

What would the Triumph look like? • How to set the captives free

Fall 2017

# Marian Helper

*Inspiration and news from the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception*

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## Divine Mercy after suicide



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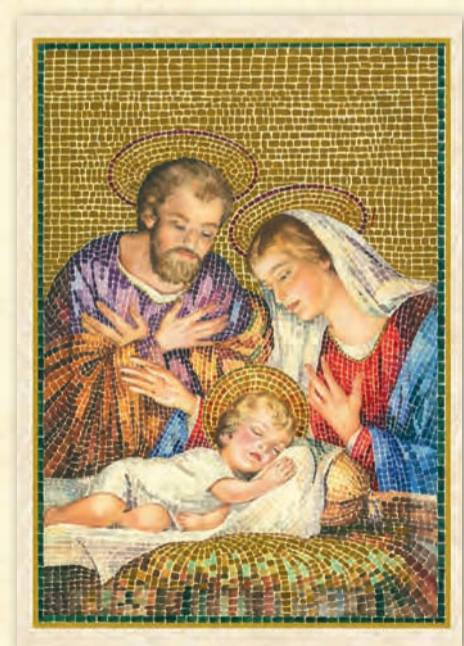
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# Divine Mercy after suicide

“Father pulled out St. Faustina’s *Diary*. He said that if you don’t see any effect from your prayers and you get discouraged, you need to turn to entry 1698. This changed my life,” writes Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, in his moving account on the suicide of his grandmother.

## 10 All Heart

One hundred years ago, Our Lady promised the children of Fatima, “In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph.” What would such a triumph look like?

## 18 Set the Captives Free

“In our age, God seems intent on reminding us of the reality of Purgatory,” writes Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC, who has dedicated his life to emptying Purgatory.

## 20 She answers Christ’s call – to the letter

Following Jesus’ demand that we engage in deeds of mercy, Sherry Zimmerman — known to some as “Nanna Sherry” — ministers to inmates. “It’s a retreat every time I receive a letter from them,” she says.

## 22 How to ride the storm

Read an excerpt from the debut book by the Marians’ promising new author, Fr. Thaddaeus Lancton, MIC, *Stepping on the Serpent: The Journey of Trust with Mary*.

## 26 Wouldn’t change a thing

Dying can be a beautiful event. Peggy Lengemann of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, gave proof to that. Her own words at her own funeral are truly words to live by.

### DEPARTMENTS

- 3 Father Joseph Writes   4 Marian Helpers in Action   6 Faces of Mercy  
8 Father Joseph’s Picks   9 Notes from Rome   28 In the News   29 At the National Shrine  
31 Outstanding Helpers   33 Graces Received   36 From Our Archives

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Vol. 72, No. 3  
Fall 2017

**ON THE COVER:** Father Chris Alar, MIC, the director of the Association of Marian Helpers, holds up an old photo of his grandmother, the subject of this issue’s cover story on Divine Mercy and suicide. Photo by Frère Fanders.

#### 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 © 2017 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](mailto:editorial@marian.org) website: [marian.org](http://marian.org)

## WHO WE ARE



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

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## Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception

The Marians are a Congregation of nearly 500 priests and brothers in 20 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 1944, the Association began as a small group of friends who believed in and supported the work of the Marians. Now some 1.5-million members strong, the Association is a spiritual benefit society that continues to prayerfully and financially support the priests and brothers of the Congregation of Marian Fathers.

Your enrollment means that, by a decree of the Holy See, you will now share in the graces that are extended to all our Marian Helpers. These graces include:

- 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.



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## OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT US

**Deepen your commitment** of prayer and support by joining a special group of Marian Helpers:

- Thirteenth of the Month Club: [marian.org/13th](http://marian.org/13th)
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- Holy Souls Sodality: [PrayForSouls.org](http://PrayForSouls.org)
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### Arrange a special gift:

- using stock, a gift through your will or trust, or a charitable gift annuity: [marian.org/plannedgiving](http://marian.org/plannedgiving)

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### When making your 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., Stockbridge, MA 01262, \_\_\_% of my adjusted gross estate (or \$\_\_\_\_\_, or a specific asset) to be used for its religious and educational purposes.*

# AN INVITATION TO HOLINESS

One hundred years ago in Fatima, Portugal, God once again gave us the gift of Mary, just as He did on Calvary when He said to the Beloved Disciple, John, “Behold, your mother” (Jn 19:27). How are we to accept this gift of Mary as our own spiritual Mother? By consecrating ourselves to her this centennial year.

