

Divine Mercy –1

Is there unforgivable sin?

Mark 3, 22-30

Jesus and Beelzebul

Then he went home; ²⁰ and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." ²³ And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. ²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

²⁸ "Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—³⁰ for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

The full context of this in Mark chapter 3:

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guilty of an eternal sin”—³⁰ for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

The footnotes of the revised version of the Ignatius Catholic Bible in reference to the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit noted that the scribes attributing the power of Jesus to heal and forgive reveals their own collaboration with the devil’s kingdom by saying that he is possessed by the prince of demons and by the prince of demons cast out demons. This malicious accusation that the work of the Spirit, that is of God, is the work of the devil which is to say that Satan has risen up against himself and will fail.

Interestingly the footnotes stated that the scribes uttered blasphemy by attributing to Satan what is actually the work of the Holy Spirit. It goes on to say their sin is not unforgivable in principle since no sin can place us beyond the reach of God's mercy however the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is a form of rebellion that is particularly grievous because it blinds people to their own need for forgiveness. In this case sins are unpardonable when they are not confessed with contrition. Sin against the Holy Spirit was prefigured in the Old Testament when the Israelites fashioned the golden calf. That is they honored an idol.

This is important to note that the sin is actually not unforgivable in and of itself but because people are blinded to their own need for forgiveness. As we will see that sin is forgivable when the heart is contrite, when the sin is confessed, when there is true intention of amending one's ways.

(Beelzebub is the Greek version of the name Baal-zebub, a pagan deity worshipped in the ancient Philistine city of Ekron during Old Testament times. The name means “the lord of flies” ([2 Kings 1:2](#)), which is significant as golden fly images have been discovered during [excavations at ancient Philistine sites](#). After the Philistines, the Jews changed the name to “Beelzeboul,” as used in the Greek New Testament, which means “lord of dung” and refers to the fly god that was worshipped for protection from fly bites. According to certain biblical scholars, Beelzebub was also known as the “god of filth,” which later became a term of contempt in the mouth of the Pharisees. As a result, Beelzebub was a particularly despised deity, and the Jews used his name as another name for Satan.)

Reconciling Unforgivable Sin with Divine Mercy-St. Faustina

Unforgivable Sin?

Mark: 3, 22-30²⁸ *“Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— ³⁰ for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”*

What actually is Unforgivable Sin?

Video 1-Father Chris Alar video- The Unforgivable Sin- Divine Mercy , Stockton MA

Diary Of St. Faustina: 1059: *I desire trust from My creatures. Encourage souls to place great trust in My fathomless mercy. Let the weak, sinful soul have no fear to approach Me, for even if it had more sins than there are grains of sand in the world, all would be drowned in the unmeasurable depths of My mercy.*

Video 2-Ocean of Mercy Video-

Reconciling with Divine Mercy-

Other resources:
 Dives et Misericordia- Encyclical by St. John Paul II 1981
 Youtube videos of Father Chris Alar, MIC Director of Shrine of Divine Mercy/Conversion Story of Father Don Calloway- No Turning Back Conversion Video- YouTube

Unforgivable Sin?

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Catechism: 1864 “Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.”¹³⁶ There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit.¹³⁷ Such hardness of heart can lead to

final impenitence and eternal loss.

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The scribes sinned by putting themselves above and separate from Jesus and claiming him to be evil. Unlike other sin the opposite occurs when we recognize that we have done evil and that God is good and is offended.

