

Divine Mercy

Definition of Mercy: dispelling the misery of others by expelling defects

Why we need mercy:

Original Sin – we are each originally cut off from sanctifying grace

Wounded Nature – we are not rightly ordered

Personal Sin – we turn from God

Capital Sins – defects of virtue

Their Children – more defects of virtue

Other Personal Sins – more defects of virtue

Good and Evil – we are not what God calls us to be

Holiness – we cannot become holy through our own action

Types of Mercy:

Creation – He didn't have to create anything

Preservation – He doesn't have to sustain us in existence

Suffering – He conforms us to Himself, teaches us to love

Punishment – He calls us to repentance

Forgiveness – He helps us turn to Him

Heaven – He gives us what we don't deserve, Himself

Purgatory – He makes us holy

Hell – He respects free will

Channels of Mercy:

Sacraments

Baptism – He forgives our sins, gives us sanctifying grace, and makes us His children

Confession – He forgives our sins and gives us grace

Eucharist – He gives us Himself

Confirmation – He stirs up the Holy Spirit in us

Matrimony – He gives us a chance to love and to get a glimpse of His love for us, He allows us to participate in Creation

Holy Orders – He makes Himself present to us through the sacraments

Anointing of the Sick – He gives us grace and mercy for final perseverance

Prayer

Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Novena of Divine Mercy

Rosary

Joyful Mysteries – the gift of God's presence, He humbles Himself for our sake

Luminous Mysteries – He shows us the way to accept His mercy

Sorrowful Mysteries – He redeems us

Glorious Mysteries – He shows us where His mercy leads

Hindrances to Mercy:

Despair – we think we cannot receive mercy because our sins are too great

Presumption – we presume upon God’s mercy

Denial of the Need for Mercy – we refuse to recognize our sins as sins

Prerequisite for Mercy:

Repentance – conversion to God, end of sin, turning away from evil, repugnance toward the evil actions we have committed, desire and resolution to change one’s life, hope in God’s mercy, and trust in the help of God’s grace (see CCC 1431)

Ways we can be merciful:**Spiritual Works of Mercy:**

Instructing
 Advising
 Consoling
 Comforting
 Forgiving
 Bearing wrongs patiently

Corporal Works of Mercy:

Feeding the hungry
 Sheltering the homeless
 Clothing the naked
 Visiting the sick and imprisoned
 Burying the dead

Questions for Reflection:

1. Do I recognize my need for mercy?
2. Do I recognize all the ways that God already shows mercy to me?
3. Do I ask for mercy?
4. Do I repent? Could I repent more fully?
5. Am I thankful for God’s mercy? Do I presume upon His mercy?
6. Am I merciful?

Suggested Reading:

The Bible, the whole thing.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, §§ 976-1060, 1431, 1451-4, 1829, 1996-2005, 2012-2016, 2447, and all the rest of it.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Part I, Question 21.

Saint Faustina, *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul*, Stockbridge, Massachusetts: Marian Press, 2006.

Sister Sophia Michalenko, *The Life of Faustina Kowalska: The Authorized Biography*, Cincinnati, Ohio: St. Anthony Messenger Press, Servant Books, 1999.

Robert Stackpole, *Divine Mercy: A Guide from Genesis to Benedict XVI*.

St. Catherine of Siena, *Dialog*.

Jesus, I trust in you!