In fact, you can plan to consecrate — or re-consecrate — yourself along with Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, and me on Oct. 13, marking the day of Our Lady’s final apparition in Fatima. We’ll be streaming our consecration on our Marian Helpers Facebook page from here at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy.

You all probably know about Fr. Michael’s great book on Marian consecration, 33 Days to Morning Glory, a do-it-yourself retreat. I know many parish groups are consecrating to Mary this year in honor of Our Lady of Fatima, and they are using Fr. Michael’s book to do so. In order to consecrate on Oct. 13, you will need to begin the 33-day self-guided retreat on Sept. 10. Then, come Oct. 13, tune in to our stream on Facebook, and let’s unite in prayer and entrust our entire lives to Our Lady. If you are unable to watch the stream, our prayers will be united just the same. And if you are unable to time

your consecration to Oct. 13, that’s fine, too. This centennial year doesn’t conclude until May 13, 2018. So there is plenty of time!

If you are looking to receive 33 Days to Morning Glory as quickly as possible, we have now made

it available in e-book format (Product code:

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Why consecrate ourselves to Mary now?

Saint John Paul II said, “The message of Fatima is more urgent than ever, when evil is threatening us through errors based on denial of God. The message of Fatima ... invites us to approach anew the fountain of Mercy by an act of consecration. Mary wishes us to draw near to [this fountain]: each one of us, each nation, and the whole world.”

In his book The Second Greatest Story Ever Told, Fr. Michael further explains that “the end goal of the message of Fatima is to bring us to God’s mercy. And so, the ‘triumph’ of Mary’s Immaculate Heart is really when we allow her to wash us in the Fountain of Divine Mercy, which she is especially free to do when individuals and nations are consecrated to her.”

God gives us the gift of His own mother as *our* Mother. He invites us to accept Mary into our hearts and our homes and to share with her our hopes, sorrows, joys, and fears. By means of consecration, we say “yes” to this invitation from Jesus from the Cross. We say, “Yes, Lord, I heard the wake-up call You gave to the world 100 years ago in Fatima.” We say, “Yes, Jesus, I accept the gift You give to me of Mary, and I will allow her to form me in holiness. Jesus, thank You for the gift of Your Mother, and I accept it.”

May Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart guide us and protect us!

*Fr. Joseph, MIC*

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“Father Joseph, MIC,” is the honorary title of the director of the Association of Marian Helpers. The current director is Fr. Chris Alar, MIC.



# Every hour on the hour

*Mona Rahael of St. Finbar's Parish in Trinidad is a mother of five children. She founded the Sanctuary of the Holy Family 25 years ago, now known as the Sanctuary of the Holy Family and the Divine Mercy Center, which offers Eucharistic Adoration, Holy Mass, a book and gift shop, and programs to support priests, seminarians, and families in need.*

**Tell me about some of the challenges facing families in Trinidad.**

A major one is single-parent families, where fathers have left the home and mothers have to take care of their children and work a job, as well. A lot of times, the children are left alone. So some of these young people wind up entering a life of crime and joining gangs. That's where we're trying to really work towards bringing families together and teaching them the values of Christ. And especially, I think what makes the Divine Mercy message so appealing is that it's one of forgiveness. Having conversations with families and especially the young people, you learn they feel — wrongly — that there's no way that God can forgive them, especially for all they may have done. The message of the Divine

Mercy is so refreshing because, the truth is, all you need to do is come to God with a repentant heart and ask His forgiveness, and God will forgive. I strongly believe the message of the Divine Mercy now is really an opportunity of calling God's people back to Him.

**What has been one of the biggest surprises you've had in the course of this ministry?**

This story starts off extremely sad, but then it becomes fruitful. My nephew, on Sept. 21, 2005, was kidnapped, murdered, and beheaded in the course of an attempted robbery. During the time when it was discovered he was missing, we were praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet for him that he be found alive and well. On the third day, he was found. We were praying the Chaplet at the time, in the Hour of Great Mercy, and we were pleading with the Lord that he would be found, and he was found that very hour — but not the way we had hoped.

