

Today I want to talk to you about God's mercy. This is why I put the Divine Mercy image in front of the ambo. The Lord wants us to speak about His mercy, especially in these perilous times, where we see things all around going astray and not making any sense. It is precisely in these times where we need to rely on His mercy.

In the gospel today, we heard that "the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for His son." Let us think about that for a moment: "What it is like to go to a wedding banquet?"

It is a very joy-filled occasion, where the bride and groom along with their families and friends, come together to celebrate their union and love for one another.

The same will be true someday when we are called to heaven. It will be a joyous occasion where the bride and the bridegroom celebrate their love for one another. We his chosen ones, are the bride and the Lord is the bridegroom.

As we heard in the gospel reading, the wedding guests were all invited to the wedding banquet, but few chose to attend. Unfortunately, the same is true for so many people today. We are all called to have that loving relationship with our Lord, but, few even think about their relationship with God or are willing to take the time and effort to truly find Him.

The Lord told St Faustina that; "True greatness of the soul is in loving God and in humility." It doesn't matter what position we have or our status in this life, but, our love for God is the key. We are called to love Him with all our heart, our mind and our soul. Where, in humility, we come to rely on Him in our daily life. As St Paul tells us in Philippians: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

My friends, we encounter this type of relationship when we come to experience His mercy in our life. When we open our heart to Him and cry

out for His mercy, where we say, "Lord save me!" Be my Lord and my Saviour! Forgive me of my sins!"

Our God is merciful and does not disappoint us when we get to that point of being vulnerable with Him, where in all humility we open our heart and seek His mercy for our life. No matter how small our good will is towards the Lord, He is faithful and will be merciful to us.

I would like to share with you a conversation that was recorded by St Faustina in her diary entry #1486. It is titled, "Conversation of the Merciful God with a despairing soul." As I read this conversation out loud, please keep you eyes fixed on the Divine Mercy Image and the rays coming from His Sacred Heart.

St Faustina recorded the following in her diary:

Jesus speaks: **O soul steeped in darkness, do not despair. All is not yet lost. Come and confide in your God, who is love and mercy.**

But the soul, deaf even to this appeal, wraps itself in darkness.

Jesus calls out again: **My child, listen to the voice of your merciful Father.**

In the soul arises this reply: "For me there is no mercy," and it falls into greater darkness, a despair which is a foretaste of hell and makes it unable to draw near to God."

Jesus calls to the soul a third time, but the soul remains deaf and blind, hardened and despairing. Then the mercy of God begins to exert itself, and, without any co-operation from the soul, God grants its final grace. If this too is spurned, God will leave the soul in this self-chosen disposition for eternity. This grace emerges from the merciful heart of Jesus and gives the soul a special light by means of which the souls begins to understand God's effort; but conversion depends on its own will. The soul knows that this, for her, is final grace and should it show even a flicker of good will, the mercy of God will accomplish the rest.

The Lord's omnipotent mercy is active here. Happy the soul that takes advantage of this grace.

Jesus speaks: **What joy fills my heart when you return to me. Because you are weak, I take you in my arms and carry you to the home of the Father.**

Soul (as if awaking, asks fearfully): Is it possible that there yet is mercy for me?

Jesus speaks: **There is, my child. You have a special claim on My mercy. Let it act in your poor soul; let the rays of grace enter your soul; they bring with them light, warmth and life.**

The soul speaks: But fear fills me at the thought of my sins, and this terrible fear moves me to doubt your goodness.

Jesus speaks: **My child, all your sins have not wounded My Heart as painfully as your present lack of trust does – that after so many efforts of My love and mercy, you should still doubt my goodness.**

Soul: O Lord, save me yourself, for I perish. Be my Saviour. O Lord, I am unable to say anything more; my pitiful heart is torn asunder; but You, O Lord...

Jesus does not let the soul finish but, raising it from the ground, from the depths of its misery, he leads it into the recesses of His heart where all of its sins disappear instantly, consumed by the flames of love.

Jesus speaks: **Here, soul, are all the treasures of My Heart. Take everything you need from it.**

Soul: O Lord, I am inundated with Your grace. I sense that a new life has entered into me and, above all, I feel Your love in my heart. That is enough for me. O Lord, I will glorify the omnipotence of Your mercy for all eternity. Encouraged by Your goodness, I will confide to You all the sorrows of my heart.

Jesus speaks: **Tell me all, My child, hide nothing from Me, because My loving Heart, the Heart of your Best Friend, is listening to you.**

Soul: O Lord, now I see all my ingratitude towards Your goodness. You were pursuing me with Your grace, while I was frustrating Your benevolence. I see that I deserve the depths of hell for spurning Your graces.

Jesus (interrupting): **Do not be absorbed in your misery — you are still too weak to speak of it — but, rather, gaze on My Heart filled with goodness, and be imbued with My sentiments. Strive for meekness and humility; be merciful to others, as I am to you; and, when you feel your strength failing, if you come to the fountain of mercy to fortify your soul, you will not grow weary on your journey.**

Soul: Now I understand Your mercy, which protects me, and like a brilliant star, leads me into the home of my Father, protecting me from the horrors of hell that I have deserved, not once, but a thousand times. O Lord, eternity will hardly suffice for me to give due praise to Your unfathomable mercy and Your compassion for me.

My friends, this is the God who we serve. One who loves us so much that He gave His only Son who died on the cross for us. He asks that we freely accept the gift of Jesus' death on the cross. That we seek Him out as our Saviour first and then slowly over time we learn to live with Him as our Lord. If we accept His gift, the Lord will come into our heart and make His home in us. As stated in Rev. 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door of your heart and knock, if anyone hears my voices and opens the door, I will come in and dine with Him and he with me."

My friends, the Lord is standing at the door of our heart. The choice is ours to make.

On the contrary, as we also heard in the gospel, that many are called but few are chosen. We can choose to ignore the Lord's invitation and He will not come against our free will. He will respect the choices that we make, even if that choice is to live without Him.

Today in this world, we are bombarded with so many distractions or the busyness of life and then we just have to watch the news and we are inundated with things that cause fear or worry with little or no love for God in our society. Ultimately if we follow these influences, we can be led down a path of despair and discouragement away from God where we become indifferent towards Him and one another. Living this life, without God's mercy, this will lead us to be like the man who was not dressed with the robe of salvation, where he was thrown out to the place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

My friends, let us freely accept that calling to love God and serve Him. Let us be humble and seek out Him out while we are still in this time of mercy.

Please bow your heads and pray with me: "Dear Father in heaven, please be merciful to me a sinner. Forgive me for my hardness of heart and living my life without You or during those times that I have chosen to go my own way. I seek your mercy Lord and I open my heart to You. I invite you in to come in and take your rightful place as my Lord and Saviour. As you stated in the words that you gave to St Faustina, I have a special claim on your mercy. So trusting in you Lord, I lay claim on your mercy and ask you to come into my heart. In Jesus name I pray."

All glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN.