

Mercy for Beloved Enemies

Day 28 of our [40 Days of Mercy Fast](#)

Mercy for Beloved Enemies

‘Be always merciful, as I am merciful. Love everyone out of love for Me, even your greatest enemies, so that My Mercy may be fully reflected in Your heart.’ (1695)

St. Faustina recorded those words as she listened to God. She was distressed, as a fellow sister in her religious order was spreading lies about her. Housemates’ cool and suspicious response to Faustina alerted her to such gossip. She listened to God, sought His Mercy in order to forgive the liar then actively blessed her.

St. Faustina gives us a sound example of how to handle beloved enemies. These are the wounds that cut deepest, because the ‘wound-ers’ are friends. The ‘hit and run’ abuse from an unknown adversary cannot compare to the betrayal of those we had every reason to trust.

That’s why Church and family wounds take so long to heal. We relied on these ‘good ones’, so the ‘hit’ sends our soul into loss (lifeless: a ‘life-line’, broken!) and disorientation (clueless: what is it about humanity and myself that I don’t understand?).

Beloved Christian enemies are especially difficult. David wrote:

‘If a foe were insulting me, I could endure it. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship...My companion now attacks his friends; he violates his covenant. His speech is smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart; his words are more soothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.’ (Ps. 55:12-14; 20, 21)

Yet we have hope amid such betrayal. Why? We live under the shadow of Christ Crucified. In light of beloved enemies, Jesus invites us to share in His suffering. We kneel before His Agony in our little one, welcoming the Water that cleanses our wound from sources of infection (hatred, bitterness, vengeance), as well as the Blood that gives us Life, the living Mercy.

Consoled by Mercy, God asks us to extend Mercy. We forgive our offenders so we can be forgiven (Matt. 6:14, 15). In St. Faustina's paraphrase: 'If a soul does not exercise Mercy, it will not obtain Mercy at the day of judgment.' (1317)

Harder still is bearing with the forgiven offender. St. Faustina grants us a picture of the transforming power of forgiveness. She lived with many of her beloved enemies! She sought no restraining order; she sought instead to imitate Christ by loving them boldly, impartially, genuinely.

Jesus gave her this instruction amid the growing envy and disdain toward her as the 'divine mercy' call began to gain momentum:

'Never claim your rights. Bear with great patience and calm what befalls you. Do not defend yourself when you are put to shame...Let others triumph. Do not stop being good when your goodness is abused. I Myself will speak up for you when it is necessary.' (1701)

Through the Cross, beloved enemies make us more like Jesus. He uses them to kill our self-justifying ways; He raises us up in turn through His advocacy. And He deepens His well of Mercy in us through such surrender. After one long Church battle, He said to me: 'If she only gave you good things, your love for her would never mature.'

Merciful surrender to Jesus in the face of beloved enemies accomplishes holy ends. 'The greater the suffering, the purer the love.' (57)

'At my first defense, no-one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that though me the message might be fully proclaimed...' (2 Tim. 4:16, 17)

'When they hurled insults at Jesus, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to the One who judges justly.' (1P. 2:23)

'Jesus, show us our wounds, that we might discover Yours afresh. Do not spare us the truth of betrayal. We surrender to You in it. United with You and Your divine purposes, let Mercy prevail. Console us as we ache and forgive, over and over. Strengthen us to rise and to bear with beloved enemies. We do so for Your name's sake, and for the unity and integrity of Your body, the Church.'

'O Blood and Water, that gushes forth from the Heart of the Savior as a Fount of Mercy for us, we trust in You!'

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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](#).