I had made a promise then that every first Friday at the Sanctuary, we would pray the Divine Mercy Novena every hour on the hour for an end to crime and violence in our land and throughout the world.

So on the first Friday right after that — Oct. 7, the

Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary — we started the Novena. That evening, I received an email from a very dear friend of mine, an apostolic nuncio in Krakow, Poland, at the Shrine of the Divine Mercy. He didn't know anything that had happened regarding my nephew, and he said he got a strong conviction to ask for a first-class relic of St. Faustina for me. Immediately, I began to sob because, to me, it was a sign from our Lord that my nephew was with Him. And also I saw this as a sign that God approved of this ministry of praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet every hour for an end to crime and violence.

The second surprise is when we received a first-class relic of St. John Paul II. Again, the apostolic nuncio stationed in Trinidad called to say that he had a gift for me for the Sanctuary and for the work that we do for Divine Mercy. Not too long after, we received another first-class relic, that of Blessed Michael Sopocko. That, to me, just cemented the mission of the Divine Mercy and how it connects with the Holy Family and a mission for the family. As a family, we had to find a way to forgive the murderers. This can only be done by God's grace and His love and mercy, which make all things possible.

### **Tell us about the “directive” you received in prayer from the Lord.**

It was not until 2011, when I took part in a leadership training seminar in California led by Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, that I came away with a directive from the Lord. The directive arises from the Lord's words to St. Faustina found in her Diary: “I thirst. I thirst for the salvation of souls. Help Me, My daughter, to save souls” (1032).

For me, what better way to promote the Divine Mercy message but in families — particularly broken families. A lot of families do not experience forgiveness. I know in Trinidad there's a lot of incest and fathers who have left home. There's a lot of abuse within families, and some of the young people say, “Well, how can God be a merciful Father when our own fathers are not merciful?” So we try to show them that “God is merciful, and you can accept His love and mercy because He desires to lavish His graces and His mercy upon you. He's pouring it out to you, and all you have to do is come to Him and allow Him to love you.” We found that has worked a lot in people's lives.

### **What's one of the biggest graces you've received through the Sanctuary?**

Seeing so many instances in which people come into the Sanctuary broken and in need of healing and who then receive healing and conversion and keep coming back to give thanks to God.

MH

— Chris Sparks

## **IN BRIEF**

Responding to our “pray the Rosary daily” initiative launched in the Winter issue of *Marian Helper*, **Mark Haynes** of Las Vegas, Nevada, wrote to us the following beautiful comment:

My wife, Eden, suffered from ovarian cancer for over three years. She grew weak at the end, but never lost faith. We prayed the Rosary together daily. Near the end of her battle, she had enough energy only to say the “Amens” after I recited each prayer. She was in constant pain that got so bad that even morphine had little effect. But during the Rosary, there was a look of peace on her face and an obvious lessening of pain and distress. She died in her sleep with her rosary beads in her hand. Five years later, I still let Eden say the “Amens” for me.



Korean War veteran **Melvin Berthold** of Carriere, Mississippi, was so moved by the witness given in the Summer issue by fellow Korean War veteran **Francis Kennedy** that he called to share a similar story about fear and faith in battle.

In 1952-53, I was on the front line. But for me, it was the same thing as with Francis Kennedy. I got to a point where I was never afraid. I didn't know what fear was. But one morning, I woke up, and I thought I was going to die. I wasn't afraid of dying, but I was just sad because I wouldn't see my wife. I went on patrol that night — 40 degrees below zero, down in the valley, laying in the snow. I had a little Bible they give you when you come into the Army. It was 1 o'clock in the morning, and there was no way I could read it because it was so dark. But I pulled it out, and when I did, a booming voice spoke to my heart saying, “Oh ye of little faith. Why are you afraid?” And that was it. I wasn't afraid anymore.

Melvin attributes hearing this voice to the fact he had received his Confirmation just about a month before he was deployed to Korea.

