

Devotion to the Divine Mercy *& to Sacred Heart of Jesus*



At first glance, it may seem that the devotion to the Divine Mercy is just some kind of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that there is no significant difference between these devotions. This conviction can also be confirmed by a cursory reading of Sister Faustina's "Diary", which often mentions the Heart of Jesus. However, the

theological analysis of the content of the Diary leads to a clear distinction between these two devotions, so popular in the Church. Such an analysis was made by Fr. Prof. I. Różycki and on its basis showed the essential differences that exist between the devotions to the Heart of Jesus and the Divine Mercy. The differences concern the essential and tangible subject, the very essence of the devotion and the privileged time with which certain promises are connected.

1. Essential (Proper) Subject

- in the devotion to The Divine Mercy - the Mercy of God in the Holy Trinity;
- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - the Son of God, Divine Person Incarnate

2. Material Subject

- in the devotion to The Divine Mercy - the image of the Merciful Jesus corresponding to the vision of Sister Faustina on February 22, 1931 in Płock;
- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - the human, physical Heart of Jesus.

3. Essential Nature of the Devotion

- in the devotion to The Divine Mercy - a spirit of trust;
- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - remuneration and reparation

4. Privileged Time

- in devotion to The Divine Mercy - is 3 pm each day (the moment of Jesus' agony on the cross) and the day of the Feast of Mercy on the first Sunday after Easter.
- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - the first Friday in every month, and the Feast of the Sacred Heart

Privileged forms of devotions to Divine Mercy

Father prof. I. Różycki also draws attention to the fact that: in the devotion to the Divine Mercy there are no known and favorite novena or litanies. Those who come into contact with this

devotions for the first time most often ask about the novena and litanies, which are so deeply rooted in Catholic piety and characteristic of other services. The novena to the Divine Mercy written in the "Diary" was intended for Sister Faustina herself and only to her was Jesus' promise: **I will deny nothing to any soul whom you will bring to the fount of My mercy** (Diary 1209).

This promise, like that of the act of "O Blood and Water," has never been extended to all who will recite it; it only refers to Sister Faustina herself. However, if we say this novena or the act "O Blood and Water" with confidence, then it will be an authentic act of devotion to the Divine Mercy, to which the promises related to trust refer. Also, the Litany of the Divine Mercy is not a privileged form of cult in the devotion to the Divine Mercy. In the "Diary" of Sister Faustina, there are only invocations that were used by Fr. M. Sopoćko to compose a litany. If someone recites this or other litany to the Divine Mercy with confidence and performed acts of mercy, then he can only count on what the Lord Jesus attached to the act of trust in God's mercy (Rev. I. Różycki).

In many publications talking about the devotion to the Divine Mercy, there is a confusion of new forms of worship revealed to Sister Faustina with her prayers recorded in the "Diary", and sometimes also with other services. Many times one gets the impression that the most important thing in the devotion to the Divine Mercy is the novena or litany or promises given without the essence of this cult, i.e. without concern for the attitude of trust in God and active love of neighbor. While earlier publications can be justified, today - after the theological analysis of Sister Faustina's writings - we must strive to ensure that this devotion is properly communicated, because only then will it be properly practiced and be fruitful when asking for God's mercy.

In describing the forms of devotion to the Divine Mercy, we can enumerate the following:

- **The image of the Merciful Jesus;**
- **The feast of Divine Mercy;**
- **The chaplet to the Divine Mercy;**
- **The hour of Mercy;**
- **The propagation of the worship of Mercy**

In conclusion let us emphasize, thus, both a formal and material object, as well as a purpose and a privileged time they are completely different in both devotions. However, we must admit the role that in the psychological and historical context, the cult of the Heart of Jesus played in preparation of the devotion to the Divine Mercy. The best example of this impact may be the attitude of St. Faustina, who throughout her life had great reverence for the Heart of Jesus and it did not prevent her in any way from experiencing and promoting the devotion to Divine Mercy.

"Once the Lord said to me, Act like a beggar who does not back away when he gets more alms [than he asked for], but offers thanks the more fervently. You too, should not back away and say that you are not worthy of receiving greater graces when I give them to you. I know you are unworthy, but rejoice all the more and take as many treasures from My Heart as you can carry, for then you will please Me more. And I will tell you one more thing - take these graces not only for yourself, but also for others; that is, encourage the souls with whom you come in contact to trust in My infinite mercy. Oh, how I love those souls who have complete confidence in Me - I will do everything for them". (Saint Faustina, *Diary*, 294)

Fr. George Bowboski (The Lay Institute to the Divine Mercy)