



Research Paper

A Review on the Diary of St. Faustina – Paragraph 1486

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ABSTRACT: This article is about Roman Catholic teaching on the Diary of St. Faustina, paragraph 1486. Specifically, we review and summarize what Jesus said in one of His conversations with St. Faustina, written in her Diary, where Jesus gives us a mystical insight into what our judgment may be like. She writes of Jesus calling to the soul not once, but three times. If the soul remains unresponsive, whether hardened or despairing, the soul is lost forever after the third call. This is the message of hope to be spread, especially for those who grief deeply due to a sudden death of their loved one, either by suicide or any other cause: God’s mercy sometimes touches souls at the last moment and our prayers can make a difference for the soul to recognize Jesus, before the third and final call, and to respond ‘Yes’ to Him.

KEYWORDS: Divine Mercy, Paragraph 1486, St. Faustina Diary.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Suicide is a major public health concern and every suicide is a tragedy that affects families, communities and entire countries and has long-lasting effects on the people left behind [1–4]. However, Fr. Chris Alar [5–8], a Marian Priest of the Immaculate Conception (MIC), whose life was shaken by the suicide of his grandmother, shared the following. Growing up, he absorbed the belief—as many perhaps have—that suicide means someone is ‘automatically lost’. But following her death, he discovered the Catholic Church’s true teaching on the matter, which is laid out in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) [9]:

“We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives (CCC §2283).”

Recently the Divine Mercy message has become increasingly popular, as a result of St. John Paul II (JP2) efforts [7]. Many individuals are aware of the fact that Jesus appeared to St. Maria Faustina Kowalska (a Polish nun who died in 1938) and revealed the depth of His mercy. She was instructed to share the message that God loves us and that his mercy is greater than our sins [7].

Note that the diary has received the official approval of the Catholic Church in the sense that it was examined by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and in 1978-79 the Congregation issued statements declaring that the Divine Mercy message and devotion expressed there by Sister Faustina does not violate Catholic doctrine on matters of Faith and Morals [10], although initially this was not the case. In fact, previously the Vatican even banned the Divine Mercy devotion for over 20 years, forbidding anyone to spread or promote it; until ‘Divine Mercy Sunday’ was officially established for the universal Church by a decree of the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on May 5, 2000. The Vatican did not create a new feast day for the Church, but it gave a new name for a day that was already a ‘solemnity’ (i.e., a feast of the highest class) in the Church’s liturgical calendar: the octave day of Easter, that is, the Second Sunday of Easter. The document said that from now on this solemnity would be called “Divine Mercy Sunday.”

Next, a priest in North Carolina (NC), gave Chris Alar the Diary of St. Faustina [8, 11], a certain passage of which deal explicitly with the issue of suicide (§1486). When Chris Alar learned about God’s mercy, after his grandma took her life—that even she can make it to heaven—and when he learned that God’s mercy is greater than any sin, even suicide, it changed his life. He fell in love with the Diary of St Faustina and the message of the Divine Mercy. His experience with his grandmother ended up shaping a book called *After Suicide: There’s still hope for them and for you* [12–13]. The message is about hope and it is not just suicide. It

is for any kind of suffering and loss. People who lose their spouse to cancer, or if a family loses their son in a car accident, the same exact principles apply.

In this article, the sections are organized as follow. In Section 2, we present the material and method. Section 3 is the result. Section 4 is the discussion. Finally, Section 5 is the conclusion.

II. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The material used is the Diary of St. Faustina paragraph 1486 [8, 11] and Fr. Chris Alar's multiple talks, spreading and unpacking such message [5]. The method use is fervent prayers as Jesus instructed (Luke 18:1-8) and the message of the Divine Mercy.

As a brief recap, CCC paragraph 2590 defined that prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God and the requesting of good things from God [9, 14–15]. Previous research [14] has also pointed out such definition of Catholic prayer. Prayer is more effective when accompanied by fasting, almsgiving and righteousness (Tobit 12:8), as the *Three Pillars of Judaism*. Jesus, besides speaking of the *Three Pillars of Judaism* individually (Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21), comprehends all three under the term 'righteousness' (Biblical Greek: *dikaosyne*) which includes His teaching on *almsgiving* (Matthew 6:2-4; Proverbs 19:17; Tobit 12:8-9), *prayer* (Matthew 6:5-6), and *fasting* (Matthew 6:16-18; Joel 2:12; Luke 4:1-2; Daniel 10:3; Ezra 8:21-23; Acts 14:23; Exodus 34:28; Isaiah 58:6).