# FACES OF MERCY

## HOW HAS DIVINE MERCY IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

### **Rosalie Kadelak** (with daughter Leia) Hamilton, New Jersey

My Polish neighbor didn't have any family and was dying from an infection in the hospital. Since I was in hospital ministry at my parish, I went to pray with her. Since she didn't have any family, I was the only one there. As we waited for a priest to arrive to give her the Anointing of the Sick, I realized that she was coming close to the end. Knowing she was Polish, I said to her, "Jezu ufam tobie" ("Jesus I trust in you"). Her eyes had been shut, but when I said this, they opened wide and she looked peaceful. It was almost as if she met Jesus. That same minute, she passed away. I prayed the Chaplet for her as much as I could. That was one of the most telling moments in my life of the power of the Divine Mercy message.



### **Cindy Casey** Buffalo, New York

Divine Mercy brought me to become an apostle of the Disciples of Divine Mercy in the Holy Face of Jesus. We are a lay apostolate from Buffalo, and we minister to the sick and dying. A big part of what we do is intercessory prayer. We pray for those who are sick and dying in our own chapel. We also go to visit people who are dying at their homes or at their bedside in the hospital. Even if they are unresponsive, we pray a Chaplet for them, and then we leave. It doesn't replace a priest who gives the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, but it does help the dying at their most vulnerable time.

### **John Czelusniak** Amsterdam, New York

I'm Polish, so I grew up hearing about Pope John Paul [II] and St. Faustina. Faustina's real name was Helena, my mother's name. My mother showed us the Divine Mercy Image in the mid to late 1950s. I remember seeing the picture, which was maybe 6-by-8 inches. My older sister has had it in her house ever since my mother died. I didn't have much of a relationship to it at the time, but when St. Faustina was canonized in the year 2000, I started to make the connection and thought, "Why didn't I pay attention to this when I was young?" Now I pray the Chaplet every day, if I can. I don't remember my mother explaining it; she might have, but I didn't listen. Now I can't get enough of it. Christ's message of mercy has inspired me and given me more confidence to be my true self. When I have temptations and start to do the wrong thing, I think to myself, "Why do I keep doing this?" I have often felt like a fool, kind of like St. Francis, "God's fool." But now I've learned to be proud of who I am because of Divine Mercy.



## Paul Lareau New Bedford, Massachusetts



I think I've been reading St. Faustina's *Diary* since 1989. You can't get better than having God's mercy in your life. To live the Christian life, you have to have an example to go to for courage, and St. Faustina does that for me. When we face trials or start to fall away, Divine Mercy is there

to bring you back when you lose your way.

## Maria Suchynna Buffalo, New York

Divine Mercy revealed to me the darkest parts of myself and opened me up to be purified. One time, I was in the hospital with this woman — I didn't know her, but she was dying of breast cancer. Her name was Jane, and I didn't know what to do, but I knew about the Chaplet because my grandmother always said you should pray it for those who are dying. The family had called me and asked me to spend the whole night with her. They just needed my help, so I got there at 8 p.m. I prayed the Chaplet each hour. All night she was breathing so slowly. Then, around 3 a.m., she started breathing fast. She had a blockage. The nurses started shoving a tube down her throat to clear it. She opened her eyes for the first time, and I saw raw fear in her eyes. I sat there, horrified. I wasn't into my faith very much at all at that time, but that morning I whispered to her, "Jane, you don't have to be afraid. Jesus loves you, and He wants you." So I finished my last Chaplet at 9 a.m., and she opened her eyes. She looked over at me, and I finally saw peace in her eyes. I left that morning, and her daughter called me and said that she passed away right after I left. I'm so in love with Jesus now because of Divine Mercy.

MH



## FAREWELL, FR. LARRY

Remembered for his holiness and humor, Fr. Larry Dunn, MIC, was laid to rest on May 24, at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. He was 74. Father Larry had suffered bravely for more than 10 years from myelodysplastic anemia. Shortly before his death on May 18, he shared with his Marian brothers that, many years ago, seeing so many people in the world suffering, he had asked the Lord for the grace to suffer as well.

