

75th Anniversary of the Martyrdom St. Maximilian Kolbe

Week 20



Blessed are the Merciful for they shall receive Mercy

Our hunger and thirst for righteousness must not make us self-righteous.

It is too easy to notice the sins and failings of others.

In the initial stages of the spiritual life and after almost every conversion a person who had before been so blind to sin now sees sin everywhere in everyone.

They have become over-sensitized to it, and in their zeal seek to stamp it out.

This however is not the way of Christ.

For Christ did not come to condemn the world but to save it.

Our hunger and thirst for righteousness must not allow us to become hard and judgmental.

Our zeal must not open our eyes to the sins of others and blind us to our own sins.

Judgment is hard, Mercy is compassionate.

To condemn is human, to forgive is Divine.

In his teaching on the Good Samaritan, Jesus ends it by saying, “who then is the neighbor to the man who fell in with robbers?” The answer is “the man who showed him mercy!” And Jesus responds by saying “then go and do the same.”

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us to love our enemies, to turn the other cheek and to give without expecting return.

If we love our enemy, they often will kill us anyway.

If we turn the other cheek, they will often slap that one as well.

If we lend something to someone, He or she will often not return it.

So why do it?

How often has God loved us, even though we were His enemy because of sin?

How often has God turned the other cheek, even though He could have lashed out at us?

How often has God blessed us, even though we give Him nothing in return?

Why does He do it?

Because He is Merciful!

Not just Merciful, but shaken together, pressed down and overflowing with Mercy!

No one put this into practice more than Maximilian Kolbe.

Maximilian loved his enemies, he turned the other cheek and gave even his bread away in Auschwitz without expecting return.

Why did he do it?

Because while the Nazis were starving him, God was filling him with His mercy, pressed down, shaken together and overflowing into the folds of his heart.

In the starvation bunker he became filled with the mercy of God to the point of exploding and overflowing in the entire world.

Why should we love our enemies?

Why should we turn the other cheek?

Why should we lend without expecting return?

Because when we do, the world is filled, pressed down, shaken together and overflowing with the mercy of God!

Prayer : Heavenly Father, where there is sin, your mercy and grace abounds all the more.

Wherever there is sin, make us instruments of Your Mercy, pressed down, shaken together and overflowing.

Meditations and Questions

1. When did Jesus show mercy rather than condemnation to sinners?
2. How am I merciful to sinners?
3. How am I merciful to myself when I sin?
4. What prevents me from being merciful?
5. Who needs mercy in my life and in the world?