Next, an excerpt from the Diary of St. Faustina gives us a mystical insight into what our judgment may be like. She writes of Jesus calling to the soul not once, but three times. If the soul remains unresponsive, whether hardened or despairing, here's what happens: *"Then the mercy of God begins to exert itself, and, without any co-operation from the soul, God grants it final grace. If this too is spumed, God will leave the soul in this self-chosen disposition for eternity. This grace emerges from the merciful Heart of Jesus and gives the soul a special light by means of which the soul begins to understand God's effort; but conversion depends on its own will. The soul knows that this, for her, is final grace and, should it show even a flicker of good will, the mercy of God will accomplish the rest (§1486)."*

Next, Alar [5] unpacks such message. A priest in North Carolina (NC) gave Alar the Diary of St. Faustina [11] which contains a certain passage deal explicitly with the issue of suicide (§1486). The NC priest talked to Chris in 2003 with regarding his grandmother's suicide in 1993. Alar told this priest that he was worried about his grandmother's soul, especially because in her last year of life she had stopped receiving the Sacraments and had turned her back on God and the Church. The priest told him to go home and pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet [16] for the salvation of his grandmother's soul. Alar, whose profession at that time was engineering, questioned the priest, "Father, I don't understand. My grandmother has been judged. There is nothing I can do to change that." The priest repeated his instructions to pray the Chaplet for her soul. Chris told the priest he did not want to be difficult, but he just did not understand. The priest said, "God knew back in 1993 that you would be here in 2003, and you would pray this Chaplet for your grandmother, and those graces will be allowed through the mercy of God to be taken back and showered upon the soul of your grandmother at the moment of her judgment to help her. This is why we need to pray for our loved ones and our families and our friends."

Alar lamented that his grandmother had fallen away from the Church before she died, so the NC priest pointed out that paragraph 1486 of St. Faustina's Diary said, *"Jesus comes to every soul three times at the moment of death. If the soul rejects Him after the first time, He goes away. But He comes back a second time. If the soul rejects Him again, He will go, but He will come back a third time. If the soul rejects Him a third time, the soul is lost forever."* Alar was elated to hear this, since he felt his grandmother would never have rejected Jesus, because she was a good person. But then the priest seemed to throw a monkey wrench at him, asserting, "We die in the state that we live." He explained that if we turn our backs on God, we will not recognize Him when He comes (i.e., not died under the *"State-of-Grace"*). Alar was crestfallen at that thought, since his grandmother had, in fact, turned her back on God. But the priest continued, *"Without your prayers, she may not recognize Him, but with your prayers upon her soul at the moment of her judgment – because God is outside of time (there is no past or future for God, just one eternal now), He can take those graces from your prayers and shower them down on your grandmother, so maybe, just maybe, it's enough grace for her to turn around and say, 'Yes' to God."* The NC priest explained further that this is why JP2 among many other saints call us *"mini co-redeemers."* We are the *'Body of Christ'* and it is very important for us to pray for one another. Prayers can make a difference. A demon once told St. John Vianney that 80,000 souls avoided hell due to his prayers and sufferings. This is why we should offer up our prayers and suffering. The NC priest continued, referencing paragraph 1698 of the Diary – which says that *God's mercy sometimes touches souls at the last moment*. Alar began to cry at the thought of such a merciful God. He decided right then and there to spend the rest of his life spreading this message of hope. Later he joined the MIC, was ordained a few years ago, and is now the director of the Association of Marian Helpers.

III. RESULT

The result is the *message of hope* to be spread, especially those who mourn and grief deeply for the loss their loved one, due to suicide and/or other cause of death (car accident, aging, sickness, etc.)

Such message of Jesus in His ‘Divine Mercy’ is consistent with what God said in the Scripture [17–18] regarding the depth and richness of His love, mercy, and grace. For example, but not limited to, Psalms 36:5-9; Psalm 107:29; John 3:16; Romans 15:4; Ephesians 2:4; Ephesians 3:18-19; etc. We simply do not have the capacity to understand His [Agape] love for us (Ephesians 3:18-19) since we are so used to the conditional love.