"He understood the redemptive value of suffering, of being able to help save souls by uniting our suffering with Christ's suffering on the Cross," said Fr. Jim McCormack, MIC, the Marians' prefect of formation at the Marian Scholasticate in Washington, D.C., where Fr. Larry lived.

Suffering and spiritual poverty served as cornerstones for Fr. Larry's vocational call. He was serving in the U.S. Navy when, one day, anchored off the coast of a poor region, he was moved by the desperation of local children who would dive into shark-infested waters to retrieve coins tossed into the water by his fellow servicemen. That experience led Fr. Larry to seek to serve those in material and spiritual poverty. He owned very few things — a few books, some photographs, and a couple changes of clothing. That's the way he wanted it.

## Calling all healthcare workers

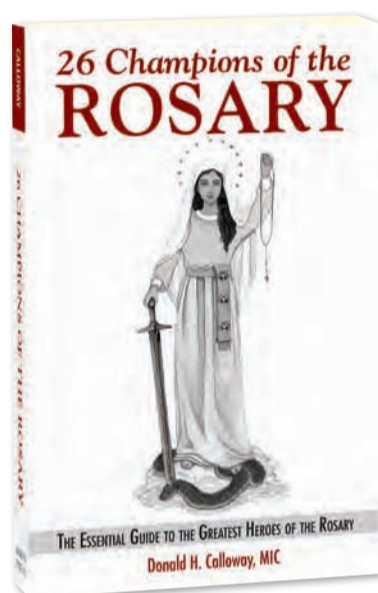
The second Cleveland Divine Mercy Medicine, Bioethics & Spirituality Conference will be held Oct. 26-27, at St. Albert the Great Church in North Royalton, Ohio. Sponsored by Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy, an apostolate of the Marians, the conference is geared to all healthcare professionals and those desiring to learn how to integrate their faith into their practice. Speakers include Fr. Seraaphim Michalenko, MIC; Fr. Kaz Chwalek, MIC; Bryan Thatcher, MD; Ronald Sobecks, MD; Dick Russ, BS; Marie Romagnano, RN; and many others.

For more information and to register, visit [TheDivineMercy.org/cleveland](http://TheDivineMercy.org/cleveland) or call 1-800-462-7426.

As we continue to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fatima, it's a good time to delve more deeply into the truth about Our Lady, the Mother of Mercy, and to pass on to our families our faith in Jesus, the Divine Mercy. Here are some resources to help you out.

## QUEEN OF HEAVEN: MARY'S BATTLE FOR SOULS DVD SET

Bringing together a range of experts, including “Fr. Joseph, MIC” (Director of the Association of Marian Helpers [Fr. Chris Alar, MIC](#)), this extraordinary DVD series introduces us to Our Lady from her eternal place in the intention of God through to her role at the end of time. Spotlighting key apparitions such as Lourdes, Fatima, and Guadalupe, the series captures the drama of salvation history and Mary’s co-starring role in it as the Mother of God and the Mother of us all. \$39.95. [B35-QUEEN](#)



## 26 CHAMPIONS OF THE ROSARY: THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE GREATEST HEROES OF THE ROSARY

By Fr. DONALD CALLOWAY, MIC

Internationally known speaker and author [Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC](#), loves Our Lady and her favorite devotion: the traditional Dominican Rosary. But he’s not the only one! Throughout the life of the Church, many men and women have become great saints and helped change the course of human history by the power of the Rosary. In *26 Champions of the Rosary* (Parts 2 and 3 from *Champions of the Rosary*), Fr. Calloway features some outstanding heroes whose trusting dependence on Our Lady and her Rosary has brought grace and divine life into the world, helping make all things new. \$11.95. [B35-26CR](#)

## HOW CAN YOU STILL BE CATHOLIC? 50 ANSWERS TO A GOOD QUESTION

By CHRISTOPHER SPARKS

Marian Press senior books editor Christopher Sparks has sought to explain how a person can still be Catholic, even in the face of 2,000 years of Church history filled with sinful human beings. He invited his Facebook friends and family to finish the sentence, “How can you still be Catholic when ... ?” and then answered the questions they shared. Ideal for religious educators to share with their students; parents and grandparents with their kids and grandkids; and for lapsed or questioning Catholics. \$14.95. [B35-BCBB](#)



