

# Divine Mercy Devotion. Good? Bad? Or Indifferent

I have posted my doubts about the Divine Mercy devotion before and was pretty much attacked by Catholics devoted to the divine Mercy. I have decided to be more objective and less harsh in my description of this devotion. That way you can determine if it works for you or if you should avoid it.

First off, I used to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet all the time. It was when a friend living in St. Mary's Kansas who was with the SSPX told me I might want to consider steering clear from it. I started to research it and started to develop some serious doubts and eventually avoided it all together. Here is what we know about the Divine Mercy devotion.

## **Do we know that the Divine Mercy was given to Sr. Faustina directly from God?**

[This is according to Angelus on line](#)

*Many people have certainly received graces from the devotion to Divine Mercy propagated by St. Faustina, and her personal piety was certainly most exemplary. However, this does not necessarily mean that this devotion is from God. It is true that Pope John Paul II promoted this devotion, that it was through his efforts that the prohibition was lifted on April 15, 1978, and that he even introduced a feast of Divine Mercy into the Novus Ordo. However, the fact that good and pious people receive graces and that Sister Faustina was pious do not necessarily means that it is from heaven. In fact, it was not only not approved before Vatican II. It was condemned, and this despite the fact that the prayers themselves of the chaplet of Divine Mercy are orthodox.*

Ok! So now we know the prayers are orthodox and that Sr. Faustina was pious Polish nun, which are the good things.

## **What about the Papal condemnations of the Devotion?**

[This is from Tradition in Action](#)

*First, when this devotion fell under the attention of Pius XII, he was concerned not with the prayers of the devotion, but with the circumstances of the so-called apparitions to Sr. Faustina and their content. That is, he was concerned with what Our Lord supposedly told Sr. Faustina and what he told her to make public.*

*Pius XII, then, placed this devotion, including the apparitions and the writings of Sr. Faustina on the Index Librorum Prohibitorum (Index of Prohibited Books). That list no longer exists, since it was formally abolished on June 14, 1966, by Paul VI. On the one hand, it is unfortunate that it no longer exists. But, on the other hand, if that list were to exist today it would be so vast that it would fill this room. Practically everything that is written today has something objectionable to the Catholic Faith.*

*So, Pius XII put the writings of Sr. Faustina on the Index of Prohibited Books. That meant that he considered that their content would lead Catholics astray or in the wrong direction.*

*Next, came other prohibitions made by Pope John XXIII. Twice in his pontificate, the Holy Office issued condemnations of the Divine Mercy writings.*

Today the Holy Office is called Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. But before it was called the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Its name has changed over several years.

This Office - placed under the direct control of the Pope - is responsible for maintaining the purity of the doctrine and, therefore, it watches over the dissemination of different documents in the Church.

If the Pope wants to correct the faithful on a particular topic, he usually does this through the Holy Office. So, the proclamations, declarations and documents issued by the Holy Office may be seen as coming from the Pope himself.

Not once, but twice under Pope John XXIII, this particular devotion was condemned through the Holy Office. The first condemnation was in a plenary meeting held on November 19, 1958. The declaration from the Holy Office issued these three statements about this devotion:

**1. There is no evidence of the supernatural origin of these revelations.** This means that the members of the Holy Office examined the content and decided that there was nothing there to indicate the apparitions were supernatural. In an authentic apparition - Our Lady of Lourdes or Our Lady of Fatima, for example - you can look at the content and affirm it can not be definitively said they are of divine origin, but there is enough evidence to say that it is possibly so. On the other hand, in the Divine Mercy apparitions, they said definitively that there is no evidence whatsoever that they are supernatural. This translates, "We do not think that these apparitions come from God."

**2. No feast of Divine Mercy should be instituted.** Why? Because if it is based on apparitions that are not clearly coming from God, then it would be rash and temerarious to institute a feast in the Church based on something that is a false apparition.

**3. It is forbidden to disseminate writings propagating this devotion under the form received by Sr. Faustina, as well as the image typical of it.** So, it was forbidden to even publish the image of Our Lord as Divine Mercy.