Note that in the ancient Greek language in which the New Testament was written, they had four different words for love [19]. Those all four words meant different levels of love; hence there are different levels of expectations. Yet, many people confused about those 4-level differences and hence couldn’t manage their 4-level of expectations, ending up with despair, by putting hopes, trust, and confidence on anybody/anything else other than God’s (Agape) love. The four main Greek words for love are 1) Agape, 2) Eros, 3) Philia, and 4) Storge – in such order (hierarchy). In the New Testament, the ‘*agape*’ level of love is the heavenly father love of God for humans (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8,16; 1 John 4:19; Romans 5:8) where no mortal/human love could measure up to such highest level of love. The ‘*philia*’ level of love (John 13:35; Roman 12:10; Hebrew 13:1) designates love between persons or human reciprocal love for God (1 John 2:15). The Greek word ‘*eros*’ refers to the love found in romantic relationships. While the Greek word ‘*eros*’ does not appear in the New Testament, the idea is included in passages like Hebrews 13:4 where the writer refers to the marriage bed – marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled, but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Like ‘*eros*,’ the word ‘*storge*’ does not appear in the New Testament. However, the opposite of ‘*storge*’ is used twice in the New Testament. It is found in Romans 1:31 and 2 Timothy 3:3 and is translated as ‘*unloving*’ (New King James Version, NKJV) or ‘*heartless*’ (English Standard Version, ESV).

IV. DISCUSSION

Suicide is so prevalent today. But we can generalize it to any other tragedy, such as but not limited to car wreck, sudden death, cancer, etc. Does that mean we can suicide? Certainly not! But seek mental health help. In this world, there are constant battles with the world, flesh, and devil (Ephesians 2:2–3; Ephesians 6:10-18). We don’t always know the answer to any life tragedy. Sometimes people have chosen suicide and is difficult to see God’s Grace. Suicide is never a solution. It is a temporary solution because this world is only temporary. We want to put our hopes in God. That’s the virtue of hopes. Sometimes tragedy happen in life but God can turn any bad thing for a greater good out of someone pain, sufferings, and anxieties (Roman 8:28).

Alar [20] learned and shared an important lesson as he contemplates his grandma’s death. The following stats are the facts that Alar pointed out. Every year there are 47K American takes their life; then going up 10 straight years, 33% increase since 1999. Then, Alar laid-down some more stats as follows. There are 25 suicide attempts for every actual suicide. Every 30-second in the United States (US), there is an attempt of suicide making over one-million/year suicide attempts. There are more veterans in US who died suicide than in the entire Vietnam Wars. Over 800K people died by suicide than all the wars or homicide combined. Women attempt suicide three times more than man. But men complete the active suicide three times than women. The Golden Gate Bridge is most popular suicide place than your home. A story of a man jumped suicide at the Golden Gate Bridge. When his family cleaned-up his apartment, they found a suicide letter that said if he found anyone on his way to the Golden Gate Bridge to suicide, just one person, to smile at him, then he won’t commit suicide. Then he jumped. That told us how important just one smile is, in a daily day-to-day. Alar added, after COVID-19, there are over 600% increase in suicide calls to suicide hot-line. The problem of mental illness people went to hospital got turned away just to avoid Corona Virus. Mental Health is a very serious problem today. We got to look at mental health which is spiritual life. How many of us received treatments for spiritual life? We are not just body. We run to doctors for body ache; How many of us run to receive treatment for the spirit, mental health, and soul? Many suicides are related to the caused of some kind of mental depression. And depression can destroy a person’s capacity to reason. They cannot reason clearly. Depression can severely impair your judgement such that a person could and would do things that they normally would not do. Just like his grandma. She did not want to suicide; she just could not continue her fights, battles, and struggle of life. But that does not excuse it. We will talk about God’s mercy.

When people suffer depression, it affects their decision in a way they wouldn’t if they weren’t depressed. Alar also pointed out that the number one reason men commit adultery is stupidity. The number one reason women commit adultery is depression. They don’t feel loved, they don’t feel wanted. All of a sudden Joe Doe come in and pay attention to her. That’s why we should put our hopes, trust, and confidence in the ‘agape’ love of the Lord; then we will never be disappointed (Jeremiah 17:7; Isaiah 49:23b). But those who puts their hope, trust, and confidence in mortals/human beings [anything less than God’s agape love] will surely be disappointed (Jeremiah 17:5). Going back to the suicide victims, the number one question people wonder is that whether those who suicide end up lost and damned. The Catholic Church answer is no and not necessarily.

Early Church Fathers consider suicide is a murder and that is a mortal sin. Objectively, yes suicide is a *grave* sin [recalled that there are two types of sins: *venial* and *grave*]. Meaning, by the fact it happened, it is a grave sin. So does helping someone to commit suicide. Hence, don't follow euthanasia trap!

