

Spring 2025

# Marian Helper

Inspiration and news from the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception

[Marian.org](http://Marian.org)



# SILVER JUBILEE!

## St. Faustina and Divine Mercy Sunday

# SHARE THE GLORIOUS GIFT OF EASTER



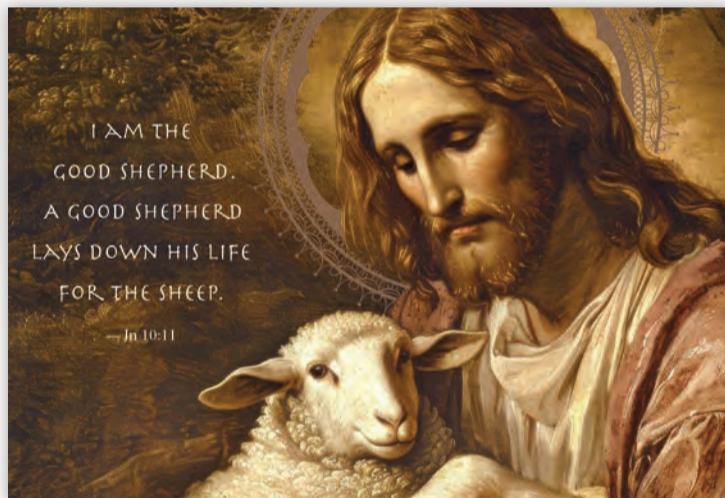
B65-EG253

## Three Masses on Easter:

Send your loved ones these exclusive cards to announce that they will be remembered in the three Holy Masses on Easter at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy.



B65-EG252



B65-EG251

**All Year:** Have your loved ones remembered in prayer from this Easter to the next. They will share in the spiritual benefits of the Holy Masses, prayers, and good works of the Marian priests and brothers. Send one of these cards to announce your gift.

There is no charge for us to send you these cards. An offering is requested when you use the cards.

**Enroll a loved one today!**  
**1-800-462-7426**  
**[Marian.org/b65/eg](http://Marian.org/b65/eg)**



B65-AE25

Your offering helps support the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception.

# Page **10** QUARTER-CENTURY OF GRACE!

During this Jubilee Year of Hope, Marian Fathers and Marian Helpers around the world will celebrate another jubilee, a silver one: 25 years since that unforgettable moment in St. Peter's Square, when Pope St. John Paul II canonized the humble Apostle of Mercy, Sr. Faustina Kowalska, and announced the universal feast of Divine Mercy Sunday. The Holy Father said it was the happiest day of his life. Ours, too!

- 10 A glorious 25 years!   14 Leading the way  
12 Radiation of Grace   16 Finding Faustina

## 18 The Carpenter's Fiat

Men in particular should imitate St. Joseph's "yes" to the Lord, writes Veronica Szczygiel.

## 20 Oh, Canada! An amazing NACOM III

The three-day North American Congress on Mercy was a great success, reports Chris Sparks.

## 24 The Jubilee Indulgence

Visit the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, a designated sacred pilgrimage site, this year.

## 25 Divine Mercy Weekend on the horizon

Make plans to visit Eden Hill April 26-27, or watch live on EWTN on Divine Mercy Sunday.

## 26 'He loved us'

Chris Sparks praises Pope Francis' latest encyclical, *Dilexit Nos*, on the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

## 28 20<sup>th</sup> Healthcare Conference on deck!

Calling all healthcare professionals! Save the date for the annual confab, June 4-6.

## 29 This Lent, find Hope

The Marian Fathers offer a daily devotional booklet to enrich your Lenten experience.

## DEPARTMENTS

- 3 Father Joseph Writes   4 Marian Helpers in Action   6 Father Joseph's Picks   7 Notes from Rome   8 On Eden Hill  
31 Outstanding Helpers   33 Graces Received   36 From the Vaults

**ON THE COVER:** Stained-glass window of Pope St. John Paul II holding an icon of St. Faustina by artist Plamen Petrov of Chicago, Illinois.

### AMH DIRECTOR/PUBLISHER:

Fr. Mark Baron, MIC — "Father Joseph, MIC"

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Dr. Joe McAleer

DESIGNER: Andrew Leeco

WRITER, ASSISTANT EDITOR: Chris Sparks

AMH GENERAL PROMOTER:

Br. Andrew R. Mączyński, MIC

### MISSION STATEMENT

*MARIAN HELPER* is intended to serve members of the Association of Marian Helpers (AMH), a spiritual benefit society of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The magazine seeks to provide spiritual nourishment, education about the Catholic faith, and information about the mission and good works of the Marians. It also provides information about Association services and presents opportunities to support the mission and good works of the Congregation. *MARIAN HELPER* is published quarterly by the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. It is sent free of charge to active members of the Association. Printed in the USA with ecclesiastical approval. Copyright © 2025 Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. All rights reserved. Send all correspondence to: Association of Marian Helpers, Editorial Dept., Eden Hill, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Email: editorial@Marian.org Website: Marian.org

Vol. 82, No. 1  
Spring 2025

## WHO WE ARE



### Marian Helpers Center

Stockbridge, Massachusetts  
Headquarters and publishing  
center for the Association of  
Marian Helpers.  
1-800-462-7426

### National Shrine of The Divine Mercy

(413) 298-3931

For pilgrimages:

(413) 298-1119

[ShrineOfDivineMercy.org](http://ShrineOfDivineMercy.org)



### Mercy Apostolates

Learn about our lay ministries:

#### Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy

Dr. Bryan Thatcher

[TheDivineMercy.org/eadm](http://TheDivineMercy.org/eadm)

1-877-380-0727

#### Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy

Marie Romagnano,  
MSN, RN, CCM

[TheDivineMercy.org/hpdm](http://TheDivineMercy.org/hpdm)

1-866-895-3236

#### John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy

Dr. Robert Stackpole

[TheDivineMercy.org/JPII](http://TheDivineMercy.org/JPII)

1-866-895-3236

#### Mother of Mercy Messengers

Joan and Dave Maroney

[TheDivineMercy.org/momm](http://TheDivineMercy.org/momm)

1-830-634-7765

### Evangelization Team

Invite the Marians

to speak at your parish.

(413) 298-1349

[parishmissions@Marian.org](mailto:parishmissions@Marian.org)

### Intercessory Prayerline

Send us prayer intentions.

1-800-804-3823

[Marian.org/prayer](http://Marian.org/prayer)

### Websites

[Marian.org](http://Marian.org)

[TheDivineMercy.org](http://TheDivineMercy.org)

[ShopMercy.org](http://ShopMercy.org)

[DivineMercyPlus.org](http://DivineMercyPlus.org)



## Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception

The Marian Fathers are a Congregation of nearly 500 priests and brothers in 19 countries around the world.

We support the Holy Father and embrace the official teachings of the Catholic Church in our special calling to:

- Spread devotion to Mary as the Immaculate Conception.
- Offer our lives for the Holy Souls in Purgatory, especially the victims of war and disease.
- Operate publishing apostolates and assist where the need is greatest in parishes, shrines, and missions.
- Promote the Divine Mercy message and devotion.
- Organize people of good will to work with and through us to bring Christ everywhere.

## Association of Marian Helpers — Join us!

Established in 1925, the Association of Marian Helpers is a spiritual benefit society that prayerfully and financially supports the priests and brothers of the Congregation of Marian Fathers.

Your enrollment means that, by a decree of the Holy See, you share in these graces:

- A daily Mass offered for all Marian Helpers.
- A share in the prayers, good works, and merits of the Marian priests and brothers around the world.
- A special Mass offered on feast days of our Savior and His Blessed Mother.
- A monthly Mass on each First Friday and each First Saturday.
- A Mass offered for deceased members on All Souls' Day.
- The perpetual Novena to the Divine Mercy.



Sign-up is easy: Visit [MICPrayers.org](http://MICPrayers.org)



You Tube



Visit [marian.org/social](http://marian.org/social)

## OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT GOD'S MISSION

- **Deepen your commitment of prayer** and support by joining one of our three spiritually nourishing prayer clubs: [Marian.org/clubs](http://Marian.org/clubs)
- **Support a particular ministry:** [Marian.org/give](http://Marian.org/give)
- **Arrange a special gift** of stock, a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA, a grant from your donor-advised fund, a gift through your will or trust, or annuity: [Giving.Marian.org](http://Giving.Marian.org)

Call 1-800-671-2020 to make a gift by phone or for assistance.

Free online help for your will, visit [Marian.org/will](http://Marian.org/will).

A sample form of bequest to the Marians is: *I give and bequeath to the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. (Tax ID #20-8599030), Stockbridge, MA 01262, \_\_\_% of my adjusted gross estate (or \$\_\_\_\_\_, or a specific asset) to be used for its religious and educational purposes.*

# A TRIO OF JUBILEES!

**T**he Holy Year is under way, the Jubilee of Hope proclaimed by Pope Francis. But as you can see from our cover of *Marian Helper*, there are two more jubilees to celebrate this year, and both are silver: It's 25 years since the canonization of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, and the proclamation of Divine Mercy Sunday by Pope St. John Paul II!

The Great Mercy Pope called that day, April 30, 2000, the happiest day of his life. It was a great moment for me and the Marian Fathers, and I'm sure all of our Marian Helpers, too!

As I write this, I and a bunch of our Marian Family have just returned from Vancouver, Canada, following "Divine Mercy and Mary: Our Hope," the third North American Congress on Mercy (NACOM III). It was a time of special graces, as you'll see on pages 20-23, and a great preparation for the Jubilee Year.

How so?

You see, in the times we're living through, our merciful words, deeds, and prayers matter more than ever (see Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, 742). We are meant to be living Images of Divine Mercy, shining rays of grace from our hearts just as Jesus does.

So getting together with our North American neighbors was a huge blessing of fellowship, shared faith, and common goals in the service of Christ and His Church. It reminded us of the sources of our hope: Jesus, and the many holy members of the Mystical Body of Christ, especially Our Lady. It reminded us that we are not alone in our service to Divine Mercy, Mary Immaculate, the Holy Souls, and wherever the Church's needs are greatest. Rather, many hands have turned to the work at hand, even as we need to continue to recruit many more.

Speaking of holy hands serving Jesus and Mary, St. Faustina and the Communion of Saints are about to get some illustrious company. We are especially blessed to look forward to the canonization of Bl. Carlo

Acutis (1991-2006) on April 27, Divine Mercy Sunday. Blessed Carlo was an outstanding young man, dying at the age of 15, but in that short lifetime, he poured himself out in love of God and neighbor. He created some outstanding websites dedicated to sharing with the world the stories of the Church-approved Eucharistic Miracles, Marian apparitions, and other proofs for the truth of the Catholic faith. Let us be inspired by his virtuous life, which persisted even in the face of the terrible leukemia that took his young life.

Another extraordinary young Italian man, Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati (1901-1925), will be canonized on Aug. 3. Marian Press is collaborating with the Most Rev. J. Peter Sartain, Archbishop Emeritus of Seattle, a recognized expert on Bl. Pier Giorgio's life, to tell the story of the soon-to-be-saint, his incredible works of mercy, and his deep love of our Lord.

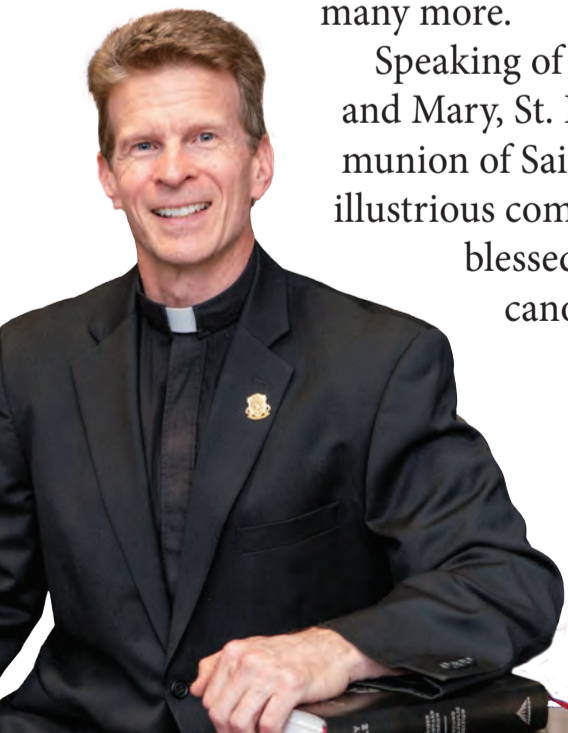
What blessings!

So I ask you, faithful Marian Helpers, to take inspiration from our Lord and His saints throughout this year of Jubilee, of forgiveness, mercy, and hope. Practice love of God and neighbor in our world today, strengthened by the Sacraments, prayer, and the Word of God.

Give a witness to the truth of our Catholic faith. Let God's light shine through your deeds, words, and prayers so that the nations may see, be touched by the grace of God, and come home to Christ's Church in faith, hope, and love.

May God bless you!

Fr. Joseph, MIC



---

"Father Joseph, MIC," is the honorary title of the director of the Association of Marian Helpers, currently Fr. Mark Baron, MIC. Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet live with Fr. Mark every Friday at 3 p.m. ET on Instagram, Facebook, and DivineMercyPlus.org.

# MIRACLES FROM A MOTHER'S HAND

By Marian Friedrichs

Some miracles are spectacular and sudden — an impossible healing — while some are gradual and inconspicuous — the slow, often arduous sanctification of an ordinary human soul. The life of every faithful Christian who perseveres in the love of God and the struggle for virtue contains the latter kind of miracle. Every once in a while, Heaven breaks into an earthly life through the former kind. And sometimes, someone — or some family — is granted both.

Here's a true story, with the names changed at the family's request.

