

**DAY 14: Meditation****THE MERCY OF GOD**

Having meditated yesterday on Hell, we will today focus on God's Mercy.

**TODAY'S MEDITATION- ON GOD'S MERCY**

This meditation is not properly an exercise that Ignatius has written into the first week, but he leaves room for the preacher to introduce meditations that are suited to the spirit and moment of each week, and mercy is particularly appropriate now.

**1. Act of the Presence of God****2. Preparatory Prayer, as in #46**

*Lord, I ask that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be directed purely to the praise and service of Your Divine Majesty. Amen.*

**3. Prelude 1: Composition of Place**

Set yourself in imagination before God our Father in Heaven- in view of His face, which is so patient, seeing His gaze that radiates fatherly concern. This is He who was willing to allow Jesus to die for your sake. You can see Jesus, enthroned beside Him, or standing up and coming to you, with the rays of blood and water that we see in the image of the Divine Mercy.

If you prefer, you can use a scriptural image, like the moment where Jesus forgave the adulterous woman, or the return of the prodigal Son, who was embraced by His Father, and who humbly accepted forgiveness despite his tarnished past. Which ever of these images you find compelling, you can spend a few moments with it.

We'll then make our petition, where we will ask to receive a greater awareness and trust in God's mercy, so as to trust less in ourselves, and more in God and His providence.

**4. Prelude 2: Petition**

Ask to receive **a greater awareness and trust in God's mercy**, so as to trust less in ourselves, and more in God and His providence.

**5. Main Points for Meditation**

We will reflect on three main points: what mercy is; how it is revealed in Jesus' life; and what God's mercy should lead us to do.

First, mercy is not turning a blind eye. After considering Hell, we see that someone in grave sin is in mortal danger, like a person drowning. To appeal to "respect" or "tolerance" in order to avoid naming evil is not compassion but indifference; it leaves our neighbor on a path that may



lead to destruction. This is an injustice, a lie of omission. In Book of Ezekiel 3, God tells the watchman he will be accountable if he fails to warn the wicked. Mercy cannot be separated from justice without becoming either sentimentality or severity. Love must oppose what harms the beloved, which is the spirit of Christ's words in Gospel of Matthew that He came not to bring peace but the sword.

A false peace that ignores sin will not do; Christ came to cut away vice, often through trials. If we never face setbacks, that is not a good sign, because we all need purification. In Gospel of John 15, the Father prunes fruitful branches so they may bear more fruit, and Epistle to the Hebrews 12 teaches that discipline yields righteousness. God's mercy is like that of a loving father who hates the illness harming his child and works to remove it. His patience and constant return to lift us up show that He desires our healing. The word "misericordia" suggests a heart for the poor; Christ has a heart for those impoverished by sin and comes to make them spiritually rich.

Now consider God's mercy manifested in Jesus. In His revelations to Faustina Kowalska, He described it as infinite, unfathomable, inexhaustible, beyond human language or understanding, and unchanging. If we admit our sin, we can be certain He forgives without delay or reproach and with joy. He is not passive; He seeks us out and provides daily opportunities to return. Though accused of receiving sinners, He alone welcomes us when the world rejects us. As long as we live, it is never too late.

His mercy is omnipotent; confessed sins are destroyed and should not be endlessly recalled. To dwell on forgiven sins is a temptation rooted in pride. God can raise a restored soul to even greater holiness, depending on its trust in His mercy, so we must ask for deeper faith in Divine Mercy.

What should this mercy lead us to do? To conversion. False mercy leaves us unchanged; true mercy transforms us. Augustine of Hippo, once unchaste and ambitious, became a Doctor of the Church. Ignatius of Loyola, once a worldly soldier seeking honor, became a soldier for Christ. Mercy not only forgives but ennobles, drawing us into reparation and restoration.

After the Resurrection at the Sea of Tiberias in Gospel of John 21, Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love me?" and each time commissioned him to feed His sheep. After three denials, Peter was given three opportunities to profess love and was confirmed in his mission to spread forgiveness. Because Peter trusted, Jesus showed tenderness. We too must desire holiness and become instruments of mercy for others.

The elder brother in Gospel of Luke refused to share in his father's mercy and excluded himself from the joy of his family, showing the link between forgiving and receiving mercy. Christ forgave while crucified; our neighbors' faults are small by comparison. We can find and love Him in the sick, the homeless, and the ignorant, remembering His words that what we do for the least, we do for Him. Thus His mercy should make us more merciful.



It should also lead us to seek confession. Jesus told Faustina Kowalska that He waits in the confessional, pouring grace on the soul that trusts. She wrote that three dispositions are necessary: complete sincerity, humility, and obedience. Hiding mortal sin invalidates confession and adds sacrilege; pride blocks honest self-knowledge; disobedience prevents growth. Especially during these exercises, this is a moment of grace for deep examination and a good confession. Ignatius of Loyola even recommends a general confession during the first week of retreat, something worth considering if one has never made one.

### **Colloquy**

To conclude, we'll make a colloquy with Jesus, thanking Him for His infinite mercy and asking that He increase His mercy in us, and that He teach us how to abandon ourselves to Him more and more completely. We can also ask Mary, refuge of sinners and queen of mercy to obtain this grace for us. And you can close that colloquy with a **Glory be**.