go in ours. Free us from the strife and stress of merely recycling our woes in our head. Open our hearts! Through our gaze on Your Passion, summon the unbearable and bear what only You can. Give us listening ears as well. Incline us to Your Merciful Word toward us in our need.'

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Author's note – Each day's entry is based a passage from St Faustina's diary. The passage entry is the number in parentheses at the end of each opening quote or simply a page number in parenthesis. [Diary of St Maria Faustina Kowalska – Divine Mercy in My Soul](#) (Association of Marion Helpers, Stockbridge, MA 01263) is available through the publisher or Amazon.com