Heather Mason's family has a history of epilepsy. Nevertheless, she and her husband Michael were as frightened and anxious as any parents would be when, in March 2008, Kelly, the younger of their two daughters, experienced a grand mal seizure at the age of 15 months. They took her to the hospital, where Kelly underwent



various tests. The results came back normal and Kelly was discharged, the cause of the seizure still unknown.

## Terminal diagnosis

The day after Kelly came home, the Masons received a phone call from the hospital. Further testing on Kelly's blood had led to a diagnosis of a terminal blood disease. Doctors estimated that the little girl had about six months to live. She would have to be admitted immediately to the infectious disease unit. It was unlikely that her parents would ever be permitted to take her home; Kelly would have to end her brief life in a hospital room.

Floored by shock and grief, Heather and Michael could not bring themselves to tell the awful truth to Kelly's 5-year-old big sister, Rose. Heather did tell her mother — a woman “beautifully devoted to Mary,” who prayed the Rosary daily — knowing she could count on her prayers. Then, instinctively following the “North Star” toward which her mother had always taught her to turn, Heather made her way to church and knelt before the statue of Our Lady (pictured at left).

## A mother's plea

Heather begged the Blessed Mother for the life of her precious daughter. If Kelly were spared, Heather promised to do faithfully what her own mother had done: Pray the Rosary every day; lay a firm foundation of the Catholic Faith in the lives of her children; take them to Mass and religious education without fail; ensure that they received the Sacraments; and teach them to pray the Rosary often.

Leaving her promises and petitions at Mary's feet, Heather returned home to take care of her family and wait for God's answer.

Hospital protocol mandated that diagnoses for children always be confirmed with follow-up testing, so new blood samples were drawn from Kelly and the tests run again. A few days later, the results came back, and the hospital contacted the Masons with astonishing news: Kelly did *not* have the fatal illness with which she had originally been diagnosed! She had a mild neurological disorder that would result in more seizures in the future, but which could be controlled with medication and was not life-threatening.

Doctors speculated about what might have caused the initial test to yield a false positive result. The pediatrician called it a miracle. Heather agrees, insisting that “Mary's the one who saved Kelly's life.”

## Keeping her word

Heather kept her word. Since the day she and Michael received their daughter's life anew from God, Heather has not let a day go by without praying the Rosary. And while the Masons had always intended to raise their children Catholic, since the day her fervent prayer was answered, Heather has spared no effort in teaching the girls to be especially devoted to Mary and to trust in God for everything.

In fact, the reversal of that devastating diagnosis proved to be just the beginning of an abundance of blessings for the Mason family. While Heather and her husband and daughters

have no further stories to tell of instantaneous healings or dramatic divine interventions, the family has consistently enjoyed God's quiet, priceless gift of a life of true faith lived together. Over the years, both daughters have questioned the Faith at times, but neither has done so with any disrespect toward the

Church or any thought of leaving it.

When Rose and Kelly experience uncertainty, Heather tells them, “You can always talk to God. You can always talk to Mary. And they do.” When they suffer, Heather encourages them in “keeping the faith, and just having hope that they will get through the struggles, that they will get answers.”

## Openness to Truth

And Rose and Kelly listen. They do not shut their ears to Truth as so many young adults do, relying for answers on a confused and wandering world. They follow their mother's example and instruction — as she followed her own mother's — in heeding the voice of the Magisterium and in turning to Mary, “the one who goes to Jesus” for us.

As so many sorrowful parents whose grown children have abandoned the Faith can testify, such reverence for the Church and openness to Truth constitute a miracle for which God should be thanked.

If parents who grieve at seeing their children in danger of losing their souls as Heather once grieved at hearing her daughter was in danger of losing her life, could reach out to Heather parent-to-parent, as she herself reached out to her mother on earth and her mother in Heaven, she would certainly offer them the words of consolation she offers her own beloved daughters.

“It's really not hopeless, and nothing's impossible with God,” she says. “Miracles happen — just ask and pray.”

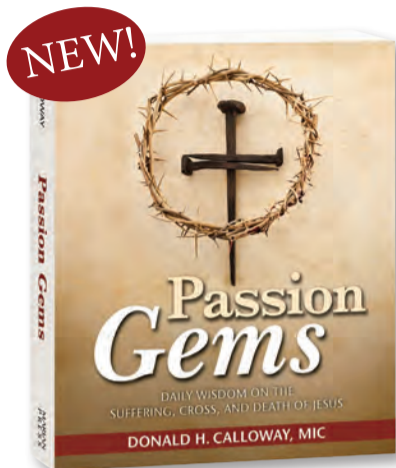
*For a host of resources on the Rosary, visit [ShopMercy.org](http://ShopMercy.org).*

**‘It's really not hopeless,  
and nothing's  
impossible with God.  
Miracles happen —  
just ask and pray.’**

## FATHER JOSEPH'S PICKS

Visit [ShopMercy.org/b65](http://ShopMercy.org/b65) or call 1-800-462-7426.

*In this time of Jubilee, and especially during the holy season of Lent, we need spiritual guidance and saintly models of the Christian virtue of hope to show us how to most fruitfully live this year of grace and mercy. Let our Lord, St. Michael, Bl. Carlo Acutis, and many others join you on the journey.*



### PASSION GEMS: DAILY WISDOM ON THE SUFFERING, CROSS, AND DEATH OF JESUS

BY FR. DONALD CALLOWAY, MIC

Perfect for Lent and guiding your daily meditation during the 3 o'clock Hour on the Passion of our Lord, as Jesus requested through St. Faustina. Selected from the writings of popes, saints, blessed, and the many venerables of the Catholic Church, these 366 quotes shed light on the life-changing power of the Passion of our Lord, and the depths of His merciful love for all sinners, no matter how great our sins. \$16.95. **B65-PGEM**


### JOURNEY OF HOPE: A GUIDE TO THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025

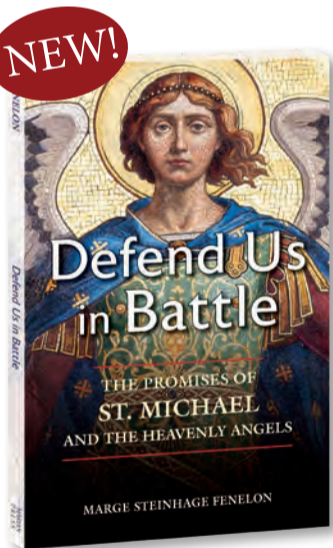
In this guidebook, you'll read about how the Church will celebrate the Jubilee Year. You'll learn what you can do to answer the call of the Holy Father to both know the face of God's mercy — Jesus Christ our Hope — and to show that face of mercy — true hope — to your friends and neighbors (as well as your enemies!). You'll also read about the importance of the Sacrament of Confession and rediscover the Divine Mercy devotion that will assist you to unleash the many graces God wishes to give you in your own life and to the whole world. Blessed Jubilee! \$3.99. **B65-JYOH**



### DEFEND US IN BATTLE: THE PROMISES OF ST. MICHAEL AND THE HEAVENLY ANGELS

BY MARGE STEINHAGE FENELON

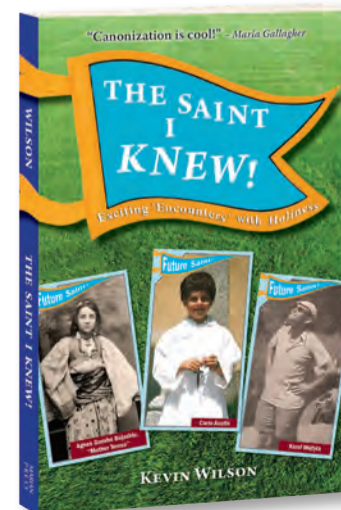
Saint Michael made three promises to all who faithfully pray the Chaplet in his honor: an escort of nine angels chosen from each of the nine choirs of angels when approaching Holy Communion; his continual assistance and that of all the angels throughout life; and, after death, deliverance from Purgatory for themselves and all their relations. As the beloved Catholic author and blogger Marge Steinhage Fenelon explains in this extraordinary exploration of the significance and power of the Chaplet of St. Michael, we all should be concerned about the influence of evil, but we should never fear evil because God is always with us and assists us through His grace and His heavenly helpers, the holy angels. \$16.95. **B65-DUFL** 



### THE SAINT I KNEW! EXCITING "ENCOUNTERS" WITH HOLINESS

BY KEVIN WILSON

Each of us has the potential to become a saint. We're especially reminded of this when we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, usually as a teenager, and choose a saint as our patron and inspiration. Who better than the saints and blessed — including Bl. Carlo Acutis, soon to be canonized — to inspire us in the battle of life? Kevin Wilson places you, the reader, in a fictional story of a holy man, woman, or child before their recognition by the Catholic Church. Perfect for those preparing for Confirmation. \$15.95. **B65-MKST**





# ON THE ROAD AGAIN

**P**art of my job as the Superior General of our Marian Congregation involves visiting on a regular basis our men in the Provinces and Vicariates where they live. This is part of the oversight that we do to make sure that everything is running smoothly, and we are living our religious, spiritual, community and apostolic lives as authentically as we can.

Our Marian Constitutions tell us that the purpose of the visitations is for the Superiors to know better the communities that are subject to them and to be able to animate and form them in the religious life and the apostolate. We meet with the members of our religious houses and residences and speak to each of them personally. We spend time praying with them and observing their apostolic activities.

Sometimes we leave recommendations about things that should be changed or improved. It is not simply an administrative process, but an opportunity for spiritual renewal.

During these encounters, I always think of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her visitation of her cousin Elizabeth. We try to do the same thing that Mary did by bringing the presence of Christ into every situation and remaining open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In 2024, I had the opportunity to visit our men in Portugal, Lithuania, Brazil, Argentina, India, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, Poland, the United States, and Cameroon. I received the final vows of Marians in Viet Nam, India, and the United States. I attended ordinations in the United States, India, and Cameroon. The Marians in Brazil were celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of their presence there, while those in Cameroon were celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup>. I am often assisted on these visitations by other members of the General Council.

It is fascinating to see how the Church is alive and very different in each country that I visit. For instance, I recently went to Cameroon. The people in one of our parishes are poor. In a simple and rustic chapel structure, they worshiped



Father Joe attended the dedication ceremony of the St. John Paul II Chapel in Minkama, Cameroon.

God with great joy and fervor on a week-day morning Mass. That day, the offertory procession consisted of the people bringing up what they could give: large bunches of plantains, bowls of freshly-picked peanuts, live chickens, bottles of water, etc. The people sang with their whole hearts with the aid of a drum

and even some pompoms that looked like what a cheerleader would use. They were giving God their whole attention and enthusiasm.

I attended the diaconate ordination of two seminarians one Sunday. I was also present for the inauguration of a new parish church and diocesan shrine that our Marian missionaries built in honor of Pope St. John Paul II. These festive Masses lasted several hours. Our seminarians from Cameroon and Rwanda study philosophy and theology in Cameroon. Our ministry is well appreciated there and bishops are inviting us to work in their dioceses.

During this year of Jubilee and Hope, please pray for our Marians throughout the world!



---

The Most Rev. Joe Roesch, MIC, is the Superior General of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. He lives in Rome. Listen to his podcasts, including "Saint Faustina's *Diary* in a Year," on [TheDivineMercy.org/podcasts](http://TheDivineMercy.org/podcasts) and [DivineMercyPlus.org/podcasts](http://DivineMercyPlus.org/podcasts).



**B**efore the first snowfall, Marian Fathers, including members of the Provincial Council, gathered to bless the ground on Eden Hill where the new Monastery and Chapel will be built. Listening on as Fr. Matthew Tomeny, MIC, rector of the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, offers the blessing are (from left) Fr. Michael Callea, MIC, Provincial Secretary; Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, Provincial Superior; Br. Mark Fanders, MIC, overseer of the project; Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, Vice Provincial; Br. Joseph, MIC; Fr. Mark Baron, MIC, director of the Association of Marian Helpers (“Fr. Joseph, MIC”); Fr. Wojciech Jasinski, MIC, General Treasurer; Fr. Kenneth Dos Santos, MIC; and Fr. Thaddaeus Lancton, MIC.

### Christ as the cornerstone

“The work we are beginning today should enliven our faith and make us grateful,” said Fr. Tomeny. “We know the familiar words of the Psalm: ‘Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain’ (Ps 127:1). Whenever we look to the interests of our neighbor or our community and serve them, we are in a sense God’s own co-workers. Let us pray for His help.

“Let us ask God, our all-powerful Father, that the work we begin today will contribute to the building up of His Kingdom and join us in faith and love to Christ, who is the cornerstone.

“Lord God we ask you to bless this new religious house, that all the Marians of the Eden Hill community may be united as one under the banner of Mary Immaculate.”

Next, as he turned a shovel into the ground, Fr. Alar offered a prayer. “Almighty God we ask blessings upon this new Monastery,” he said. “We ask your blessings upon the Marian Fathers, and upon the thousands of Marian Helpers who made this project a reality.”

Construction has now begun on the Monastery and Chapel, situated in the large field beyond the outdoor Stations of the Cross. More than 13,000 donors have contributed to the Marian Fathers’ first capital campaign, “Together for Christ and His Church.” When completed next year, the |Marians assigned to Stockbridge will live and worship together in community under the same roof — a requirement of a religious congregation — for the first time since their earliest days on Eden Hill..

MH



The new Marian Monastery and Chapel are being built in the large field (left) near the outdoor Stations of the Cross — this is the view from the Third Station. Site work began in December 2024.



Follow our progress at [TogetherForChrist.org](https://www.TogetherForChrist.org)



Sister Beata Piekut, ZMBM,  
vice-postulator for the cause  
of beatification of Sr. Faustina,  
greeted Pope St. John Paul II  
in St. Peter's Square on  
April 30, 2000.