Mark: 3, 22-30

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New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition (Mt 12:30–32)

31 Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

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**Luke 12:10 (NRSVCE)**

10 And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

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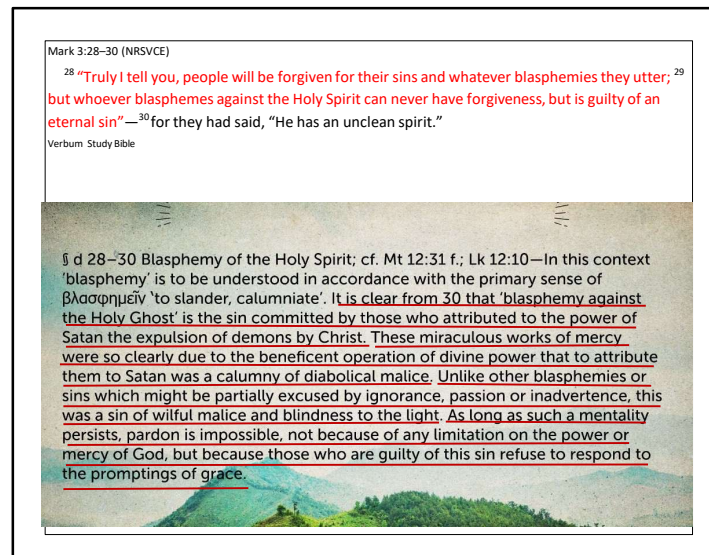
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One resource i.e.Verbum goes on to state "the miraculous works of mercy were so clearly due to the magnificent operation of divine power that to attribute them to Satan was diabolical malice... As long as such a mentality persists pardon is impossible not because of any limitation of the power or mercy of God but because those who are guilty of this sin refused to respond to the promptings of grace. This differs from other forms of sin of ignorance, passion etc. because it excludes the necessary elements of forgiveness, recognition of sin, repentance and therefore the promptings of grace.

The scribes were putting themselves above and separate from Jesus and claiming him to be evil.

Catechism and Companion documents:

1864 “Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.” *There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss.*

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Catechism and Companion documents: Reference- *Dominum et vivificantem* 46 , Section 6
Against the background of what has been said so far, certain other words of Jesus, shocking and disturbing ones, become easier to understand. We might call them the words of "unforgiveness". They are reported for us by the Synoptics in connection with a particular sin which is called "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit". This is how they are reported in their three versions:
Mat- thew: "Whoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come."
Mark: "All sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."
Luke: "Every one who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven."

Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit unforgivable? How should this blasphemy be understood? Saint Thomas Aquinas replies that it is a question of a sin that is "unforgivable by its very nature, insofar as it excludes the elements through which the forgiveness of sin takes place".

According to such an exegesis, *"blasphemy" does not properly consist in offending against the Holy Spirit in words; it consists rather in the refusal to accept the salvation which God offers to man through the Holy Spirit, working through the power of the Cross.*

Citing Pope John Paul II's encyclical from 1986 *Dominum et vivificantem -On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World*

1986

As we will explore with our video it appears that the real sin is not so much in the words or action but the accompanying attitude that is so malicious that there is no desire for forgiveness, repentance, amending one's life and behavior.

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Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit unforgivable? How should this blasphemy be understood ? St. Thomas Aquinas replies that it is a question of a sin that is "unforgivable by its very nature, insofar as it excludes the elements through which the forgiveness of sin takes place."

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If man rejects the "convincing concerning sin" which comes from the Holy Spirit and which has the power to save, he also rejects the "coming" of the Counselor-that "coming" which was accomplished in the Paschal Mystery, in union with the redemptive power of Christ's Blood: the Blood which "purifies the conscience from dead works."

We know that the result of such a purification is the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, whoever rejects the Spirit and the Blood remains in "dead works," in sin. And the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit consists precisely in the radical refusal to accept this forgiveness, of which he is the intimate giver and which presupposes the genuine conversion which he brings about in the conscience. If Jesus says that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven either in this life or in the next, it is because this "non-forgiveness" is linked, as to its cause, to "non-repentance," in other words to the radical refusal to be converted.

Ps 103:8-14

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
9 He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.
10 He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.
11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
13 As a father has compassion for his children,
so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.
14 For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust.