Now, you have all seen this image, even if in passing, and you would know and recognize it. It shows a strange picture of Jesus that makes me uneasy. I cannot really tell you why. I do not like it. I don't like the face, I don't like the gesture, I don't like the posture, I don't like anything. This was my first impression of this image. I don't want it around because it is, for lack of a better term, creepy to me when I look at it.

The image shows multicolored rays, I think they are red, white and blue, coming from His chest region - no heart, just these rays. You have all seen this. Well, that was the image that was forbidden to be published or spread.

On March 6, 1959, the Holy Office issued a second decree on the order of Pope John XXIII. It forbade, once again, spreading the images of Divine Mercy and the writings of Sr. Faustina propagating this devotion. It also stated that it was up to the bishops to decide how they were going to remove the images that had already been displayed for public honor.

I do not need to say much more about these declarations. Two Popes strongly warned the faithful of a danger in this devotion. Pius XII put it on the Index; John XXIII issued two condemnations through the

*Holy Office about the spiritual danger this devotion presented to the faithful. Not much more needs to be said on that.*

These are bad things. Supporters of the devotion will tell you that this was just mere confusion due to a poor translation of Sr. Faustina's diary. This might be but doubtful, this was the pre Vatican 2 church where things concerning the faith were thoroughly researched. I am sure all aspects of the translation was researched.

Cardinal Ottaviani is listed as the villain in this. It was believed that it was he that pushed Pius XII to suppress the devotion. These come from mainly liberal Catholic groups so take that with a grain of salt. Ottaviani acted with the information he had at the time with the goal of protecting the Catholic faith.

### **What about this picture of the Christ of the Divine Mercy?**

To be honest this picture has always given me the creeps. Jesus Christ with no heart. Very similar to the long standing Sacred heart of Jesus devoting but with some disturbing differences.

[caption id="attachment\_2010" align="alignnone" width="450"]



You can see the differences. The Sacred Heart devotion on the left shows Our Lord with a heart that is absent on the divine mercy devotion on the right.[/caption]

### [Again from Tradition in action](#)

*Consider the true image of Christ Our Savior. Probably the most symbolically rich and accurate representation of Him, besides the Crucifix, is the image of the Sacred Heart, because the image of Our Lord with the Sacred Heart summarizes the whole theology of Redemption.*

*They pierced His Hands, His Feet and His Sacred Heart; the crown of thorns encircles the Heart, which burns with love for man. This was the price He paid, the sacrifice He made for our redemption.*

*He offered Himself because of His burning love for us despite the fact we are ungrateful creatures who rebelled against our Creator. Think about it. He created us and then we nailed Him to a cross even though He was God and completely innocent of any guilt. So, the Sacred Heart encapsulates all this.*

*In the images of the Sacred Heart, He points to this symbolic font of love and mercy for us. The devotions to the Sacred Heart always suppose reparation for our sins. We are sinners, we must make reparation. Despite the promises from Our Lord and the fact that He paid an infinite price for our Redemption, we must make reparation. We should always do penance for our sins and make various kinds of reparation.*

*Now, consider the image of Our Lord representing the Divine Mercy. It is an imitation of the Sacred Heart without the heart. When you pay attention, you notice that in the image there is no heart. There are simply rays coming out of a point above His waist. This symbolizes the error of the Divine Mercy devotion. It preaches that we can expect an unconditional mercy with no price to be paid whatsoever, with no obligations whatsoever. This is not the message of Christ.*

*Christ is merciful. Time and time again, His mercy pardons our repeated sins in the Sacrament of Penance, always taking us back no matter how bad our sins are. And what happens in the Sacrament of Penance? The very name of the Sacrament tells us exactly what happens: to be effective the Sacrament supposes penance. Not only are you there at the Sacrament recognizing your full submission to the Church and your dependence on the Sacraments for forgiveness, but you walk out of the confessional with an imposed penance.*

### **If this devotion is condemned then why is it so popular now and heavily pushed upon Catholics?**

One answer, John Paul II. Lets keep in mind that John Paul II is heavily pushed as a conservative, a orthodox traditionalist. In fact John Paul was a modernist not much different from Francis. Michael Matt of the Remnant hits the nail on the head with the following:

*We must keep in mind that during his reign, Pope John Paul went from the “great white hope” of conservatives early on, to the most outspoken champion of the Revolution of all time. And his many gifts to the Church—i.e., altar girls, Theology of the Body, the saint-making factory, Assisi-styled interfaith lallapaloosas, a New Rosary, etc.—did precious little to assuage the fears of traditional Catholics who felt that the situation in the Church—under Pope John Paul the GREAT! —couldn’t get much more apocalyptic.*

*Granted, in hindsight John Paul seems like something of a watchdog of orthodoxy; but this is only in comparison to Francis the Uber-Modernist. To employ a pretty clumsy analogy from the cultural revolution of sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll—Francis might be Miley Cyrus or Marilyn Manson, while Pope John Paul is the Beatles. They’re all part of the same revolution but the Beatles were well-dressed, articulate, talented and smart enough to overcome Christian society’s residual social and moral sensibilities. Most decent people with a pulse can see a problem with Cyrus and Manson; but just try criticizing the greatest “Marxist minstrels” of all time, the Fab Four, the gods of early rock ‘n’ roll, and see how popular you are at the next cocktail party.*

*And yet this is what the traditionalists felt more or less dutybound to do where all the post-conciliar popes were concerned. This is why the traditionalists were vilified, called ugly names like ‘schismatic’*

*and dismissed as 'trouble makers'...because, to them, the Emperor looked pretty darn naked and they told him so!*

*Pope John Paul did have two distinct advantages over Francis, however: Charisma, on the one hand, and a retention of some semblance of the Catholic Faith on the other. John Paul was also cool. He's the Michael Jordan of popes. He was charming, cosmopolitan, multilingual, confident, and conveyed the easy impression that he—along with Maggie Thatcher, Sylvester Stallone and Ronald Reagan—could make the world a better place. The world was understandably seduced by him.....*

**Chris Ferrara mentions the "saint factory" of John Paul II.**

*What are we to make of these imminent canonizations—the latest in the output of what the press mocks as the “[saint factory](#)” put into operation by John Paul II? In considering this question, it would be opportune to conclude the two-part series I began [here](#), venturing the opinion of a layman who cannot see how the infallibility of canonizations can be anything but dependent upon the integrity of the investigative process that precedes the papal canonization decree.*

Now we ask, who canonized Sr. Faustina to sainthood? Non other than John Paul II. The same pope who re-energized the Divine Mercy devotion. Get the connection? The logic is how dare you criticize the devotion created by a Saint of the Catholic church? Yes that argument was used against me. I am determined this was done deliberately by JP2 to legitimize the devotion. And I am not hinting anything against the piety of Faustina.

**So what exactly is wrong with the Divine Mercy that should concern us?**

Again from Father Scott SSPX

*What was it about this devotion that prevented the Holy Office from acknowledging its divine origin? The decrees do not say, but it seems that the reason lies in the fact that there is so much emphasis on God's mercy as to exclude His justice. Our sins and the gravity of the offense that they inflict on God is pushed aside as being of little consequence. That is why the aspect of reparation for sin is omitted or obscured.*

*The true image of God's mercy is the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance, crowned with thorns, dripping precious blood. The Sacred Heart calls for a devotion of reparation, as the popes have always requested. However, this is not the case with the Divine Mercy devotion. The image has no heart. It is a Sacred Heart without a heart, without reparation, without the price of our sins being clearly evident. It is this that makes the devotion very incomplete and makes us suspicious of its supernatural origin, regardless of Sister Faustina's own good intentions and personal holiness. This absence of the need for reparation for sins is manifest in the strange promise of freedom from all the temporal punishment due to sin for those who observe the 3:00 p.m. Low Sunday devotions. How could such a devotion be more powerful and better than a plenary indulgence, applying the extraordinary treasury of the merits of the saints? How could it not require as a condition that we perform a penitential work of our own? How could it not require the detachment from even venial sin that is necessary to obtain a plenary indulgence?*

