

31. July

Novena to God the Father
Day 3: "Fountain of Mercy"

We human beings, with our fallen nature and our limitations, with the uncertainties of our lives and our changing and unstable environment, need a constant and firm foundation for our existence. That meaning of existence is the love of our Father!

His love gives us life, light, clarity and security. It is our refuge, for divine love is not subject to change and does not withdraw when we succumb to our weakness and give in to those inclinations that want to turn us away from God.

God gives Himself to humanity especially through His mercy. He opens His heart wide so that we can find mercy in Him. God is not a merciless judge and avenger, fixated on our every fault. On the contrary, He always wants to lead man to reconciliation and a change of life, rather than to show him and make him feel the consequences of his wrongdoing.

God does not want to punish or take revenge, but to forgive. He has mercy on us and offers us His love again and again, no matter how messed up our lives are. And this is especially true of those who sincerely strive to follow Him, but who are constantly confronted with their own weakness and fall.

Although the way of following Christ is a matter of the utmost seriousness, and although we must handle with great responsibility all that has been entrusted to us, the Lord does not want us to become tense or scrupulous, nor to live in fear of our Father. He offers us His love, His patience, His forbearance and the gentleness of His heart as the foundation of our relationship with Him. Our Father invites us to be ever more gentle in our dealings with Him and to develop in us the gift of the fear of God and the gift of piety, so that we not only avoid offending God, but also try to do everything that pleases Him, moved by love for Him.

For this journey we need His mercy, for time and again we are confronted with the limits of our capacity to love. Our Father knows them, and He comforts and strengthens us to continue on the path we have chosen, and to get up when we fall, never doubting

His love. What kind of love would it be to turn away from us when we fail? Certainly not our Father's! He wants us to always return to His Heart, which is the source of mercy, and to trust Him unconditionally. And this trust, in turn, can be acquired by recognising and experiencing God's mercy again and again. How often have we experienced His mercy when we have sincerely turned to Him in prayer, in confession or in the various ways that He has shown us!

We must engrave in our conscience and in our hearts the certainty that God, in His love, is always on our side, and that He wants nothing more than to make His love known to us even more deeply.

Sometimes it is precisely the experience of His mercy in a situation that is difficult for us that enables us to discover His love that lifts us up and gives us life again. Divine mercy is therefore not only the bridge that leads the sinner to true life, but also for those who have already set out on the path of God and are striving for holiness.

His mercy is the source from which we are constantly purified from everything that pollutes us and prevents the divine light from penetrating us completely. This is the source that should encourage us to return to the path and continue along that path, and it should enable us to show mercy to our neighbour.