[ACTS 13- 38](#): Therefore, let it be known to you, brothers, that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. [39](#)Through Him everyone who believes is justified from everything from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Old Testament Psalms indicates clearly how the Lord is **merciful and gracious slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, he will not always accuse nor will he keep his anger forever, he does not deal with us according to our sins nor repay us according to our iniquities.** For as the heavens are high above the earth so great

is steadfast love for those who fear him as far as the east is from the West so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. Fearing this case is reverence, holding in awe. Not fear as a negative emotion.

In acts 13 we read through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you through him everyone who believes is justified from everything from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. This is an indication of the boundless mercy of God through Jesus Christ.

How are we to reconcile the infinite Mercy of God, that is, of Divine Mercy with unforgivable sin?

Father Chris Alar of Divine Mercy Shrine: Video1

Let us listen to this brief video to an extension of these concepts. Keep in mind that the scribes essentially attributed Jesus' miraculous healings and forgiveness of sin to the devil or forces of evil. It is one thing to sin against the will of God, but a significantly other thing and malicious action to state that the actions of God are from the evil one.

Aquinas: Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit unforgivable? How should this blasphemy be understood? Saint Thomas Aquinas replies that it is a question of a sin that is "unforgivable by its very nature, insofar as it excludes the elements through which the forgiveness of sin takes place." it consists rather in the refusal to accept the salvation which God offers to man through the Holy Spirit, working through the power of the Cross.

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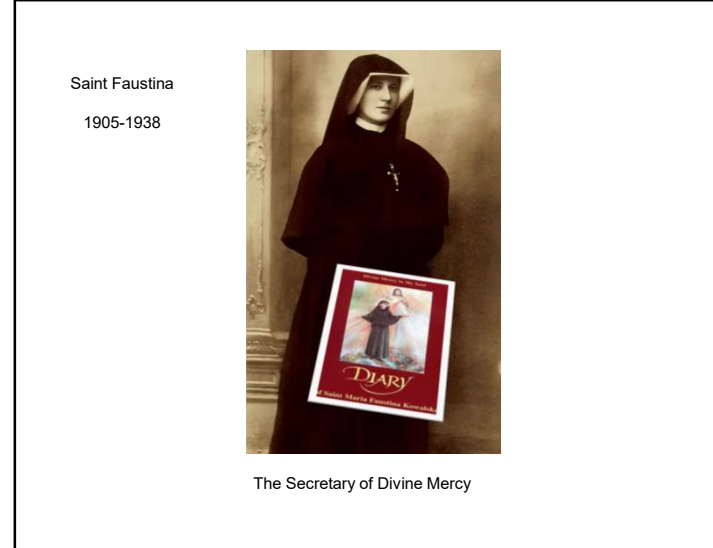
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They obviously insult Jesus by unapologetically claiming the works of Jesus are works of the devil. But why would driving out the devil be the work of the devil? That is to say that the scribes would sooner make a statement that is utterly illogical and blasphemous. This reflects their pride, and willful ignorance. They willfully refuse the path of salvation that Jesus has demonstrated on multiple occasions his divinity, his forgiveness, his ability to heal, his appeal to the father.

As father a lot will explain when we place ourselves outside of the mercy and forgiveness of God either by virtue of pride, despair, lack of faith we similarly reject the workings of the Holy Spirit and the power of the cross.



Let us listen to this brief video to an extension of these concepts.



Divine Mercy:

Sister Faustina was assigned to be the secretary of divine mercy by Jesus Christ. The reason for this was to prepare humanity for his final coming. This should be done by letting humanity know of the infallible mercy that is available to humanity by simply acknowledging sin, repenting, and trusting.

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Ocean of Mercy Video -Part 1:

June 1924

“As I began to dance I suddenly saw Jesus at my side,” Sr. Faustina wrote several years later in her *Diary*. He looked as though He was on the Way of the Cross — “racked with pain, stripped of His clothing, all covered with wounds.” Like a jealous youth, He reproached her, saying, **“How long shall I put up with you and how long will you keep putting Me off?”** (*Diary*, 9).



Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska

Helen Kowalska, was born in 1905 in Poland, the third in the family of 10. Her family was very dedicated to the religious practice, they were poor and generally with very limited education. Even at age 7 she sensed a very strong inner urge of devotion to Jesus Christ and the desire eventually for religious life. At age 13 Jesus appeared to her and explained the holy mass. Because they were poor at age 14 she worked outside of the home doing domestic work for family so that she could help support her parents and their farm. Her inner desire for religious life was always present an increase through time, her parents resisted her interest in this as they needed her to help in the farm, additionally at that time the dowry was commonly needed to get into a convent. Our poverty and limited education would serve as a deterrent to be accepted in a convent. Interestingly at age 19 she attended a dance reluctantly with her sister, at that dance a mystical phenomenon occurred in which the wounded Jesus Christ appeared to her expressing his frustration regarding entering religious life. Our diary quotes state that Jesus asked her *"how long shall I put up with you*

and how long will you keep putting me off" this was diary entry number nine.

She left the dance stating to her sister that she was having a headache, went to the local Cathedral and lay prostrate on the floor asking for guidance from the Lord. An inner locution or voice instructed her to go to Warsaw which she did almost immediately, contrary to the wishes of her parents. Then Warsaw not knowing anyone there she again prayed for guidance and was advised to inquire at conference regarding admission. Several of them refused her as they did not accept maids, or people of limited education, especially those who were poor. Finally in August 1925 the convent of our Lady of Mercy advised her that after a period of time of working locally to raise funds and that she would be accepted. Her superiors described her as *no one special* but she was respected for her piety and fervor regarding prayer. She was accepted and described as a member of choir to which described the caste- like system for workers which assigned her to mostly labor such as cooking, gardening and cleaning and attending to the door and receiving visitors.

She fasted severely and had periods of spiritual darkness. She is known to have experienced spiritual stigmata, could read souls, demonstrated significant spiritual insight. She was noted in the early to mid 1930s in the face of recurrent episodes of weakness to have tuberculosis which was spreading throughout her body.

She is described as the Sec. of Divine Mercy, **"You are the secretary of My mercy; I have chosen you for that office in this and the next life"** (*Diary*, 1605) ... **"to make known to souls the great mercy that I have for them, and to exhort them to trust in the bottomless depth of My mercy"** (*Diary*, 1567).

St. Faustina is known for her mission of spreading the message of Divine Mercy as delivered to her by Jesus, via operations and inner locution's. There was skepticism regarding her role however her example eventually one people over. Most notably when she was transferred from Warsaw to Lithuania Father Sopocko became her confessor. She confided in him that she knew that one day he would meet with her and she was to describe the mission of Divine Mercy. As her interaction with others the power go went on he was convinced of her special mission. He advised her to write down everything in a diary. He went as far as having a psychiatrist evaluate. Ultimately, she became very well accepted. Most of the nuns with which he lived did not know of her deep spiritual and mystical activities.

In the early 1930s Jesus appeared to her in a special in an image that portrayed him as the source of Divine Mercy. And requested of her that an image be painted. She had no skills along these lines, she shared this with her confessor. Ultimately a painter in Vilnius Lithuania where she was in convent proceeded and after a number of attempts and no doubt the critical scrutiny of sister Faustina an image was finally agreed upon. There are several images. The first image is described as the Vilnius image, there are some later revisions.

An unfortunate circumstance that she described as being deceived by the evil one prompted her to destroy the diary that she was keeping. When she shared this with father Sopocko he was very disappointed and insisted that she start over with it.

From her deep mystical and religious experience, the painting, the diary, a Novena, a litany and chaplet as well as a reference for the so-called hour of Divine Mercy at 3 PM each day have all become part of the Divine Mercy Devotion.

A history of getting divine mercy devotion to America is one that is in and of itself miraculous as this began in the 1930s during wartime when Poland was under the influence of secular forces from Russia and Germany. However, a Marian priest father Jarzebowski, against the odds was able to manage to get to America and engage with nuns who then helped him to begin to spread the message.