# A GLORIOUS 25 YEARS!

By Chris Sparks

“**T**oday my joy is truly great in presenting the life and witness of Sr. Faustina Kowalska to the whole Church as a gift of God for our time.” So proclaimed Pope St. John Paul II a quarter-century ago in St. Peter's Square on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 30, 2000, before a gathering of 200,000 pilgrims.

It's hard to believe that 25 years have passed since the canonization of Sr. Maria Faustina Kowalska, the Secretary and Apostle of the Divine Mercy, not to mention the surprise declaration by St. John Paul II that henceforth the Second Sunday of Easter would be Divine Mercy Sunday, a universal feast for the Catholic Church.

No wonder the Holy Father is said to have remarked, at the end of that momentous day, “This is the happiest day of my life.”

## The Marian connection

Perhaps the second most happy person that historic day was the late, great Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC (1930-2021), who devoted his life's work to the cause of Divine Mercy.

In 1979, he brought St. Faustina's Diary out of Com-

unist Poland in his luggage on microfilm — he always insisted he hadn't smuggled anything; the Polish authorities simply hadn't checked his bag. In 1981, he was present with the Digan family for the miraculous healing of Maureen Digan's lymphedema at the tomb of Sr. Faustina in Kraków, Poland, a miracle he would document and verify with medical testimony so that it became the beatification miracle.

Father Seraphim oversaw the publication of the *Diary*, first in Polish, and then in translation in more than 20 languages, reaching a worldwide audience by the time of St. Faustina's canonization.

The ongoing bestseller status of the *Diary* is one of the clearest signal graces to those of us who work on Marian Press books of the truth of Faustina's private revelations — a book so large, so out of chronological order, and telling

the inner life of an obscure Catholic nun has no earthly business selling so well!

Father Seraphim also documented the canonization miracle, for which his close collaborator and Marian brother, Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC, was present.

The night before the big day, word came from the Vatican that Fr. Seraphim was to report at once. When he returned, he very calmly and casually told Fr. Kaz that the Pope would announce the addition of Divine Mercy Sunday to the universal liturgical calendar of the Church. Father Kaz was electrified, but Fr. Seraphim persisted in his calm. Anyone who knows them both can easily imagine!

## Crowning the vision

“This canonization is the crowning of the vision that the Fathers of the province had,” Fr. Seraphim told *Marian Helpers Bulletin* at the time of the canonization. “People continue to look to the Marians as a reference point when it comes to the Divine Mercy message and devotion.”

While St. Faustina’s canonization and the establishment of Divine Mercy Sunday was certainly a red-letter day for Fr. Seraphim, it was not the end of his long labors. Far from it.

By the time he died on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes in 2021, his service to St. Faustina, the Divine Mercy message and devotion, and to Christ and His Church had taken him around the world. He had been instrumental in many conferences, congresses, and other Divine Mercy gatherings, culminating in the World Apostolic Congress on Mercy (WACOM), whose structure also included continental, regional, and national Congresses on Divine Mercy. His work shall bear fruit for the Church till the end of time.

It’s no wonder, then, that many of us who worked with him are convinced he was the prophesied “S.M.” in St. Faustina’s *Diary* (1689).

Also present that historic day was Fr. Walter Pelczynski, MIC (1916-2000), founder of the Association of Marian



Processing into Mass are Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC (right), and Fr. Ron Pytel, whose miraculous healing led to Sr. Faustina’s canonization.



More than 200,000 filled St. Peter’s Square on Divine Mercy Sunday 2000.

Helpers. He told *Marian Helpers Bulletin* that, for many years, many Helpers encountered opposition in their parishes to the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday.

“This was a confirmation for them and for the whole Church,” he said. “It validated the efforts that we Marians and our Helpers have expended for so long in promoting the Divine Mercy message and devotion entrusted to Sr. Faustina.”

The work begins anew, added Fr. George Kosicki, CSB (1925-2014), part of the triumvirate with Fr. Seraphim and Vinny Flynn that spread the message of Divine Mercy far and wide.

“What can I do now that Sr. Maria Faustina has joined the major leagues with all the officially recognized saints?” he asked. “I can follow the way Jesus revealed to her — *the merciful way*. In my misery, I can plunge into the infinite ocean of God’s mercy with complete trust in Jesus. When doubts assail me, I can pray unceasingly, ‘Jesus, I trust in You!’ I can decide to ‘nestle close’ to the merciful Heart of Jesus (*Diary*, 1726).”

## The next 25 years

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower, herself assured St. Faustina that she would one day be a saint like Thérèse, canonized and everything (see *Diary*, 150). The Marian Family continues active efforts to see St. Faustina also join St. Thérèse as a Doctor of the Church!

A quarter-century from the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 to the Jubilee Year of Hope. Heaven only knows what the next 25 years will bring. One thing’s for certain: The Divine Mercy message and devotion will go on illuminating, cleansing, transforming, and reinvigorating hearts, minds, the Church, and the world. Saint Faustina’s legacy lives on in us, in all whom her work, her merciful love, and her words touch.

Saint Faustina Kowalska, Secretary and Apostle of the Divine Mercy, pray for us!

MH



On Divine Mercy Sunday 2000, Dr. Robert Stackpole proclaimed one of the readings for Mass, as Pope St. John Paul II looked on.

# RADIATION OF GRACE

By Robert Stackpole, STD

Few memories are more precious to me than the canonization day of St. Faustina, April 30, 2000 — the same day that our Holy Father, Pope St. John Paul II, also proclaimed his intention to establish the annual Feast of Divine Mercy.

That weekend I was privileged to be a member of the team leading a pilgrimage to Rome for the canonization, under the guidance of Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, the vice-postulator of the cause for Sr. Faustina's canonization with the Holy See.

## Unexpected volunteer!

The adventure really began on the evening before the big day. Father Seraphim asked me to accompany him on a visit to the office at the Vatican of the Polish monsignor who was designated as the master of ceremonies for the

event. While Fr. Seraphim and the monsignor were discussing in Polish the order of events for the Liturgy the next day, I happened to notice some copies of the handsomely-decorated program for the papal Mass on the monsignor's desk. I quietly began skimming through the pages of it, just to pass the time.

Suddenly, I noticed my name listed in the program as the person designated to do the reading from the Acts of the Apostles. I turned to Fr. Seraphim and asked in alarm, "Father, what is my name doing here in the program?"

He replied, "Oh yeah, I forgot to tell you: I volunteered you to do one of the Scripture readings for the Mass tomorrow."

Yikes!

Excited, yet also terrified, the next morning, I had to arrive early at St. Peter's Square while it was still half-empty to practice. And then before the Mass started, I was asked to read an explanation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet to the hundreds of thousands of people already gathering for the celebration.

All this preparatory practice, however, did me (and the other readers, I think) a lot of good. This was no big deal: We were just reading into a PA system to a sea of distant heads (with a massive delayed echo, as our words bounced back to us from the piazza). Piece of cake. We sat on the platform up front, and awaited our turn.

## Power surge

Then the Mass started, the choir began to sing, and the cardinals processed onto the dais, one after another. Again, an impressive sight, to be sure, but still, nothing to panic about.

Then the Holy Father came in. It was as if a power surge suddenly spread through the whole congregation. I was totally unprepared for it! I have been in the direct presence of two U.S. presidents, several big-cheese network news broadcasters, and a mayor of New York City at various times in my life, but nothing could even remotely compare with what I experienced that day.

Jesus once said to St. Faustina: "**Tell [all people] My daughter, that I am Love and Mercy itself. When a soul approaches Me with trust, I fill it with such an abundance of graces that it cannot contain them within itself, but radiates them to other souls**" (Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, 1074). Never have I felt such an overwhelming radiation of grace from anyone before!

Here was one of the greatest saint-popes in the history of the Church, about to canonize a religious sister who was the divinely-chosen instrument for the greatest movement

of spiritual renewal in our time — and Sr. Faustina was not just any Polish candidate for sainthood, but a "hometown girl" to John Paul, since she hailed from his own archdiocese of Kraków. I was trembling all over when it finally came time to do my reading from the Book of Acts.

In his homily that day, the pope referred to her as "my dear Sr. Faustina," which made the Polish sister from her religious congregation, seated next to me, start to cry.

When he unexpectedly announced that, from now on, the Second Sunday of Easter would be known as Divine Mercy Sunday throughout the whole Church, a wave of joy seemed to spread throughout the piazza. What a blessing to be there that day, and to take part in it all — probably the biggest thrill of my life.

The wheels of careful discernment by the Church must turn slowly, but we believe St. Faustina will receive her 'doctorate,' in the Lord's good time.

## Future Doctor?

And the excitement did not end there. Ever since that day, the Marians have set their sights on one more honor that St. Faustina richly deserves: the official title of "Doctor of the Church." This title would make her the fifth woman in history to be recognized in this way as one of the principal teachers of the Catholic Faith (along with St. Catherine of Siena, St. Theresa of Avila, St. Thérèse

of Lisieux, and St. Hildegard Von Bingen). For many years we have been collecting signatures on a petition to the Holy See in support of this intention. Please visit [TheDivineMercy.org/doctor](https://TheDivineMercy.org/doctor) to sign the petition.

Meanwhile, at the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy, Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC, and I have been hard at work putting together a huge volume titled *Saint Faustina: Doctor of Divine Mercy* — a comprehensive, systematic study of her doctrine and spirituality, making the case for her elevation to this honor. This year, advance copies will be distributed to cardinals, bishops, and theologians throughout the world. Then in the light of their feedback, in 2026 the manuscript will be revised and made available to the general Catholic public through Marian Press.

Again, what a thrill to be part of all this!

The wheels of careful discernment by the Church must turn slowly, but we believe St. Faustina will receive her "doctorate," in the Lord's good time.

*Ora pro nobis!*

*Dr. Robert Stackpole is the emeritus director of the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy and the author of God's Amazing Mercy: Meditations by St. Faustina's Confessor and Spiritual Director (B65-SOPB), available now on [ShopMercy.org](https://ShopMercy.org).*

# LEADING THE WAY

By Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle

With abounding triumphant joy and gratitude, on April 30, 2000, throngs of Catholics were huddled together in the sanctuary of Kraków, Poland, clapping and singing in jubilation. Their beloved spiritual friend Sr. Faustina would be canonized! Amid the prayerful enthusiasm, the two holy rays of Divine Mercy, which were visible to St. Faustina in an earlier vision, issued forth from the Sacred Host and spread upon the entire world.



“The crowd was so enormous that the eye could not take it all in,” stated St. Faustina in her *Diary*. We might wonder at her words. *How could she say this?* It is because, amazingly and mystically, St. Faustina was made aware of this momentous canonization ceremony while she was still alive! Though the young humble Polish mystic knew nothing of the invention of the television to come, nor communication through satellites, she would confidently pen in her famous *Diary* her prophetic vision, depicting her own canonization.

I’m not aware of any other saint who was given a vision of their own canonization!

Specifically, on March 23, 1937, the young visionary experienced the fascinating vision of her canonization. She could see clearly that her joyful ceremony would simultaneously take place in Rome and in Kraków. In her *Diary*, St. Faustina also prophetically implied that the Feast of Divine Mercy would be instituted for the entire Church on that pivotal canonization day.

## Faustina's vision

Saint Faustina recorded this vision in great detail in her *Diary*, which was written under obedience to Jesus and her spiritual director, Bl. Michael Sopoćko:

Everyone was participating in the celebrations with great joy, and many of them obtained what they desired. The same celebration was held in Rome, in a beautiful church, and the Holy Father, with all the clergy, was celebrating this Feast, and then suddenly I saw Saint Peter, who stood between the altar and the Holy Father. I could not hear what Saint Peter said but I saw that the Holy Father understood his words...

Then suddenly, I saw how the two rays, as painted in the image, issued from the Host and spread over the whole world. . . the whole day abounded in joy. (*Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, 1044-1048)

The Marians suppose that St. Peter was here symbolically suggesting to St. John Paul II the inclusion of Divine Mercy Sunday in the Universal Calendar. Interestingly, there were big screens in St. Peter's Square and in Kraków, broadcasting the celebrations between the cities. Kraków was shown in Rome, and Rome in Kraków. Saint Faustina had not known what she was seeing, but she had seen it true!

## Eyes opened

Certainly, the Church's declaration of Sr. Faustina's canonization opened our eyes to the humble mystic's existence, a greater awareness of her sanctity, as well as her available intercession and guidance. As the faithful learned more about the new saint and the message of Divine Mercy, they prayed for Faustina's mighty intercession, and their lives changed for the better. After all, St. Faustina assured us, "I feel certain that my mission will not come to an end upon my death, but will begin" (*Diary*, 281).

Saints are not born with sparkling halos hovering over their heads. They have to earn them. Saints come into this world as ordinary pilgrims like you and me — all called to holiness. Yet, many people fear that they could never achieve sanctity, or that it is reserved for someone else — their parish priest, a missionary on the other side of the world, or perhaps their heroic grandmother. Still, they've got one thing right. Sainthood requires heroism. Heroic virtue, to be exact.

Saint Faustina faced many obstacles in earning her halo. That is, her sanctity. It wasn't handed to her. Even her own devout parents tried to prevent her from entering the convent. Saint Faustina had to eventually "elope" with Jesus! After crossing the threshold to religious life into what should have been "paradise" for her, instead the struggles greatly increased. She suffered much ridicule, persecution, spiritual darkness, and severe sickness.

However, it was along the arduous steps ascending the rungs of holiness — through obedience, simplicity, humility, and great faith and trust in God, that the once simple Polish farm girl excelled in heroic virtue — a saint-in-the-making.

## Divine Mercy

Divine Mercy is not a new revelation. God has always been merciful. However, Heaven saw fit that between the First and Second World Wars, Jesus Christ would entrust

the propagation of the hopeful message of Divine Mercy to Sr. Faustina, of the second choir in the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy Congregation, when He appeared to her on Feb. 22, 1931.

This young visionary, who once cared for the cows on her family's farm, was obedient to the mission and also to writing the unparalleled *Diary*, making it possible for us to learn about Jesus' unfathomable

Divine Mercy shown to humankind through the wounded Heart of Christ. This great Mercy is available for every single soul, and most especially for the most hardened of sinners. We would also become privy to Jesus' proclamation, "Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to My Mercy" (*Diary*, 300).

During his homily at St. Faustina's canonization, Pope St. John Paul II said he didn't claim to know the future, except that there would be "new progress" and "no lack of painful experiences." He added, "But the light of divine mercy, which the Lord in a way wished to return to the world through Sr. Faustina's charism, will illumine the way for the men and women of the third millennium."

Let us, without delay, turn to the heavenly light of Divine Mercy, asking St. Faustina to help us become saints and to impart Christ's Love and Mercy to a world starved for it!

Jesus, we trust in You!

*Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle is the author of 52 Weeks with Saint Faustina; Diary of a Future Saint: Faustina's Incredible Journey; and her latest, Our Life, Our Sweetness, and Our Hope: Jubilee Pilgrims of Hope with Mary, all from Marian Press and available on ShopMercy.org.* MH

**As the faithful learned more about the new saint and the message of Divine Mercy, they prayed for Faustina's mighty intercession and their lives changed for the better.**



The sanctuary of St. Kazimierz Church in Świnice Warckie, Poland, where Helena Kowalska was baptized in 1905.

# FINDING FAUSTINA

By Stephen J. Binz

**T**his silver jubilee year of St. Faustina's canonization is the perfect time to visit the historic places in Poland and Lithuania associated with the Apostle of Divine Mercy, in person or vicariously from the comfort of home.

## Birth and Baptism

The limestone house in the peasant village of Głogowiec, Poland, was completed in 1900 and sat on a few acres of farmland. In this modest home, Helena Kowalska (the baptismal name of St. Faustina) was born in 1905, the third of 10 children, and lived her first 16 years. Today a small museum features mementos of their family life.

Two days after her birth, Helena was brought for Baptism to the family's parish church, St. Kazimierz Church in nearby Świnice Warckie. Today, the side altar highlights an image of St. Faustina and the baptismal font at which she was received into Christ's life. In this



church, she also received her first Confession and first Holy Communion.

At the age of 20, Faustina joined the convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy on Żytnia Street in Warsaw. Describing her feelings when joining the convent, she wrote: "It seemed to me that I had stepped into the life of Paradise. A single prayer was bursting forth from my heart, one of thanksgiving" (*Diary*, 17).

The site of the convent is today the Shrine of St. Faustina. The convent buildings were burned during World War II and remained in ruins throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Reconstruction of the site began in the early 21<sup>st</sup>

century, transforming the convent chapel into an active parish church.

## Płock Sanctuary

Sister Faustina arrived at the convent in Płock in May 1930. Here she was assigned to the bakery shop, so every day, many inhabitants of Płock bought baked goods and were served by Sr. Faustina. This is the place where she first experienced a vision of Jesus wearing a white garment with red and pale rays emanating from His Heart. Jesus told her to have this Image painted with the signature, “Jesus, I trust in You” (in Polish: “*Jezu, ufam Tobie*”), so that it could be honored throughout the world.

Here, too, Jesus expressed to Sr. Faustina His desire for a Feast of Mercy on the Sunday after Easter.

Today the shrine contains a chapel where the Merciful Jesus first revealed Himself to Sr. Faustina. Some of the most precious relics of the shrine include the authentic bakery with the preserved kiln and tools used for baking bread, and the floor on which St. Faustina walked.

## The Merciful Jesus Image

In 1933, after professing her perpetual vows in Kraków, Sr. Faustina was directed by her superiors to go to the convent in Vilnius (in today’s Lithuania), where she lived until 1936.

Shortly after arriving, Sr. Faustina met Fr. Michael Sopoćko, the newly-appointed confessor to the sisters, who grew to trust and support her mystical experiences. At his request, she began writing her beloved Diary. Here, too, the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy was dictated to Sr. Faustina on Sept. 13-14, 1935.

The original Image of the Merciful Jesus is today venerated in the beautiful Shrine of Divine Mercy in Vilnius. As Sr. Faustina insisted that God desired the Image to become a means of grace for an aching world, Fr. Sopoćko arranged for a well-known Vilnius artist, Eugeniusz Kazimirowski, to paint it.

## Convent and Tomb

Sister Faustina spent the final months of her short life at the sisters’ convent in Łagiewniki, Poland, located in

the southern part of Kraków. She knew this convent well, having spent her novitiate years here, and she received her habit, took the name Maria Faustina, and made her final vows in the chapel.

In her final months of life, Sr. Faustina was assigned as the porter at the convent gate. Here she encountered Jesus through a poor young man. After she fed Him some soup with breadcrumbs, He let her know that “He was the Lord of heaven and earth” and vanished from her sight.

During her final years while in the last stages of tuberculosis, Sr. Faustina began undergoing an invisible stigmata, feeling the sufferings of Christ in His Passion without the

visible wounds. About a year before her death, Sr. Faustina received instructions from the Lord concerning the Hour of Great Mercy at 3 p.m., the time of the Lord’s death on the Cross.

On Oct. 5, 1938, Sr. Faustina peacefully went to her reward, while almost immediately her emaciated body seemed to take on an unearthly beauty. On the convent building at the entrance to the chapel, a plaque points to the cell in the former convent infirmary where Sr. Faustina died.

In the chapel, which joins the two wings of the convent, the side altar holds the miraculous Image of Merciful Jesus painted by Adolf Hyła. Sister Faustina’s remains were exhumed and transferred to the convent chapel in 1966.

Below the Image of Merciful Jesus, the saint’s relics rest in a white marble coffin.

The nearby Basilica of Divine Mercy was consecrated by Pope John Paul II in 2002. Dedicating the whole world to Divine Mercy, he said: “Today, in this Shrine, I wish *solemnly to entrust the world to Divine Mercy*. I do so with the burning desire that the message of God’s merciful love, proclaimed here through Saint Faustina, *may be made known to all the peoples of the earth* and fill their hearts with hope.”

*Stephen J. Binz is the author of The Way of Mercy: Pilgrimage in Catholic Poland, winner of the Catholic Media Association Book Award for “Pilgrimages/Catholic Travel.” The lavishly illustrated book from Marian Press (B65-PPLM) is available on ShopMercy.org.*

MH



The convent in Vilnius, Lithuania, where Sr. Faustina met Fr. Michael Sopoćko and received the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy from Jesus.



The porter’s gate at the convent in Łagiewniki, Poland, where Sr. Faustina encountered Jesus as a beggar.



“Saint Joseph and the Child Jesus” by Bruno Lucchesi, a bronze sculpture at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe in Orlando, Florida.

# THE CARPENTER’S *FIAT*

By Veronica Szczygiel

**I**n my husband Arthur’s workshop stands a 14-inch tall plaster statue of St. Joseph. He’s holding a hammer and a square (an L-shaped instrument used to measure right angles), typical tools of the carpentry trade. He’s covered in a layer of sawdust and filaments from Arthur’s own handiwork, albeit with more modern tools, like a bandsaw and an electric sander.

Despite his dusty appearance, St. Joseph lovingly casts his gaze on my husband as he handcrafts furniture and refurbishes antiques. But the saint's influence stretches beyond the workshop. I can see St. Joseph's guiding spirit in Arthur's dedication to his friends, integrity in his workplace, and loving, patient faithfulness in his marriage to me.

## Family virtues

When St. Joseph is depicted with the tools of his trade, I remember that he not only built items necessary for a functioning home, but he also built the virtues necessary for a faith-filled family: guardianship, merciful love, and unfailing trust in God. Saint Joseph's life shows us how to live our own lives convicted in faith.

We often speak of Mary's *fiat*, or "yes" to God's will, when she accepted the news from the Angel Gabriel that she would bear Jesus. Joseph had his own *fiat*, too. He was betrothed to Mary when she informed him that she was with child. This must have come as a shock, and while Joseph could have disgraced the young woman, instead, he decided he would dissolve their engagement quietly. The kind and compassionate Joseph preferred not to "drag her name through the mud" but to trust in her, and in God's providence working somehow in this mysterious situation. He was merciful even when the external signs alone indicated he may have been wronged.

But when an angel visited Joseph's dreams to explain the true meaning behind Mary's pregnancy, Joseph accepted God's will for his family (see Mt 1:18-25). Joseph's full embrace of his role as husband and father shows not only his faithfulness to God but his love and fidelity to his wife.

In his 2020 apostolic letter *Patris Corde* ("With a Father's Love"), Pope Francis wrote that Joseph "teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture."

## Rose to the challenge

The course of Joseph's life probably looked nothing like he imagined, yet he continuously rose up to challenges by trusting in the Lord.

During the census, he cared for his pregnant wife on a long journey to Bethlehem and found a safe place for her to

deliver the Child (see Lk 2:1-7). When King Herod began his massacre of infants to kill the Baby Jesus, Joseph led his family as fugitives into Egypt (see Mt 2:13-15).

After Herod's death, Joseph emigrated back and settled in Nazareth, with carpentry as his trade to support his wife and child (see Mt 2:19-23). And when the pre-teen Jesus was lost in Jerusalem, staying behind in the temple to teach the rabbis, Joseph did not admonish Him but accepted his Son's divinity and greater purpose (see Lk 2:41-52).

Saint Joseph models for all men the unique and necessary role that fathers play in the family as protectors of their wives and children, made possible by a total trust in God's plan for the family. Pope St. John Paul II stated in his 1989 apostolic exhortation *Redemptoris Custos* ("Guardian of the Redeemer"), "In the course of that pilgrimage of faith which was his life, Joseph, like Mary, remained faithful to God's call until the end."

## Actions, not words

Interestingly, while Joseph is featured in the Gospels, he is never given any spoken lines. We read about Joseph's character through his actions alone.

Perhaps that gets at the heart of holy masculinity. Men can show their love for their wives and children best through their hard work, good deeds, and ardent faith.

On March 19, the Catholic Church celebrates St. Joseph's feast

day, a Solemnity which falls during the Lenten season. During Lent, we can pray that he intercedes for us with the St. Joseph Memorare. We can also devote a novena to St. Joseph in the nine days leading up to his feast day, with special intentions for family life, fathers, jobs, and immigrants, all for which St. Joseph is patron.

Additionally, we can dedicate ourselves to embracing Lent in the spirit of St. Joseph: With fewer words and more action. Pope Benedict XVI said in a 2006 Angelus address, "From the example of St. Joseph, we all receive a strong invitation to carry out with fidelity, simplicity, and modesty the task that Providence has entrusted to us."

Rather than simply talking about being kinder, more forgiving, and more patient with others, let's actually do it! After all, "faith without works is dead" (Jas 2:26). And St. Joseph showed us that the best way to keep our faith alive is to truly and fully live it out.

MH



We invite you to send us your intentions for the St. Joseph Novena. Visit [Marian.org/b65](https://www.Marian.org/b65) to have your intentions remembered.

NACOM III

# OH, CANADA!



Sister M. Inga Kvassayová, OLM, leads the Q&A on the final day of NACOM III in Vancouver, Canada, joined by Fr. Patrice Chocholski, Dr. Robert Stackpole, Dr. Bryan Thatcher, Bishop Antonysamy Savarimuthu, Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, and Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC.

Below, Good Shepherd Church was filled to capacity for the three-day North American Congress on Mercy, with relics of St. Faustina and Pope St. John Paul II displayed at the altar. (PHOTOS BY GIUSEPPE MIGNANO AND CHRIS SPARKS)



# AN AMAZING NACOM III

By Chris Sparks

**T**hird time was the charm for the North American Congress on Mercy (NACOM III), held for the first time in Canada, Nov. 15-17, 2024. Under the theme “Divine Mercy and Mary: Our Hope,” the Congress was hosted by Good Shepherd Church in Surrey, a suburb of Vancouver, with the 800-seat parish church filled nearly to capacity.

Speakers included such famous names as Fr. Chris Alar, MIC; Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC; Sister M. Inga Kvassayová, OLM (a member of St. Faustina’s order, the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy); and many other Divine Mercy experts, leaders of the Marian Fathers’ official apostolates, and members of the Marian Family.

## Blessed fellowship

“People who promote Divine Mercy are almost instantaneous friends,” said Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC, NACOM coordinator.

“How grateful we are for this gift of God’s mercy as we open the Third North American Congress on Mercy here in Canada,” he said. “This world is crying out for mercy, and the Lord is choosing us to be His instruments to proclaim that mercy, to live it out, and to make His mercy concrete in the environments where we live.”

Father Kaz thanked the Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, CSB, Archbishop of Vancouver and lead celebrant of the opening Mass, for his extraordinary openness to Divine Mercy and hosting NACOM III in his archdiocese. He also offered thanks to Fr. Augustine Obiwumma, Good Shepherd’s pastor, and all of the volunteers. He noted that the next NACOM would most likely be held in Mexico.

Also on deck: the next World Apostolic Congress on



“We each one of us by our Baptism — we are made advocates of His mercy,” said Archbishop J. Michael Miller, summing up the whole mission of the Congress. “We are entrusted with the great mission that Jesus entrusted to the Church. And what is that? To make disciples ... to bring other people into the knowledge and friendship of Jesus Christ.”

many pilgrims came forward to venerate the relics.

Long-time Good Shepherd parishioner Gisela Deutsch was a volunteer, but also an eager participant in the Congress. When asked what it’s been like to have this Congress come to her parish, she said fervently, “Amazing. Indescribable. I never had an opportunity to see so many priests and parishioners being together and people from all over North America. We are so blessed.”

Visit [MercyCongress.org](https://www.MercyCongress.org) to learn more about NACOM III and the other Mercy congresses.