## *Presumption in the Writings of Sister Faustina*

*The published Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalski (Marian Press, Stockbridge, MA, 2007) also indicates several reasons to seriously question the supernatural origin of the more than 640 pages of voluminous and repeated apparitions and messages. The characteristic of any true mystic who has received supernatural graces is always a profound humility, sense of unworthiness, awareness and profession of the gravity of his sins. Yet this humility is strangely lacking in Sister Faustina's diary. On October 2, 1936, for example, she states that the "Lord Jesus" spoke these words to her: "Now I know that it is not for the graces or gifts that you love me, but because My will is dearer to you than life. That is why I am uniting Myself with you so intimately as with no other creature." (§707, p. 288). This gives every appearance of being a claim of being more united to Jesus than anybody else, even the Blessed Virgin Mary, and certainly more than all the other saints. What pride, to believe such an affirmation, let alone to assert that it came from heaven!*

*In April 1938, Sister Faustina read the canonization of St. Andrew Bobola and was filled with longing and tears that her congregation might have its own saint. Then she affirms the following: "And the Lord Jesus said to me, Don't cry. You are that saint." (§1650, p. 583). These are words that most certainly no true saint would affirm, but rather his sinfulness and unworthiness of his congregation. This presumption in her writings is not isolated. She praises herself on several occasions through the words supposedly uttered by Jesus. Listen to this interior locution, for example: "Beloved pearl of My Heart, I see your love so pure, purer than that of the angels, and all the more so because you keep fighting. For your sake I bless the world." (§1061, p. 400). On May 23, 1937 she describes a vision of the Holy Trinity, after which she heard a voice saying: "Tell the Superior General to count on you as the most faithful daughter in the Order" (§1130, p. 417). It is consequently hardly surprising that Sister Faustina claimed to be exempt from the Particular and General Judgments. On February 4, 1935, she already claimed to hear this voice in her soul: "From today on, do not fear God's judgment, for you will not be judged" (§374, p. 168). Add to this the preposterous affirmation that the host three times over jumped out of the tabernacle and placed itself in her hands (§44, p. 23), so that she had to open up the tabernacle herself and place it back in there, tells the story of a presumption on God's grace which goes beyond all reason, let alone as the action of a person supposedly favored with innumerable and repeated mystical and supernatural graces.*

*It is perhaps not accidental that Pope John Paul II promoted this devotion, for it is very much in line with his encyclical *Dives in Misericordia*. In fact, the Paschal Mystery theology that he taught pushed aside all consideration of the gravity of sin and the need for penance, for satisfaction to divine justice, and hence of the Mass as being an expiatory sacrifice, and likewise the need to gain indulgences and to do works of penance. Since God is infinitely merciful and does not count our sins, all this is considered of no consequence. This is not the Catholic spirit. We must make reparation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world, as the Sacred Heart repeatedly asked at Paray-Le-Monial. It is the renewal of our consecration to the Sacred Heart and frequent holy hours of reparation that is going to bring about the conversion of sinners. It is in this way that we can cooperate in bringing about His Kingdom of Merciful Love, because it is the perfect recognition of the infinite holiness of the Divine Majesty and complete submission to His rightful demands. Mercy only means something when we understand the price of our Redemption.*

## Strange thoughts from Sr. Fastina's diary

On page 23 of the book *Divine Mercy in My Soul* (The Diary of Sr. Faustina), it says: "... **and the host came out of the tabernacle and came to rest in my hands and I, with joy, placed it back in the tabernacle. This was repeated a second time, and I did the same thing. Despite this, it happened a third time...**" (Marian Press, Stockbridge, MA, 1987) **This is very suggestive of the Arian Heresy which denies the divinity of Christ. The Arians receive the Eucharist in the hand to reject Christ's divinity as they believe he is just another one of God's creations**

On page 89 of the book *Divine Mercy in My Soul*, it says: "When the priest approached me again, I raised the host for him to put back into the chalice, because when I had first received Jesus I could not speak before consuming the host, and so could not tell him that the other host had fallen. **But while I was holding the host in my hand, I felt such a power of love** that for the rest of the day I could neither eat nor come to my senses. I heard these words from the host: **I desired to rest in your hands, not only in your heart.**"

On page 168, it says: "The moment I knelt down to cross out my own will, as the Lord had bid me to do, I heard this voice in my soul: From now on, **do not fear God's judgment, for you will not be judged.**" (from Feb. 4, 1935) **According to the Catholic church God is all merciful but also the heavenly judge. This pretty much negates any punishment for sin.**

On page 176, "Jesus" says to her: "You are a sweet grape and a chosen cluster; **I want others to have a share in the juice that is flowing within you.**"

On page 191, "Jesus" says to her: "For your sake I will withhold the hand which punishes; **for your sake I will bless the Earth.**" (see also page 378.)

