

## Mercy's Sacrifice

Day 21 of our [40 Days of Mercy Fast](#)

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### Mercy's Sacrifice

'How sad I am that souls do not recognize Love. They treat Me as a dead object.' (1385)

St. Paul implores us to not take Communion unworthily (1Cor. 11:27), and Church fathers echo him. Those who persist in serious sin should think twice...

How do we square this with the God of sinners, He who desires Mercy and not legalistic sacrifice? It all depends on the attitude toward our sin, and towards His Sacrifice. The main document on Holy Communion from Vatican II urges us to foster a spirit toward the Meal which is intent on 'cooperating with grace'.

In other words, approach the Lord's table with a heart hungry for all the grace you need to overcome sin.

One of my most shameful and glorious memories of communion occurred early in my walk with Jesus. Simply put, I had many 'bad' weekends. After a regrettable night of porn and guilt, I visited my mother's Episcopal Church. Because of fire in my heart for Jesus, the false passions were evident and ugly. The only cure was confession, so I confessed my sin. Then I realized how hungry I was for Him. I wanted Jesus, not the false gods and goddesses of this world!

Perhaps for the first time, God graced me with the miraculous awareness of Jesus in the Meal—alive, Mighty in Mercy, and yet tender, utterly tailored to my deep need for Him. Honestly, I don't think Jesus ever seemed so near and so substantial as He did that morning in an unassuming church which spread a Table for me.

In my battle against sin, I needed the Life of Jesus in the Holy Meal. St. Faustina says it best: 'I find myself so weak that were it not for Holy Communion, I would fall continuously.' (1037)

Communion grants us substantial Mercy in our struggles, and thus helps make us worthy. Yet we must honor the Meal with a heart intent on becoming honorable.

St. Paul directs us to both a vertical and a horizontal uprightness in approaching Communion. He implores us to prepare our hearts for Christ's Sacrifice.

Aware of the idolatry at Corinth—false gods worshipped through food offerings and sexual orgies—St. Paul reminds them of their vertical call to worship only One God through the Holy Meal. 'The sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not God, and I do not want you to participate with demons...you cannot have a part in both the Lord's Table and the table of demons.' (1 Cor. 10: 20, 21)

Make a decision, the Apostle says: those who sacrifice to other gods are not worthy of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Paul also exhorts the proud Corinthians who violated horizontal boundaries at Table. When they came together for Communion, the wealthy and powerful would shove aside the poor. To Paul, Love had to accompany the Meal or its Mercy had no evident meaning. He implored the good Corinthians to act justly toward those who had less, or refuse the Holy Meal altogether. (1Cor. 11: 20-22)

Mercy ingested needs to result in Mercy manifested. We may come derided by false gods, tempted to push our way through Communion and out the exit. Yet Almighty Mercy stops us in our tracks and urges us to consider His Sacrifice. He gave all to grant us Mercy. Should we not then welcome Mercy entirely, and extend it generously?

'Do you despise the Church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? ... A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread or drinks of the cup.' (1Cor. 11:22, 28)

*'Jesus, thank You for Your Sacrifice of Mercy. We need it now more than ever! In Your Mercy, unite our divided hearts and make us whole in one-Spirit communion with You. Free us also for merciful communion with one another. Free us to love as You have loved us. We pray also for those persisting in sin, without repentance. Open hearts to their true hunger and true home at Table with 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](#).