

## “Mercy Behind Bars – The Wounds That Heal”

*A Divine Mercy Dialogue with Gospel and Tradition*

### Characters:

- **Marcus:** Inmate, ex-drug dealer, burdened by guilt
  - **Sr. Mary Grace:** Dominican nun, mental health counselor, once a drug addict herself
  - **Setting:** A prison visiting room on Divine Mercy Sunday
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[Scene: The visiting room of the prison. Marcus sits at the table, sullen. Sister Mary Grace enters, carrying a Divine Mercy image, her Bible, and a copy of St. Faustina’s Diary.]

### Sr. Mary Grace:

Happy Divine Mercy Sunday, Marcus!

### Marcus:

Mercy? You sure you got the right guy?

### Sr. Mary Grace:

If I were Jesus, I’d be coming straight here first. In fact, He did. “*Peace be with you,*” He said—*not* to saints in silk robes, but to a bunch of terrified apostles hiding in fear. (John 20:19)

### Marcus:

You're talking about the Gospel?

### Sr. Mary Grace:

Exactly. *John 20:19–31*. You know what’s wild? Jesus walks *through* locked doors. Not just the prison kind. The guilt kind. The “I can’t be forgiven” kind. The “I sold drugs and now two kids are dead” kind.

### Marcus:

But they *were* afraid. I’m not afraid. I’m just done. What kind of God would even want me?

### Sr. Mary Grace:

The kind who keeps His wounds after the Resurrection.

### Marcus:

Huh?

### Sr. Mary Grace:

He shows His hands and His side—still wounded. Why? Not to guilt-trip the apostles. St.

Augustine says those wounds were a *reminder of love*, not punishment. St. Gregory the Great says Jesus kept them so that when He intercedes for us, He can say: “*See what I endured for them.*”

**Marcus:**

So... He’s not ashamed of what He went through?

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

Nope. And He’s not ashamed of what He’s gonna bring *you* through either. Your past doesn’t scare Him—it’s His job description. “*As the Father has sent me, so I send you,*” He said—even to doubting Thomas.

**Marcus:**

You mean the guy who wouldn’t believe until he touched Jesus?

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

Yes! Jesus didn’t say, “Forget you, Thomas.” He said, “*Put your finger here.*” He met Thomas in his doubt. That’s what mercy does. *St. John Chrysostom* says Thomas’ doubt actually strengthens our faith, because Christ allowed a skeptic to inspect the evidence.

**Marcus:**

Still feels like I’m past hope. I knew better.

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

Want to know what Jesus told St. Faustina? “*The greater the misery of a soul, the greater its right to My mercy.*” Diary, paragraph 1182.

**Marcus:**

He said that?

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

He did. She saw Him, like in this image. White rays for Baptism. Red rays for the Eucharist. That’s the flood of grace He offers *anyone*. But He also said in Diary 1448, “*Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet.*”

**Marcus:**

Scarlet? Sister, I’m neon red.

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

Perfect! You’ll be His next billboard for grace. You know how people put tattoos on their bodies to mark where they’ve been? God writes mercy on the soul to show where He’s taking you.

**Marcus:**

But it still feels fake. Like, say sorry, and it’s all wiped?

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

It's not about pretending it never happened. It's about knowing it doesn't define you anymore. St. Ambrose said, "The Church is not a museum for saints, but a hospital for sinners." And guess what? Confession is the emergency room.

**Marcus:**

I don't know if I can believe all this.

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

That's okay. Neither did Thomas. But he came back to the room. That's the key. He showed up. And Jesus met him.

**Marcus:**

So what do I do?

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

Come back to the "upper room"—confession. Tell Jesus, "I trust in You." Just like St. Faustina wrote. And then start fresh. We'll even pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet together. You offer it for those two teens. Turn your sin into intercession.

**Marcus:**

That's... heavy. But also, weirdly hopeful.

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

That's Divine Mercy. Heavy enough to bear your sin. Light enough to lift you from it. *Now*, want to touch the wounds of Christ?

**Marcus:**

What do you mean?

**Sr. Mary Grace:**

Let Him touch yours.

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**Reflection Takeaway:**

On Divine Mercy Sunday, the Gospel of John reminds us that Jesus comes *into our locked places*—even prisons of shame and regret. He does not come to scold but to *show His wounds* and say, "Peace be with you." Like Thomas, we are invited to stop doubting and believe. Like Marcus, we are invited to lay down our guilt and *trust in Divine Mercy*.

As St. Faustina heard from Jesus:

*“The soul that trusts in My mercy is most fortunate, because I Myself take care of it.”* (Diary 1273)

So whether your hands are clean or covered in scars—reach out. His are still open.