Another major setback was that in 1958 after momentum have been established for spreading the word of Divine Mercy that it was banned by the Holy See. This inadvertently occurred because of a misinterpretation of the Italian version of the initially Polish language diary. This ultimately was corrected but 20 years to remove the band. The person very much responsible for removing the band was none other than Archbishop Karol Wojtyla, eventually Pope John Paul II. He also initiated inquiry regarding her potential candidacy for sainthood which became an issue of concern because of the previous ban. Ultimately through the efforts of Pope John Paul II, Pope John XXIII, and ultimately Pope Paul the sixth it was deemed appropriate to consider her for beatification and canonization which occurred in 2000 when St. John Paul the

second had become Pope.

She died in 1938 at the young age of 35.

“Today, I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My merciful Heart” (Diary, 1588).

“You are the secretary of My mercy; I have chosen you for that office in this and the next life” (Diary, 1605) ... “to make known to souls the great mercy that I have for them, and to exhort them to trust in the bottomless depth of My mercy” (Diary, 1567)



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Diary Of St. Faustina: 1059: I desire trust from My creatures. Encourage souls to place great trust in My fathomless mercy. Let the weak, sinful soul have no fear to approach Me, for even if it had more sins than there are grains of sand in the world, all would be drowned in the unmeasurable depths of My mercy.



Divine mercy and its devotions consist of the diary of St. Faustina, the image of Divine Mercy that Jesus requested to be painted in the 1930s, novena, the chaplet of Divine Mercy, and the hour of mercy at 3 PM each day.

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1146 (39) [Let] the greatest sinners place their trust in My mercy. They have the right before others to trust in the abyss of My mercy. My daughter, write about My mercy towards tormented souls. Souls that make an appeal to My mercy delight Me. To such souls I grant even more graces than they ask. I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to My compassion, but on the contrary, I justify him in My unfathomable and inscrutable mercy.

Write: *Before I come as a just Judge, I first open wide the door of My mercy. He who refuses to pass through the door of My mercy must pass through the door of My justice...*



Saint Faustina

1905-1938

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Devotion of Divine Mercy

The Message of Divine Mercy
(our ABC's)

"A"sk for God's mercy


"B"e merciful to each other

"C"ompletely trust in God's mercy



The Devotion of Divine Mercy

F = Feast of DM
I = Image of DM
N = Novena of DM
C = Chaplet of DM
H = Hour of DM



Divine mercy and its devotions consist of the diary of St. Faustina, the image of Divine Mercy that Jesus requested to be painted in the 1930s, the chaplet of Divine Mercy, and the hour of mercy at 3 PM each day.

Jesus: "Your misery does not hinder
My mercy. My daughter, write that
the greater the misery of a soul, the
greater its right to My mercy; [urge]
all souls to trust in the
unfathomable abyss of My mercy,
because I want to save them all"
(Diary, 1182)

Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos wrote, "None of the damned was ever lost because his sin was too great, but because his trust was too small!"

This is the message of divine mercy, acknowledging sin no matter what the magnitude of the sin, trusting in forgiveness.

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Ocean of Mercy clip



Video _ Divine Mercy

1142 (38) June 4. Today is the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. During Holy Mass, I was given the knowledge of the Heart of Jesus and of the nature of the fire of love with which He burns for us and of how He is an Ocean of Mercy. Then I heard a voice:

Apostle of My mercy, proclaim to the whole world My unfathomable mercy. Do not be discouraged by the difficulties you encounter in proclaiming My mercy. These difficulties that affect you so painfully are needed for your sanctification and as evidence that this work is Mine. My daughter, be diligent in writing down every sentence I tell you concerning My mercy, because this is meant for a great number of souls who will profit from it.