Alar [20] reminded us the Catholic Church definition of mortal sin. There are three conditions: 1) Grave Matter, 2) Full Knowledge, 3) Free Will (willful/want to do it). Certainly, suicide is a grave matter. Next, it must be Full Knowledge and Full Consent to do it. But in his grandma case, not full consent. CCC#2282 stated, "*Grave psychological disturbance, anguish, or grave fear of hardship, suffering, or torture can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide.*" Hence, don't lose hope! The Catholic Church look at suicide funerals with pity, not condemnation. Suicide was never been the answer. God's answer to every misery is mercy. Tragedy in this life does not mean tragedy in the next life!

Previously, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries taught that those who die by suicide are eternally damned. And they would not allow a Roman Catholic, who had taken her or his life, to be buried in consecrated soil in a Catholic cemetery. But things have drastically changed; they can now be buried in consecrated soil. The reason the Early Church said for those who took their life on suicide is condemn to hell because there is no time to repent. Is that true? Once again, CCC#2283 stated, "*We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for Salutory Repentance*" [21]. 'Salutory' repentance means even after death. Protestant Churches have also taught, and many still do, that everyone who take one's own life goes straight to hell with no second chance. These thoughtless, mindless, irrational teachings have caused unspeakable pain and suffering to the unfortunate families who have experienced the horrible ordeal of loved ones who have left this world by suicide [or any other cause of death/tragedy].

Since God can and will grant salutary repentance to people who have been so distraught to have seen suicide as a viable option, He certainly can and will grant salutary repentance to everyone in hell who stops sinning, humbly bows one's knees and sincerely confesses Jesus Christ as Lord to the glory of God (Philippians 2:9-11)! This makes possible the fulfillment of the glorious picture of every created being in the whole universe worshipping God and the Lamb [the Lord Jesus Christ] eternally (Revelation 5:13)!

To reiterate, the priest told Alar to go home tonight and pray the '*Chaplet of Divine Mercy*' [16] for his grandma's salvation of her soul. God is outside of time. For God, there is only one big '*Eternal Present Moment*' because God sees it all instantaneously, everything at one moment. God is Omniscient (all knowing), Omnipotent (all powerful), and Omnipresence (presence everywhere). God knows Alar will be here tonight 10 years later to pray Chaplet of Divine Mercy for his grandma's salvation. God is powerful to apply those graces to your grandma back to ten years ago, to apply His Mercy on her death, when ordinarily, she could have been lost! It blown away Fr. Alar's mind. Then the priest asked Alar, do you ever hear Padre Pio?

Padre Pio (PP), documented by Franciscan Friars, was praying, being evaluated by his doctor, and the doctor asked him what was he praying for? He answered the conversions of my *happy-death (holy-death)* grandpa. Recalled that in Catholics teaching, a '*happy-death (holy-death)*' is defined as to die under the '*State-of-Grace*' at the moment of his death, just like St. Joseph's death on his dying bed, the guardian of the Child Jesus, who received the final 5-Graces: 1) Final Sacrament of the Eucharist [to be united with Christ], 2) Final Sacrament of the Oil Anointment for the sick/dying, 3) Final Sacrament of Reconciliation, 4) Double Pardon from the Church, and 5) be accompanied by his child [Jesus] and his spouse [Mary].

Then the doctor said to PP, but I knew your grandpa died 20 years ago. PP said I know, but God knew I will be praying now 20 years later, and He will apply His Graces back to my grandpa at the moment of his death, to help him in his conversion! Then Alar responded: What? Wait a minute; and the priest went on. That's the Mercy of God! Listen, this is God using our prayers. Our prayers can help those, your loved ones, for their conversions. Pray now the '*Chaplet of Divine Mercy*', it's powerful prayers for the death; and maybe will help her conversion to God! The priest asked: Did she received sacraments like the anointing or the reconciliation before her death? Alar said I don't know! She is going to need your prayers for her conversion. Your prayer in 2003 is like a squadron of died boomers. Your prayers are going back to 1993 on her judgement to shower over her soul to [maybe] turn-back/convert back to God because God is outside time; because as you said she was not practicing her faith when she was alive. That does not mean you are the savior. The grace came from God. You are just cooperating with it. Consistently, St. Mary, Mother of Lord Jesus, told the three children of fathom that thousands of souls go to hell because nobody prays for them. Wow, that blows me, said Alar. Your grandma maybe got lost but because of your persistent prayers, God grace convert her soul back to God. Therefore, don't ever give up!