MH

Mercy, to be held in Vilnius, Lithuania. Archbishop Gintaras Grušas closed NACOM III with a recorded talk, welcoming everyone to the land of St. Faustina, Bl. Michael Sopócko, and the original Image of Divine Mercy, June 7-12, 2026.

## Unity in Mercy

All ages were represented at the Congress — the babes in arms; the extremely elderly; the disabled; faithful folks of all ethnicities, from across the North American continent. As was observed early in the Congress (and displayed on the following pages), Divine Mercy brings people together, unites us in the love of God and neighbor.

Throughout the Congress, a relic of St. John Paul II stood to the left of the altar and a relic of St. Faustina to the right, each surrounded by beautiful fresh red and white roses, as well as an image of the saints. Between Masses, devotions, and talks,

## NACOM III



Thank you, Canadian Catholic Women's League and the Knights of Columbus, for making the Congress run smoothly!



Maria, Juan, Mayra, and Lucia are members of the Hispanic Catholic Young Adult Group at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver. "One of the speakers said Jesus is more hurt by you not trusting Him than all of your sins together, and I think that stood out to me a lot," Maria said. "I think sometimes we can be very hard on ourselves and not understand the amount of the love and mercy that Jesus has for us, so that has been very eye-opening." They all bought a copy of the Spanish edition of *Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father* by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC. Excellent choice!



The Very Rev. Chris Alar, MIC, Provincial Superior, delivered the keynote address of NACOM III, entitled "Mercy and Mary – Our Hope for a Troubled World." He emphasized that God had entrusted Divine Mercy to the Marian Fathers, according to the late Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, because He wanted the Divine Mercy message and devotion under the mantle of Mary.



Dr. Bryan Thatcher, founder of Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy (EADM), spotlighted the works of mercy, especially the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. He shared the work EADM has done with the Marian Fathers in the formation of the "Mother of Mercy Village" in the Philippines and promoting the praying of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for the dying.



Bishop Antonysamy Savarimuthu of Tamil Nadu, India, offered a talk on "Jesus, Teacher of Divine Mercy in the School of Divine Mercy." "Sister Faustina viewed Jesus as a constant guide," noted Bishop Savarimuthu, referring to Him as "Master" 54 times in the *Diary*, and "Director" and "Teacher" twice.



Father Donald Calloway, MIC, best-selling author of *Champions of the Rosary* and *10 Wonders of the Rosary*, challenged the Congress to be faithful in praying the Rosary, especially for poor sinners. “May all of you, and those like you, flourish because you are Apostles of Mercy.”

Father Patrice Chocholski, former general secretary of the World Apostolic Congress on Mercy and rector of the Shrine at Ars, France, surveyed the essential Jewishness of Jesus, and how that informed Jesus’ self-understanding as well as how He exercised mercy in the world.



Father Mark Baron, MIC, the Director of the Association of Marian Helpers (also known as “Father Joseph, MIC”), introduced “The Hem of His Garment Blessing,” a special way to encounter Jesus in the Eucharist. “You have the opportunity to have your own personal experience of Jesus,” said Fr. Mark. Four priests, each with the Eucharist exposed in a monstrance and wearing a humeral veil, stood ready to bless and pray over each Congress participant.



“The spirituality of Divine Mercy is a sign for the end times,” said Sister M. Inga Kvassayová, OLM, pictured here with Br. Joshua, MIC. “This is not just one of the spiritualities — this is *the* spirituality.” Sister Inga is a member of St. Faustina’s order, the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy.

A highlight of NACOM III was a video presentation by the Most Reverend Gintaras Grušas, Archbishop of Vilnius, Lithuania. Vilnius will host the Sixth World Apostolic Congress on Mercy (WACOM 6), June 7-12, 2026. “One of the key goals of WACOM 6 is to address contemporary challenges through a merciful lens,” he said. “This means finding ways to apply the message of Divine Mercy to issues such as poverty, inequality, and environmental stewardship. Our Congress hopes to create a world where Mercy is a guiding principle for individuals and communities alike.”



# The Jubilee Indulgence

**Y**ou may have heard that the Jubilee Year of Hope, now under way, offers the opportunity for the faithful to obtain a special plenary indulgence, a grace granted by the Catholic Church through the merits of Jesus Christ to remove the temporal punishment due to sin. One way is to make a pilgrimage. You can visit a designated church in Rome or, closer to home, a sacred site designated by the bishop of your diocese.

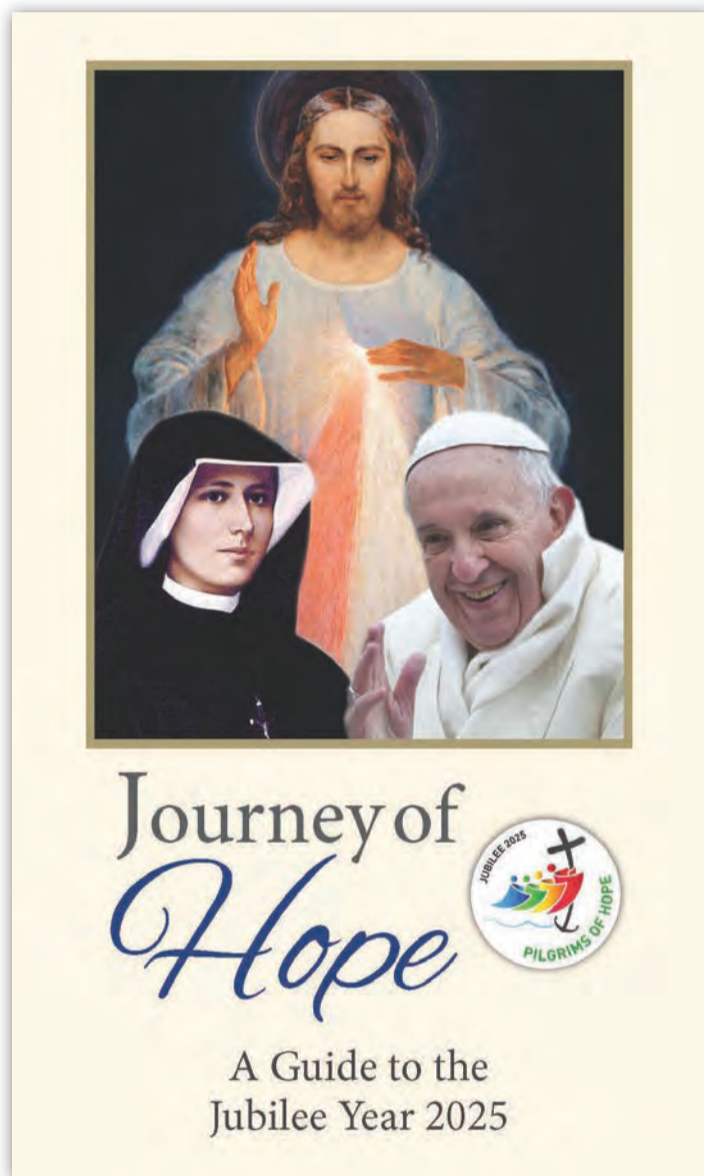
Here in western Massachusetts, our bishop, the Most Rev. William Byrne of the Diocese of Springfield, issued a decree making the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy “a sacred place-pilgrimage site” for the duration of the Jubilee Year, concluding on Holy Family Sunday, Dec. 28, 2025.

## How to obtain

The decree states that, “as a Pilgrimage Site, the faithful, Pilgrims of Hope, will be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence granted by the Holy Father if they undertake a pious pilgrimage to the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge by devoutly participating in Holy Mass.” If Mass (every day, 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. ET, and also at 10:30 a.m. ET on Sundays) is not convenient, they may also make the Stations of the Cross or pray the Rosary, recited daily at 1:30 p.m. ET.

The decree also states that the faithful can obtain the plenary indulgence at the National Shrine if they, individually or in a group, “for a suitable period of time, engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Lord’s Prayer, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form as well as invocations to Mary, the Mother of God, so that in this Holy Year everyone ‘will come to know the closeness of Mary, the most affectionate of mothers, who never abandons her children’ (*Spes non confundit*, 24).”

To obtain the Jubilee plenary indulgence, the usual conditions apply: detachment from all sin, sacramental Confession, holy Communion, and prayer for the intentions



*Journey of Hope: A Guide to the Jubilee Year 2025* (code B65-JYOH) from the Marian Fathers is available on ShopMercy.org.

of the Holy Father. While usually only one plenary indulgence can be obtained per day, during the Jubilee Year the Holy See is extending this to two, subject to all conditions, with an act of charity carried out for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

## Acts of penance

Can't make it to Stockbridge? The Holy See offers many additional ways to obtain a plenary indulgence during the Jubilee Year through acts of penance and mercy. These include: abstaining for at least one day a week from “futile distractions,” such as social media or television; fasting; donating “a proportionate sum of money to the poor;” supporting religious or social works, especially in the defense of life in all phases; offering support to migrants, the elderly, the poor, young people in difficulty, and abandoned children; and volunteering in service to your community.

Lastly, the Holy See advises that Catholics can obtain a jubilee indulgence “if with a devout spirit, they participate in popular missions, spiritual exercises, or formation activities on the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, held in a church or other suitable place, according to the mind of the Holy Father.”

*For more information on planning a visit to the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, visit [ShrineofDivineMercy.org](http://ShrineofDivineMercy.org).*

*News and updates on the Jubilee Year of Hope are posted on [TheDivineMercy.org](http://TheDivineMercy.org).*

MH

# Divine Mercy Weekend 2025



## JOIN US ON EDEN HILL, APRIL 26-27

Planning is in full swing for the celebration of Divine Mercy Weekend, April 26-27, at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. More than 15,000 people are expected to attend the annual event hosted by the Marian Fathers, who have promoted the Divine Mercy message and devotion since 1941.

This year's celebration marks two milestones: It's 25 years since Sr. Faustina, the Apostle of Divine Mercy, was canonized by Pope St. John Paul II, making her the first saint of the new millennium. At that same ceremony in St. Peter's Square on April 30, 2000, the Holy Father proclaimed the Second Sunday of Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday, a feast for the universal Church.

### All are welcome

Throughout the weekend, the 350-acre Shrine grounds are transformed into a small tent city, providing opportunities for Confessions, Eucharistic Adoration, praying the Rosary, and perusing the Divine Mercy Gift Shop. Both the Vigil Mass at 4 p.m. on April 26, and the Sunday Liturgy on

April 27, will be celebrated on Eden Hill at the Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine.

Sunday Mass will be broadcast live by EWTN and on DivineMercyPlus.org at 1 p.m. EST on April 27. Preceding the Mass at 12 p.m. EST (and broadcast live on EWTN) will be our annual pre-show, hosted by the Most Rev. Joseph Roesch, MIC, Superior General, and the Very Rev. Chris Alar, MIC, Provincial Superior.

### Celebrate in your parish!

"We hope to see you on Eden Hill," says Fr. Chris. "But if you are unable to join us, please help your pastor and parish celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. We have a host of useful resources available at TheDivineMercy.org/celebrate."

*The Marian Fathers extend a warm invitation to come to Eden Hill to experience this annual celebration. Admission is free. Private vehicles do not need to register, but buses and groups larger than 15 people must register in advance. Details and more information available now on ShrineofDivineMercy.org. MH*



# ‘HE LOVED US’

By Chris Sparks

“He loved us.” Jesus loved us enough to lay down His life for us, St. Paul points out (see Rom 8:37). Pope Francis makes that the opening of his newest (and fourth) encyclical, *Dilexit Nos*, and so the title of it as well.

If you take away nothing else from this pontificate, or this encyclical, know this: Jesus has loved, is loving, and will always love you.

“Even now, the Lord says to us, ‘I have called you friends’ (Jn 15:15),” Pope Francis writes. “His open heart

has gone before us and waits for us, unconditionally, asking only to offer us his love and friendship. For ‘he loved us first’ (see 1 Jn 4:10). Because of Jesus, ‘we have come to know and believe in the love that God has for us’ (1 Jn 4:16).”

## Console the Heart of Jesus

In perhaps the best single document of his entire pontificate, Pope Francis teaches with the weight of the Magisterium that we still need to turn to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; that the devotion has not lost its relevance or transformative power today; that the heritage of our Catholic faith, including the devotions, is a treasure, not a burden.

Pope Francis shares many truths of our faith and much rich spiritual insight that will be familiar to many long-time Marian Helpers. After all, Marian Press has been publishing crucial pieces of Sacred Heart theology for decades, drawing out the connections to the Divine Mercy, since of course there is only one Jesus Christ, whose Sacred Heart is the same as His Merciful Heart. It's the pierced Sacred Heart that pours forth the Blood and Water, the graces of which are symbolized in the Divine Mercy Image by the red and pale rays of light shining.

Dr. Robert Stackpole has dedicated much time and ink to the study of the Sacred Heart and the Divine Mercy. Some of the fruits of that can be found in his "More Brilliant Than the Sun" series on TheDivineMercy.org. And Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, has given us a wonderful gift in Sacred Heart Gems, a daily devotional with wisdom and insight on the Sacred Heart from saints, blessed, and popes. It's available now on ShopMercy.org (product code B65-SHGM).

## Mercy received, so give mercy

The Holy Father spotlights the incredible reciprocity of the Sacred Heart devotion. "We love because he first loved us," after all. In all things, God precedes us. So our devotion isn't some initiative that *we* are beginning. Rather, it's a matter of becoming aware of the love and mercy coming to us from God already, ongoingly, every single day of our lives, and making some return to Him of love, thanksgiving, and friendship.