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The Message of Divine Mercy
(our ABC's)

"A"sk for God's mercy

"B"e merciful to each other

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The Devotion of Divine
Mercy

- F = Feast of DM
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- N = Novena of DM
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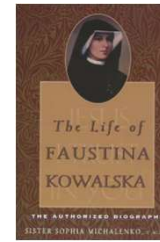
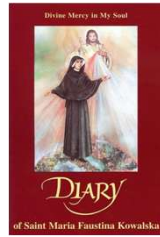
“Can the sin that is the “unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit” be reconciled with the unfathomable Divine Mercy that God offers us and ultimately be forgiven?”

As we have learned it is not so much the content of the sin but the malice of complete rejection by the sinner of God's forgiveness either based on lack of trust or pride that makes it unforgiveable and places one outside of the working of the Holy Spirit. Thus, all sin becomes forgivable if we sincerely ask for God's mercy, be merciful to one another, and completely trust in God's mercy.

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Resources



Fr. Calloway- No Turning Back Conversion Video- YouTube



IOANNES PAULUS PP. II
DIVES IN MISERICORDIA

Encyclical

Other Verbum notes

§ 697a 31–32 Blasphemy of the Spirit (Mk 3:28–30; Lk 12:10)—The meaning of ‘blasphemy of the Spirit’ is to be determined by the context. In the first place, it is blasphemy against (objective genitive) the holy Spirit; cf. 32. But, secondly, what precisely is the sin in question? The context (to which 31–32 are closely tied; cf. ‘therefore’ in 31 and even more explicitly Mk 3:30) is decisive. The sin referred to is one of which an example has just been furnished by the Pharisees. They have perversely attributed to Satan what is clearly the work of God. This is only one example of conscious, hardened rejection of God’s proffered light—the root-vice of the Pharisees (cf. Jn 9:41; 3:19 f.) as of others. This is the direct affront of the Spirit of wisdom; cf. e.g. 1 Cor 2:10–13. It is the sin ‘that remaineth’, Jn 9:41. Why does it ‘remain’? Why is it unforgivable? Of its very nature. Man cannot be saved without the gifts of God, one of which is forgiveness. If these gifts are perseveringly refused nothing can be done. It is called “unforgivable” because of its very nature it precludes those things (i.e. the dispositions) which induce forgiveness. However, we cannot thus exclude the power and mercy of God which can find a way of forgiveness ... by which, as it were miraculously, he heals such sinners’, ST II, 2, 14, a. 3. Even in this hypothesis of a ‘quasi-miraculous’ grace the sinner is presumed to accept it. At that moment and to that extent he ceases to affront the Spirit; he ceases to be a blasphemer of the Spirit because he has (though tardily) accepted God’s light. Our Lord’s statement is therefore literally true: it shall never be forgiven because it refuses to be forgiven. The ‘word against the Son of Man’ is, though grave, forgivable. To assail the human conduct of our Lord (e.g. 9:11 or even 16:22) is an insult to his compassionate humanity but it proceeds from a misreading of God’s ways. It may presuppose a religious, if indocile, spirit. It finds some excuse in the fact that the Word has taken flesh and is, to that degree, veiled. But an attack upon the Son of Man when manifestly wielding the power of the Spirit is conscious malice—an attack upon the Spirit himself.

Jones, A. (1953). The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to St Matthew. In B. Orchard & E. F. Sutcliffe (Eds.), A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture (p. 874). Thomas Nelson.

Fear of God

While fearing God in the OT can sometimes refer to a terror or dread of God (e.g., Gen 3:10), most often it refers to an awe or reverence toward God. To “fear Yahweh” means to serve and be faithful to him (Josh 24:14–15). It includes an aspect of worship, as the people of Israel are commanded to “fear Yahweh” and not fear other gods (2 Kgs 17:35–36). The concept of fearing God is also closely linked with obedience to the law (Deut 5:29; 8:6). To fear God is to have a proper response to his holiness (Isa 8:13).

Custis, M. (2014). Fear. In D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Lexham Press.