Fig 1. St. Faustina and St. Mark's Huntersville, NC – a church where the priest told Alar the whole concept

To recap, Diary 1486 of St. Faustina (see Figure 1) said that Jesus comes to the souls three times at the moment of death. And Jesus offers the soul the opportunity to accept Him. If the soul says no, Jesus will come back the second time. If the soul says no the second time, Jesus will come back the third time. If the soul says no the third time, it is lost forever. But if a prayer was said on her, it will pour the graces for her to recognize Jesus and say 'Yes' to Jesus. So Alar said he was blown away!

Moreover, Alar re-emphasized the message of Paragraph 1486 of the Diary of St. Faustina, all over again. Alar added the consistency from JP2 which said that Jesus wants us to aid the salvation of souls. St. Faustina said Jesus told her that salvation of thousands of souls depends on her prayers! For a brief history on St. Faustina, see Rahardja (2021) paper [22], Section F, pages 78–80. Consistently, St. John Vianney was told by a demon [note that a demon sometimes was forced by God to tell the truth!] that 80K souls avoid hell because of his prayers and sufferings alone. However, most people assumed there is no time for those who have already suicide or died of other causes, isn't it? Again-and-again, that's not true! The CCC# 2283 said God will give time to repent. In the time the bullet took 3-inch on grandma, God could take a miracle. God pull to Chris Alar, the Diary 1698 of St. Faustina which Jesus said to *listen to the moment of her [your loved one] death!*

Diary 1698 of St. Faustina stated that *God's mercy, sometimes touches the sinner at the last moment in a wondrous mysterious way*. Outwardly, it seems as if they were lost. But it is not so. The soul was illuminated by array of God's powerful final grace, turns to God in the last minute was such a powerful love in an instant, it receives from God's forgiveness of sins and punishments while outwardly it shows either no signs of repentance or of contrition because souls at that stage no longer reacts to external things. How O, how beyond comprehension is God's Mercy. Although a person is at the point of death, the merciful God gives the soul that interior vivid moment, so that if the soul is willing, it has the possibility of returning to God.

This NC priest was telling Chris Alar that this is the kind that your prayers can help her (grandma) response to that Grace! Not Alar responding for grandma, but grandma has to response to God's Grace herself. Wow, it is unbelievable, said Alar. Repeatedly Alar emphasized that this message is for any tragedy, any lost. Not just lost to suicide. Alar said to the NC priest: father, I have to spread this news of Faustina's Divine Mercy. The priest handed Alar a prayer card which teaches us the prayer of Divine Mercy, which came from the Association of Marian helper in Stockbridge, MA. Now Fr. Alar is the Director of The Association of Marian helper in Stockbridge, MA. God indeed can bring a greater good out of a tragedy (Roman 8:28).

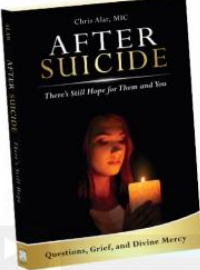
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|---|---|
| <p><u>3 Spiritual Principles</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We admit that we are powerless over the loss of our loved one.2. We come to trust that Jesus, the Divine Mercy, can restore our lives to manageability.3. We make a decision to entrust our will, our lives, and our loved one to the loving care and protection of God. |  <p>SuicideAndHope.com</p> <p><i>After Suicide: There's Still Hope for Them and You</i></p> <p>Memorialize your lost loved one, order the book, and find many other resources.</p> <p>Fr. Chris Alar & Br. Jason Lewis</p> |
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Fig 2. The 3 Spiritual Principles and the Book (After Suicide: There's Still Hope for Them and You)

As shown in Figure 2, Fr. Alar has three Spiritual Principles to never forget for those who suffer loss of any tragedy, not just suicide tragedy, because God's Mercy is so Great.

V. CONCLUSION

In this article, we have reviewed and summarized the ‘Divine Mercy’ message. Particularly, the paragraph 1486 of the Diary of St. Faustina [8, 11]. There are two key forms of hope: 1) hope for the salvation of those who have died by their own and 2) hope for the healing of those left behind. The message is important for all those trying to make sense out of such a difficult subject. Remarkably, the spiritual principles of healing and redemption apply not only to a loss from suicide, but by any cause of death. We conclude that such message of hope is very powerful to be spread around the world and therefore is highly recommended for the benefits of many others.

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

This research represents the author’s own work and opinion. It does not reflect any policy nor represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Defense nor any other federal agency.

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