Pope Francis links the devotion to the Sacred Heart with Divine Mercy, citing the words of the Great Mercy Pope, St. John Paul II:

Saint John Paul II intimately linked his reflections on divine mercy with devotion to the heart of Christ: "The Church seems in a singular way to profess the mercy of God and to venerate it when she directs herself to the heart of Christ. In fact, it is precisely this drawing close to Christ in the mystery of his heart which enables us to dwell on this point of the revelation of the merciful love

of the Father, a revelation that constituted the central content of the messianic mission of the Son of Man". Saint John Paul also spoke of the Sacred Heart in very personal terms, acknowledging that, "it has spoken to me ever since my youth."

True devotion to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Incarnate, is Catholicism alive, practiced, and eventually perfected,

by the grace of God. True devotion is the best response to our times, a lived response and an echo of the wise counsel of Scripture and the Marian Renovator Blessed George Matulaitis: "Overcome evil with good."

It's an imitation of Sts. Margaret Mary Alacoque and Claude de la Colombière, of Bl. Michael Sopócko and St. Faustina. It's an imitation of St. Francis of Assisi, who loved the poor because in them he saw Jesus, and those whom Jesus loves. It's an imitation of every saint in whom love of God and neighbor truly lived, truly worked out of living faith, truly manifested grace building on nature.

## The path ahead

Read this new encyclical, posted on the Holy See's website, Vatican.va.

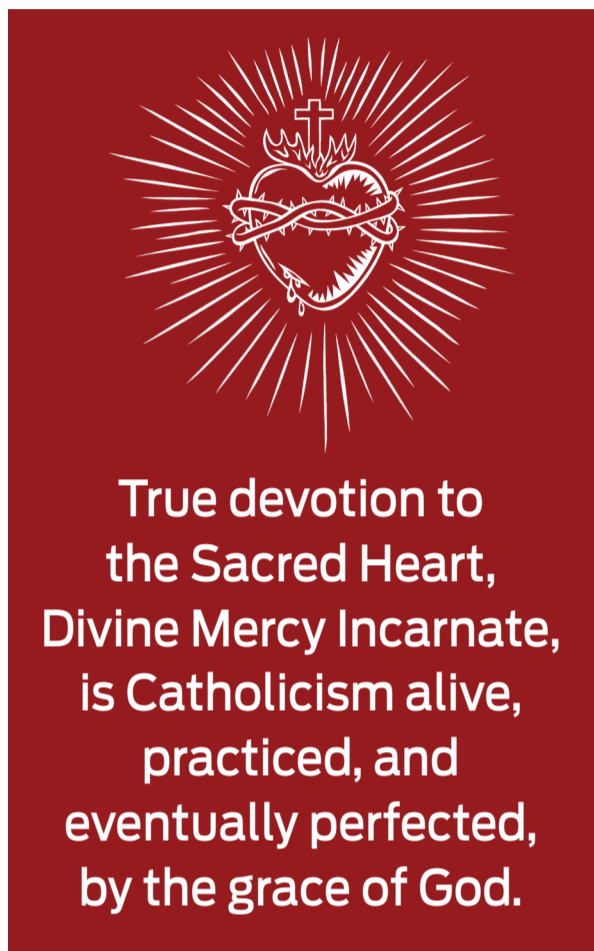
Pray as you read it. Maybe bring it with you to Eucharistic Adoration, or bring it in front of the Divine Mercy Image, and pray before and after you read. Ask our Lord to give you light to hear and understand what the Holy Father is telling you. After all, "faith comes from what is heard" (Rom 10:17).

And starting on March 7, take up the monthly First Friday devotion with the Marian Fathers, live at 8 p.m. ET on Facebook and YouTube.

"In your own way," Pope Francis writes, "you too must be a missionary, like the apostles and the first disciples of Jesus, who went forth to proclaim the love of God, to tell others that Christ is alive and worth knowing."

Listen to the successor to St. Peter, and respond to this summons to the Sacred Heart. Jesus addressed Peter and all of the apostles (and thereby their successors, on down to the current pope) when he said, "Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me" (Lk 10:16). And then persist in your love of God and neighbor in the practice of your faith, in how you live your daily life.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us and on the whole world!



# 20<sup>th</sup> Healthcare Conference on deck!

Calling all healthcare professionals! The 20<sup>th</sup> annual Divine Mercy Medicine, Bioethics and Spirituality Conference will be held June 4-6, 2025, at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

“I would like to invite and welcome everyone to our 20<sup>th</sup> conference, which to my knowledge is the longest running bioethics conference in the United States,” says organizer Marie Romagnano, MSN, RN, CCM-R, founder of Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy, an official apostolate of the Marian Fathers. “We are especially excited because this is our third year at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy.

“Many of our participants have told us over the years that this is an academic program, yet it’s also a retreat. We combine two days of academic study with daily Mass, Confession, and a half-day optional retreat on day three, so this is such a comprehensive program. We invite healthcare professionals, first responders, and pastoral care workers to attend.”

Continuing Education Credits are available to conference participants.

## Unique program

“The conference offers nurses, physicians, and other allied health professionals a unique program of professional formation that integrates the spirituality and devotional elements of the Divine Mercy message in patient care,” says Dr. Kathleen Brooks Scoble, Dean Emeritus of the College of Our Lady of the Elms School of Nursing and professor of nursing. “Presentations are designed to give the health professional unique opportunities to enhance their faith, professional lives, and practice to enhance care outcomes.”

Dr. Scoble will serve as emcee for this year’s conference. Among the many topics are spirituality and its role in the well-being of the healthcare professional and the healing



Marie Romagnano, MSN, RN, CCM-R, addressed the third North American Apostolic Congress on Mercy in November via video. She shared the essential importance of well-formed, faithful healthcare professionals in order to fully serve patients in spiritual distress and even at the end of life. If healthcare professionals are not spiritually prepared, Nurse Marie points out, essential spiritual needs of patients will go unserved.

effect on the patient; spiritual care of the patient; human dignity; emerging medical technologies; discernment for appropriate care decisions; strategies to build resilience; and therapeutic communication.

Visit [TheDivineMercy.org/healthcare/conference](https://TheDivineMercy.org/healthcare/conference) for more details.

MH

# This Lent, find Hope

By Chris Sparks

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom 10:17). In this special Holy Year, the Jubilee of Hope, Lent becomes a season anew for listening to Divine Revelation, setting aside fear, despair, and presumption, and taking up instead true Christian hope. Our 2025 Lenten devotional, *Jesus, Our Hope*, is designed to help you do just that — to listen attentively to the Word of God and so be transformed (see Heb 4:12).

## Our Hope

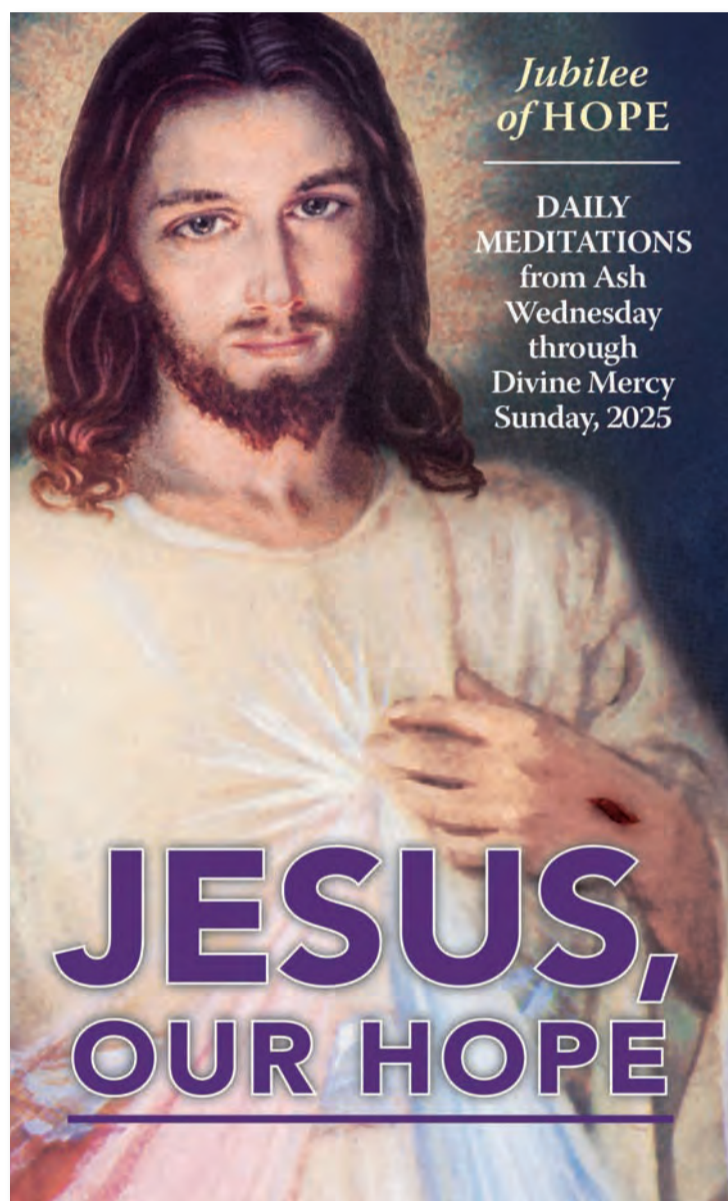
This Lent is a special time of grace and transformation as we all come together as “Pilgrims of Hope” on the penitential path to Jesus, our Hope and the Divine Mercy Incarnate. Easter and Divine Mercy Sunday are always blessed celebrations, but this Jubilee year, we should put extra effort into our annual rejoicing! That’s why we offer you, our Marian Family, this special Lenten devotional.

*Jesus, Our Hope* starts with Ash Wednesday, March 5, and continues past Easter Sunday, April 20, through to the Feast of Divine Mercy Sunday on April 27.

Each day offers an inspiring meditation based on the day’s liturgical readings, and references to passages from the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina for further reading. You’ll feel like you’re there: listening to Jesus teaching at the Temple; seeing Him heal the man at Bethesda; and hearing the crowds around you as they discuss who Jesus truly is.

After all, Jesus *is* our hope. Not world leaders. Not better policies. Not earthly power, economics, or strategies from the world.

Jesus *is* our hope. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him



To order *Jesus Our Hope: Daily Lenten Meditations from Ash Wednesday through Divine Mercy Sunday, 2025* (Product code B65-LD25), visit [ShopMercy.org](http://ShopMercy.org) or call 1-800-462-7426.

might not perish but might have eternal life” (Jn 3:16).

True, God’s love for the world right now looks like Christ on the Cross, rather than worldly triumph. Jesus is our hope in the near term and in an ultimate sense.

In the near term, Jesus is our hope for truth to answer the lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Jesus is our hope for grace to build on nature, to redeem and sanctify a wounded world, to marry time with eternity, space and matter with spirit, and to prepare the world for the final consummation when God shall be “all in all” (see 1 Cor 15:28).

Jesus is the Light of the World, and the darkness shall never overcome Him.

## The Just Judge

In the ultimate sense, Jesus is the Lord of History, the Just Judge. He shall make all wrongs right, wipe away every tear, and ensure the final triumph of good over evil.

But until the Day of the Lord is at hand in a full, final, and awesome sense, we continue our pilgrimage in the long Lent of this life. We persist in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving till the Bridegroom comes again.

Live in hope. Live Lent well. Live Lent with Jesus in Scripture and the *Diary*.

MH



Father Andy invites kids to explore the upcoming Sunday Gospel reading, bringing its stories to life in a way that's meaningful. Each episode helps children build a deeper connection to the Mass and makes learning about Jesus' teachings fun and relatable.



## Why a gift from your IRA is a smart way to give!

- Satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)
- Exclude the gift from your taxable income
- Make an immediate impact on our mission
- Save your post-tax money for personal use

Contact our Mission Advancement Team at  
1-800-671-2020

to begin a conversation or  
visit [Marian.org/smart-giving](http://Marian.org/smart-giving)

# FROM JAPAN WITH LOVE

Sometimes the simplest prayer is the most powerful. One of our Marian Helpers — from Japan! — recently shared her story with me. It's a testament to how the Marians and the message of Divine Mercy unite us all in His love, no matter where we are in the world — and how "Jesus I Trust In You" can transform a life. Here is Maria Lourdes' story, in her own words.

"I am the second of nine children, given my name because I was born very close to the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes.

"I married in 1975 and my husband and I had one daughter, Maria Donna. Then in 1984, my husband was murdered. It was a devastating loss! I never thought I would re-marry, but I met my future husband, Kiyoshi, five years later.

"I first encountered the Divine Mercy in 2007 when I had a severe family problem that really tested my faith. Being a Filipina, I of course knew of the Divine Mercy prayer but had never really prayed to Jesus the Divine Mercy.

## Only one prayer

"I went to our priest at the Franciscan Chapel Center in Tokyo for counseling. I was struck by the advice Fr. Cal Sweeney gave me, which I will never forget. "There is only one prayer that you should say: "Jesus, I trust in You," he said.

"When Fr. Cal said this, I immediately knew Who the Divine Mercy was, what His image looked like, and that very short but powerful prayer below His feet!

"I took Fr. Cal's advice, and can truly say that, since then, Jesus, the Divine Mercy, has never failed me.

"I heard about the Marian Fathers through my brother who



"I never thought I would remarry": Maria Lourdes and her current husband, Kiyoshi.

lives in California. He told me about a priest he'd seen on You Tube who was dedicated to our Blessed Mother and praying the Rosary: Fr. Donald Calloway. I was so blown away by his life story, his conversion, and his 'Totus Tuus' devotion to our Lord, the Blessed Mother, and now St. Joseph.

"As I learned more about the Marians, I discovered a treasure trove! I love the daily livestream Masses, Rosaries, and Chaplets, and also the talks that Fr. Chris Alar gives on Saturdays. During Holy Week, I watch all of the Masses and, especially, Divine Mercy Sunday.

"These streaming services are really a gift for us who cannot be there physically in Stockbridge. And it's wonderful to catch glimpses of the breathtakingly beautiful grounds of the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. I hope to visit one day!"