On page 247, "Jesus" says: "**And know this, too, my daughter: All creatures, whether they know it or not, and whether they want to or not, always fulfill my will...** My daughter, if you wish, I will this instant create a new world, more beautiful than this one, and you will live there for the rest of your life."

On page 260, "Jesus" says: "For many souls will turn back from the gates of Hell and **worship My mercy.**"

On page 374, "Jesus" says: "**If they will not adore My mercy, they will perish for all eternity.**"

On page 382, "Jesus" says: "**I desire that My mercy be worshipped.**"

On page 288, "Jesus" says: "That is why **I am uniting myself with you so intimately as with no other creature.**" **This does not make sense to me. Why is our Blessed mother not included in this equasion and the focus is all about Faustina?**

On page 400, "Jesus" says: "I see your love so pure, purer than that of the angels, and all the more so because you keep fighting. **For your sake I bless the world.**"

On page 417, we read that "Jesus" supposedly gave Sr. Faustina this instruction: "**Tell the Superior General to count on you as the most faithful daughter in the Order.**"

On page 583, we read that Sr. Faustina said: “When I took the Messenger of the Sacred Heart into my hand and read the account of the canonization of St. Andrew Bobola, **my soul was instantly filled with a great longing that our congregation, too, might have a saint and I wept like a child that there was no saint in our midst.** And I said to the Lord, ‘I know your generosity, and yet it seems to me that you are less generous towards us.’ And I began again to weep like a little child. And the Lord Jesus said to me, ‘Don’t cry. **You are that saint.**’”

On page 602, we read that “Jesus” supposedly said: “**I cannot stand them, because they are neither good nor bad.**”

On page 612, we read that “Jesus” supposedly said: “**I bear a special love for Poland, and if she will be obedient to My will, I will exalt her in might and holiness. From her will come forth the spark that will prepare the world for My final coming.**”

On page 643, we read that Sr. Faustina said after receiving Communion: “**Jesus transform me into another host!**.... You are a great and all-powerful Lord; you can grant me this favor. And the Lord answered me, ‘**You are a living host.**’”

For me seems to all be riddle with personal pride. This is very unusual for past visionaries. I still don't know what to make of it.

### **What is my take and reaction to the Divine Mercy devotion**

Bottom line I still can not accept the devotion for a number of reasons:

1. **It's too easy.** There is too much emphasis on God's mercy with nothing mentioned about he is also all just. This is almost a protestant notion. Christ died on the cross for our sins so all we have to do is say I am sorry and we go to heaven without any penance for our sins. That alone makes me nervous.
2. **It has almost become cult like.** I have a close friend so into this devotion that he put a tattoo of the divine mercy Christ on his forearm. People who criticize me for my doubts tell me Christ is not pleased and how can any Catholic not believe in this devotion. The church itself teaches that it is not mandatory to believe in private devotions. I am exercising that right.
3. **Too many twisting of traditional devotions.** The chaplet is said on the rosary, given to us my our lady, that should be kept separate and sacred. The creepy picture of our Lord without a heart seemingly taken from the sacred heart devotion.

I am sorry I just can not except this devotion. It is just all too strange and symbolic of the post Vatican II church and is devoid of many Catholic teachings. Like the devotion I believe in God's mercy but I also believe in his judgement. I can not conceive being totally forgiven for my sins without any penance or punishment for my sins via purgatory. I have been praying for divine inspiration on this for a long time now. It still comes up with, be cautious, stay away.

However, as said before the prayers are orthodox so if this devotion works for you don't let me stop you. I am not an apologist or canon lawyer but my gut says there is something wrong here. I think I will stay with the Sacred heart devotion instead.