## Making a gift

You can help support the Marians in their work as Maria Lourdes does, by making a gift to one of the Marian Fathers' ministries that resonates with you, whether it is a special devotion to Our Lady or praying for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

---

Hope Ponsart Hansen is a major gifts officer for the Marian Fathers. Contact her at (413) 298-1387; [helpers@Marian.org](mailto:helpers@Marian.org); or Association of Marian Helpers, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Visit [Giving.Marian.org](http://Giving.Marian.org) to learn more.



# Journey of Hope

NEW!



**Journey of Hope**  
A Guide to the Jubilee Year 2025

## A Guide to the Jubilee Year 2025

In this guidebook, you'll read about how the Church will celebrate the Jubilee Year. You'll learn what you can do to answer the call of the Holy Father to both know the face of God's mercy — Jesus Christ our Hope — and to show that face of mercy — true hope — to your friends and neighbors (as well as your enemies!). You'll also read about the importance of the Sacrament of Confession, and rediscover the Divine Mercy devotion that will assist you to unleash the many graces God wishes to give you in your own life and to the whole world. Blessed Jubilee! Paperback, 88 pages. B65-JYOH \$3.99

Visit [ShopMercy.org/b65](http://ShopMercy.org/b65) or call 1-800-462-7426.

# Consecration to St. Joseph

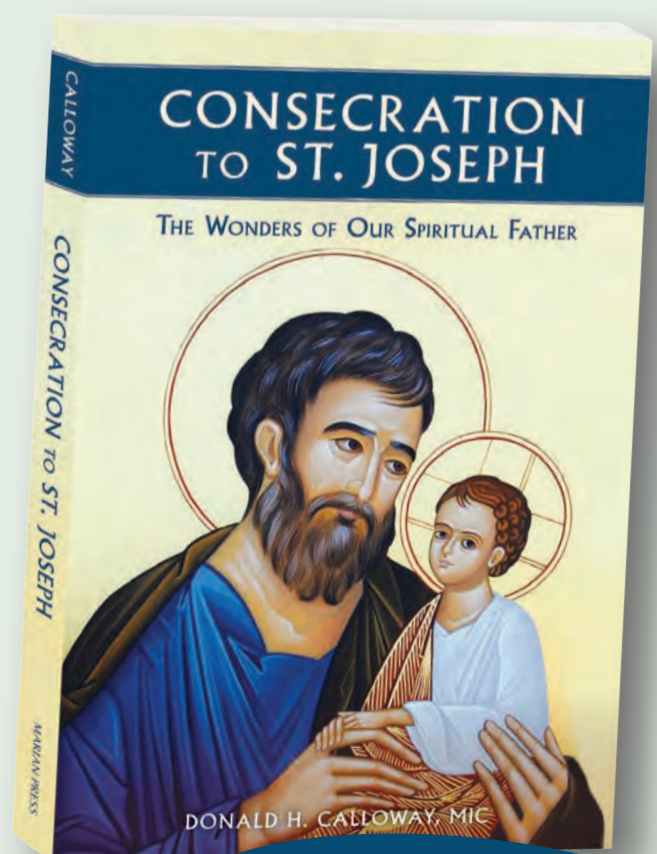
In the midst of crisis, confusion, and a world at war with the Church, it's time to come home again to our spiritual father, St. Joseph.

In this richly researched and lovingly presented program of consecration to St. Joseph, Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, brings to life the wonders, the power, and the ceaseless love of St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church and the Terror of Demons.

Start your consecration to conclude on March 19, the Solemnity of St. Joseph, or May 1, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker! Or participate any time of the year!

B65-FCSJ 

Available at [ShopMercy.org/b65](http://ShopMercy.org/b65)  
or call 1-800-462-7426!



Start March 30 to consecrate on May 1

## GRACES RECEIVED

### Son gets a better job

Our son was in a predicament at his current job. Work was not being directed his way in the office. He knew he needed to get out, and he was stressing out.

My husband and I prayed to Bl. George, who we learned about from the articles in *Marian Helper*. Then one day our son had lunch with a friend who set up a quick interview with his bosses. They weren't even looking to hire anyone at this time. After the interview, company officials quickly assembled the rest of the staff and made our son an offer within days! Prayers were answered! I shared this prayer to Bl. George with family members.

— M.B.F.  
Buffalo, New York

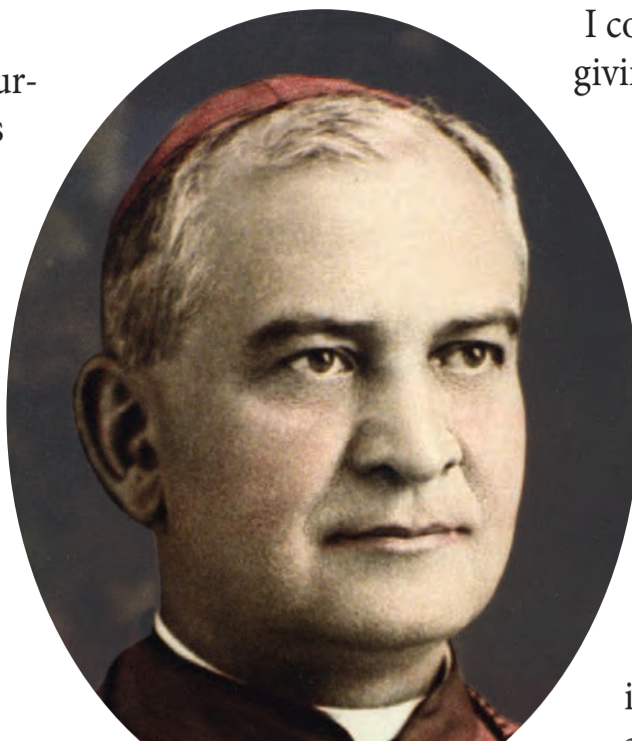
### My thanksgiving is threefold

My thanksgiving to Bl. George is threefold. My daughter, grandson, and granddaughter all have been helped by his intercessions.

When my daughter suffered a stroke two years ago, I prayed to Bl. George that she would not be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of her life. My prayers were answered. She has been walking with a walking stick for quite a while now and has little use for her wheelchair. I am so grateful for that.

My grandson and granddaughter were both having difficulties finding employment. The pandemic didn't help their search. I prayed to Bl. George to intercede for them in finding a job. They are both now employed and doing very well at their new jobs.

I thank Bl. George for interceding for them.



Acknowledgements  
of graces received through  
the intercession of  
Blessed George Matulaitis,  
Renovator of the Marian  
Fathers (1871-1927).

I continue to pray to Bl. George in thanksgiving for the graces received!

— L.M.P., email

### Avoided a check scam

I've prayed for Bl. George to watch over me concerning fraud and scam issues for years. I am old and at the age where fraud and scams are directed at me.

Recently, I had a check washed and payment directed to a criminal source! [A washed check has been stolen and treated with chemicals to remove the ink and change the amount or payee. The check is then rewritten and deposited to steal money from the victim's account.]

I have to believe it was by Bl. George's intercession that I checked my account so soon and for once opened the details to see that the check had been changed! It was the very next day that the check had come through my bank. I just don't

check my account very often and I almost never open the details as I did on this one. My bank worked immediately and though it took a week, they too are amazing — they succeeded in getting my money back!

I'm not certain if you consider this a miracle, but I tell all my friends that, for me, it was a miracle by Bl. George's intercession.

— M.H., email

---

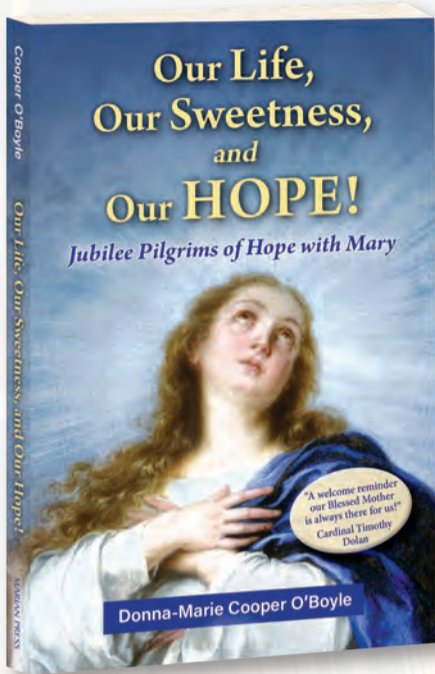
For a Blessed George prayer card (B65-CBGP), call toll free 1-800-462-7426. If you have received graces through his intercession, please write: Br. Andrew Maczyński, MIC, Vice Postulator of the Marian Causes of Canonization, 2 Prospect Hill Road, Stockbridge, MA, 01263. Email: [graces@Marian.org](mailto:graces@Marian.org).

## Prayer for a Special Grace Through the Intercession of Blessed George

O God, our Lord and Father, You surround us always by Your care; receive our humble petition, and through the intercession of Blessed George, who suffered so much for Your glory and for the increase of Your Kingdom here on earth, grant me the grace (mention intention), for which I ask You with confidence, promising to live from now on with greater fidelity to Your commandments. Amen.

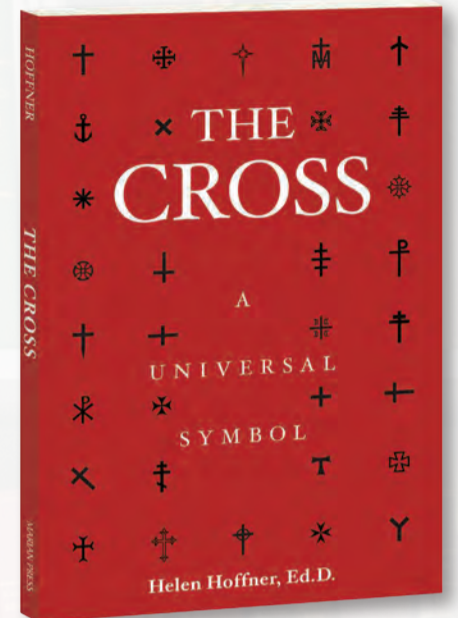
*Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be to the Father ...*

# Recommended Reading for the Jubilee Year of Hope



## Our Life, Our Sweetness, and Our Hope: Jubilee Pilgrims of Hope with Mary

Hope is truly a lifesaver! Whether we have struggled through a world-wide pandemic, are dealing with seemingly hopeless diagnoses, losses, family troubles, or whatever else that might have caused us to become tempted to give up on hope, we should realize that God is certainly the foundation of our every hope. He will forever be. We need to continue to hope in His loving promises. He will never leave us! And He gifted us with the most eminent gift ever — His own Mother! This book presents many reasons for hope in our world today through the lens of Our Mother Mary and some of her apparitions around the world. Join Our Blessed Mother, “Our Life, Our Sweetness, and Our Hope,” on an inspiring journey to coincide with the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope. Paperback, 256 pages. [B65-POHB](#) \$16.95

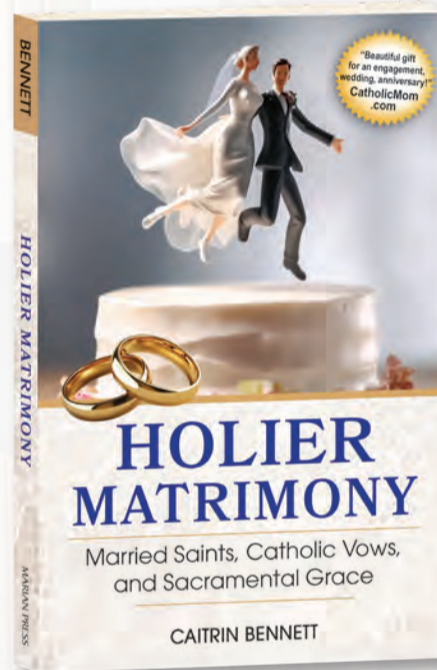


## The Cross: A Universal Symbol

This beautifully-illustrated book will help you identify and understand the history of crosses seen on historic monuments, houses of worship, flags, and anywhere your travels may lead. It also addresses crucifixes, or crosses that contain an image of the Body of Jesus Christ. Every cross has a story to tell. Paperback, 136 pages. [B65-CRUS](#) \$23.95

## Holier Matrimony: Married Saints, Catholic Vows, and Sacramental Grace

If you are an engaged or married Catholic thirsting for *holier* matrimony than you so often observe, you have come to the right place. This book will help you unwrap and tap into the power of the gifts Jesus has given us through His Church. As you read, you will grow in understanding of your marriage vows, and, more importantly, you will become better equipped to live them out. You will befriend several married saints who also lived out these vows, reflect on how you can emulate their lives and marriages, and ask for their intercession. You will learn to strive constantly towards holiness, and to rely on that most precious gift of marital grace when you and your spouse inevitably fall short. Paperback, 208 pages. [B65-HLMY](#) \$16.95



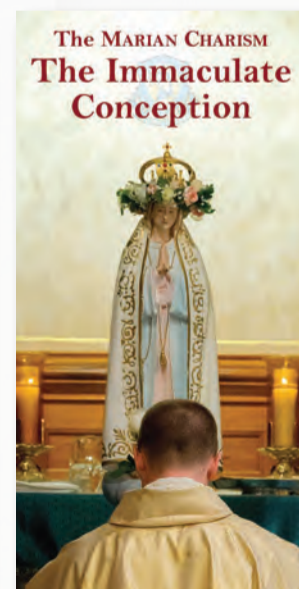
**Pamphlets:**  
 10 FOR \$1.90  
 100 FOR \$16  
 1,000 FOR \$120



[B65-SERV](#)



[B65-PGMC](#)



[B65-MRIC](#)

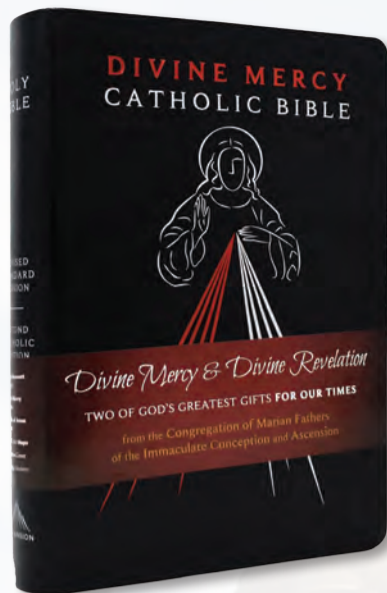


[B65-MCLF](#)

# Prepare for Divine Mercy Sunday

## The Divine Mercy Catholic Bible

Many Catholics may not realize that Divine Mercy, a gift given to us by God, is interwoven throughout the Bible. The Divine Mercy Catholic Bible includes 175 Mercy Moments and 19 articles that explain how God encounters us with mercy through His Word and Sacraments. Leatherbound, 1,712 pages. **B65-BIDM \$49.95**

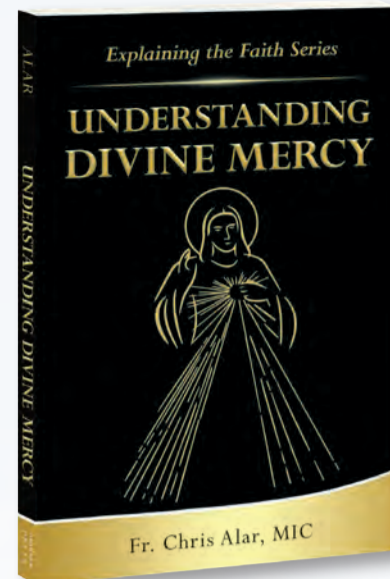


*Explaining the Faith Series*

## Understanding Divine Mercy

The entire Divine Mercy message and devotion is summarized in one easy-to-read book! Explaining the teaching of Jesus Christ as given to St. Faustina, *Understanding Divine Mercy* by Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, has it all. Paperback, 167 pages.

**B65-EFBK \$16.95**



## Deluxe Leather-Bound Edition

Treasure this deluxe leather edition for years to come. Includes a special dedication, gilded edges, a ribbon marker, and 20 pages of color photographs. 726 pages. **\$31.95 EACH**

**Blue: B65-DDBLUE**

**Burgundy: B65-DDBURG**



## Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, Compact Edition

The compact-size edition of St. Faustina's *Diary* chronicles the message that Jesus, the Divine Mercy, gave to the world through this humble nun.

739 pages. **B65-DNBF \$12.95**



## The Divine Mercy Message and Devotion

Our most popular pocket-size handbook on Divine Mercy covers every aspect of the message and devotion. By Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, with Vinny Flynn and Robert A. Stackpole, STD. 88 pages.

**B65-M17 \$3.99**

**LARGE PRINT: B65-M17L \$6.99**

## Divine Mercy Explained

This booklet by Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, gives you a brief and easy-to-understand introduction to the Divine Mercy message and devotion. It includes the full prayers of the Divine Mercy Novena and St. Faustina's "Litany to Divine Mercy," as well as two bonus appendices: Divine Mercy prayers and Divine Mercy wisdom from Pope St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. 67 pages. **B65-DMX \$3.99**



## The Divine Mercy Image Explained

This booklet by Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, reveals hidden gems and highlights inspiring truths about the Divine Mercy Image. Also includes instructions on how to enthrone the Image in your home, an enthrone prayer, and two bonus appendices. 72 pages.

**B65-DMIX \$3.99**



## Order Info

Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery of phone or online orders; 2-4 weeks for mail orders.

**toll free:** 1-800-462-7426 **shop online:** [ShopMercy.org](http://ShopMercy.org)

**mail:** Order Department

Association of Marian Helpers  
Stockbridge, MA 01263

**Checks payable to:** Association of Marian Helpers

Order total:	U.S. postage/handling	Canada postage/handling
\$.01-\$20 . . .	\$5.25	. . . \$6.75
\$20.01-\$35 . . .	\$7.25	. . . \$9.50
\$35.01-\$75 . . .	\$8.50	. . . \$11.25
\$75.01-\$125 . . .	\$9.50	. . . \$13.50
over \$125 . . .	10% of subtotal	15% of subtotal

Postage costs may vary for online orders.

From the  
VAULTS

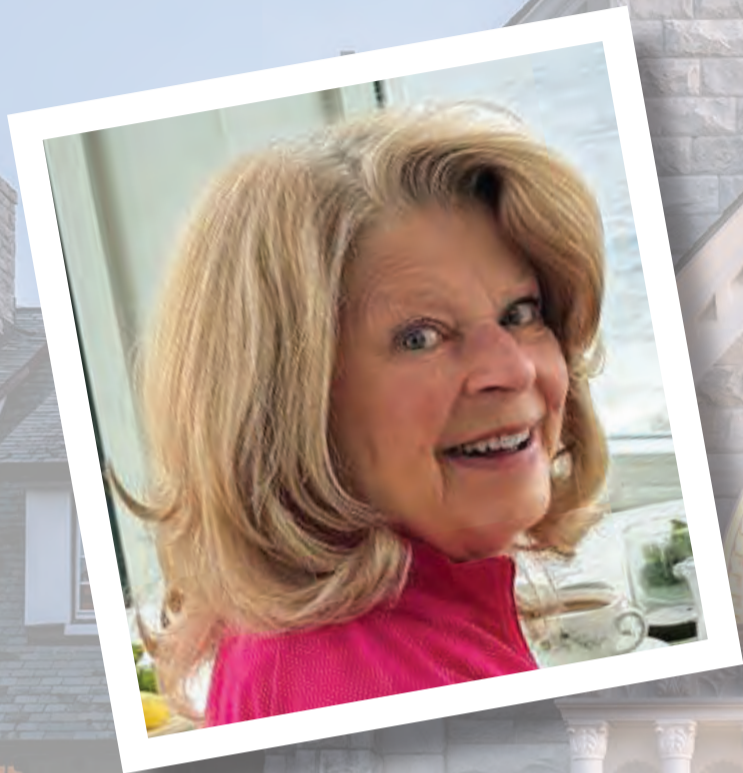


**A**s the National Eucharistic Revival enters its final year, it's appropriate to recall a page from the Autumn 1957 edition of *Marian Helpers Bulletin*, entitled **“When You Miss One Holy Communion.”** “It is well occasionally to consider what you lose every morning that you pass up Holy Communion,” readers were advised. A list followed:

1. You miss a personal visit with Jesus, author of all spiritual energy and of all holiness.
2. You lose a special increase of sanctifying grace, which makes your soul more pleasing to God.
3. You lose a quota of sacramental grace, which entitles you to special help in times of temptation and in the discharge of your daily duties.
4. You lose a precious opportunity of having all your venial sins wiped away.
5. You miss the special preserving influence which each Holy Communion confers against the fires of passion.
6. You miss the opportunity of having remitted a part, or all, of the temporal punishment due to your sins.
7. You lose the spiritual joy, the sweetness, and particular comfort that come from a fervent Holy Communion.
8. You lose part of the glory that your body might enjoy at its resurrection on the Last Day.
9. You lose the greater degree of glory you would possess in Heaven for all eternity.
10. You may lose: a) Complete victory over some fault or passion; b) Some Particular grace long prayed for; c) The conversion or salvation of some soul; d) Deliverance of a relative or friend from Purgatory; e) Many graces for others, both the living and the dead.

The article concluded, **“Will a few extra minutes of sleep repay you for all these losses?”** The illustration of a tearful St. Faustina from an earlier issue seems fitting here! MH

# Live the call!



## Louise Boivin:

It is very important for me to support the Marian seminarians as they follow their apprenticeship to bring to the world the Faith they carry in their souls. Marian priests have brought thousands of people worldwide back to the Faith by spreading their captivating and important teachings online. Their seminarians receive strong training to, God willing, become the best priests the world could hope for. Faithful and dedicated to Christ through Mary, the Marians spread unceasingly the important message of Divine Mercy. The world is in need of such exceptional priests!

## Deacon Alexander Pumphrey, MIC:

It's the Jubilee Year of Hope, and this gives me hope that my call is for a purpose and that the Lord desires great things from me — not for myself, of course, but great things for Him and His Kingdom. If God can use me as an instrument of His grace and love in the world, then He can use anybody! I am so thankful for the prayers and sacrifices that have made my vocational journey possible. I could not have come to this point without you. Please continue to pray that the Lord will fill me with His grace and love and transform me into the saint He desires me to be.

## Attend a retreat

Father Donald invites you to attend a VOCATION RETREAT at the Marian House of Studies in Steubenville, Ohio.

### The next retreats:

Feb. 14-16  
Feb. 28 - March 2  
Visit  
[Marian.org/vocations](http://Marian.org/vocations)  
for more information.

## Learn more

**Email:** [vocations@Marian.org](mailto:vocations@Marian.org)

**Visit:** [Marian.org/vocations](http://Marian.org/vocations)

Write: **Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC**  
Vocation Director

**Marian Fathers of the  
Immaculate Conception**

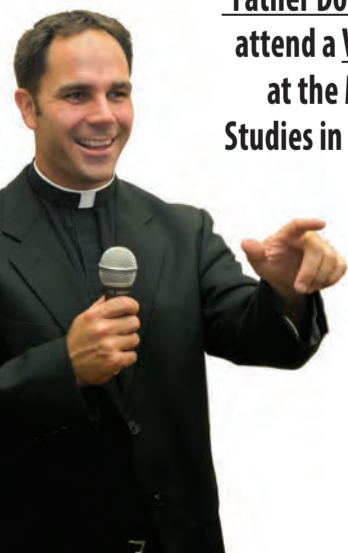
**350 Belleview Boulevard  
Steubenville, OH 43952**

## Support

### Want to help our seminarians?

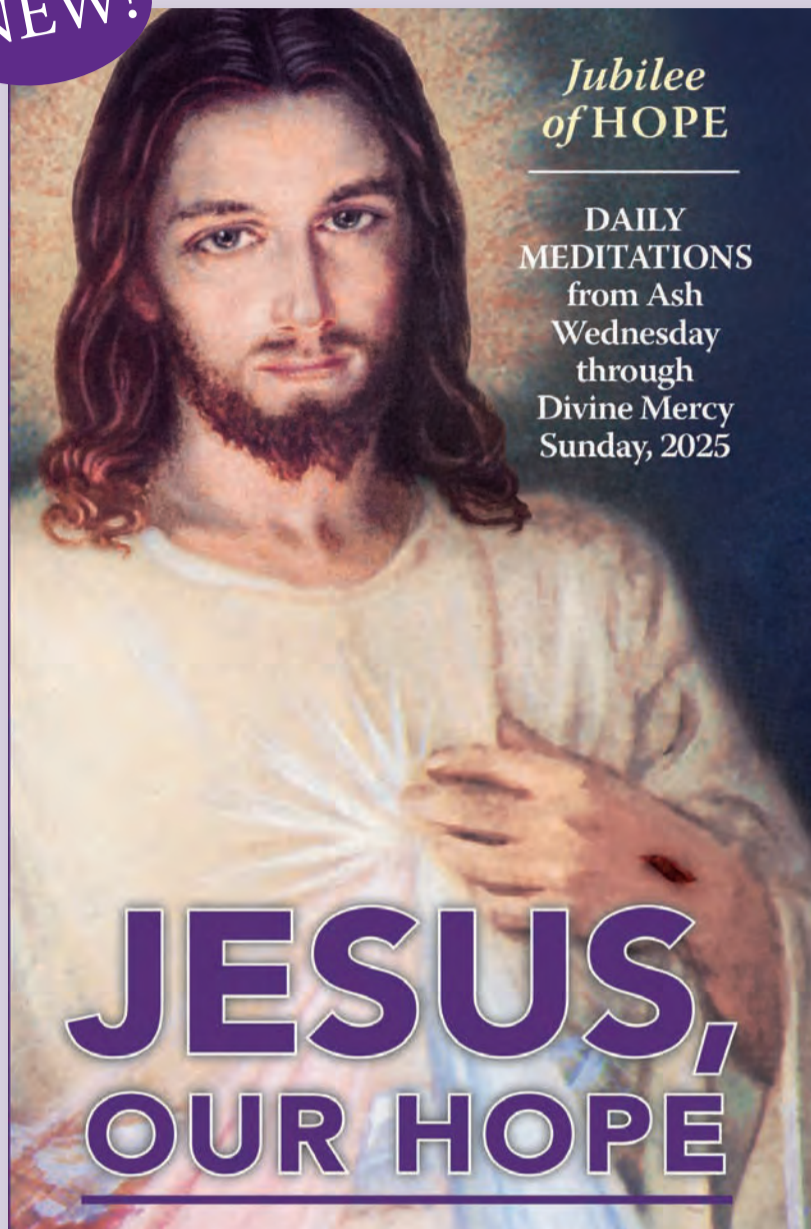
We have more than 20 men preparing for religious life and the priesthood.

To donate, visit  
[marian.org/give/seminarians](http://marian.org/give/seminarians)  
or call 1-800-462-7426.



# Jesus, our Hope

NEW!



Daily Lenten Meditations  
from Ash Wednesday through  
Divine Mercy Sunday, 2025

Lent is a pilgrimage through the spiritual desert on the long road to Easter and Divine Mercy Sunday. During this Holy Year, the Jubilee of Hope, draw strength and encouragement for the journey from the Scriptures with this Lenten devotional. Read just one page a day to help prepare your heart to receive profound graces. Paperback, 64 pages. B65-LD25 \$6.95

Visit [ShopMercy.org/b65](https://ShopMercy.org/b65)  
or call 1-800-462-7426.