## KING OF THE SHATTERED GLASS

By SUSAN BELLAVANCE

Set in Medieval times, *King of the Shattered Glass* is a wonderfully illustrated tale about orphan and scullery maid Marguerite, who accidentally — and repeatedly — breaks the King’s precious glass. When she courageously owns up to her mistakes and brings the broken shards to the King, Marguerite opens the way for the King to show her unexpected grace and beauty. Appropriate for all ages. \$12.95. [B35-GLASS](#)



# 30 YEARS AND THREE CHEERS

I recently traveled to Lithuania to participate in the celebrations for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beatification of Blessed George Matulaitis-Matulewicz (1871-1927) in Mariampole.

It was Blessed George who wrote, “Lord, let me be but a dishrag in Your Church, a rag used to wipe up messes and then thrown away into some dark corner. I want to be used up and worn out in the same way so that your house may be a little cleaner and brighter. And afterwards, let me be thrown away like a dirty, worn-out dishrag.”

Amidst a time of religious oppression, Blessed George set about to restore the Marian Congregation, which had dwindled to one man. We Marians fondly refer to Blessed George as “Father Renovator.” On June 28, 1987, at St. Peter’s Basilica, St. John Paul II raised our beloved Renovator to the honors of the altar, saying in his homily: “His only concern was always the salvation of the souls entrusted to his care.”

Every year in Mariampole, in preparation for the anniversary of his beatification, there is an octave of prayer featuring Masses and talks each day, along with other activities. Busloads of pilgrims come from all over Lithuania, and in this way, Blessed George is becoming better known there.

I arrived at the tail end of the celebrations on Friday night and concelebrated the noon Mass on Saturday with Bishop Rimantas Norvila, the local ordinary. There were many other concelebrants and many faithful who participated. That evening, a group of Polish pilgrims arrived after having walked for six days from their town of Sokolka. On the day of the anniversary, I concelebrated the principal Mass at noon along with other Marians from Lithuania and Poland. The main celebrant was the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Pedro López Quintana, who



expressed the hope that Blessed George could be canonized soon when the Lord grants a miracle through his intercession.

During the lunch that followed, Bishop Norvila shared that he had spoken to a man at the celebration that day who said that he had been sent to Mariampole 30 years before on the day of the beatification. Lithuania was part of the Soviet Union at that time. He had been sent as a KGB agent along with five other agents to observe the large crowd. But an amazing thing happened: Through the intercession of Blessed George, he was given the gift of faith that day. He returned these 30 years later as a believer to give thanks to the Lord and to Blessed George.

During the lunch, I shared with the bishops that the nuncio had met with our Marian Superior General in June. The nuncio had told the General that, while almost all churches in Lithuania have a picture of Blessed George — and many of the faithful know his name and face — they don’t really know *who* he was. The nuncio encouraged us to place a kneeler and literature before these images in order to make him better known. I asked the bishops to encourage the pastors to be open to this initiative so that this untiring apostle of Lithuania could soon be raised to the honors of the altar.

It was a powerful weekend, and I’m sure the Lord was pouring out many graces on all who attended.

I ask each of you to pray through the intercession of Blessed George for the sick and suffering. We can ask God to grant the needed miracle so the canonization might take place soon.

# ALL HEART

## WHAT WOULD THE TRIUMPH OF MARY'S IMMACULATE HEART LOOK LIKE?

By Chris Sparks

I recently was talking with a seminarian for the Melkite Catholic Church, one of the Eastern Rite Catholic Churches, who wasn't familiar with the 1917 Marian apparitions in Fatima, Portugal. So I shared the story of Fatima with him, talking especially about the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart and how our present age of history is destined to culminate in a world-changing Marian victory. At the end of our conversations, he shook my hand and said that he hadn't had hope for a while, until now.

That's what Fatima means to me, and should mean to all the Church: hope.

After all, that's why Our Lady comes to us at all — to bring hope and remedies for the problems we confront in each age, not despair in the face of evil.

That's why she came to us 100 years ago, at the Cova da Iria in Fatima, appearing to the three shepherd children Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta six times in as many months, culminating in the great Miracle of the Sun on Oct. 13. That's why she gave the children a secret in three parts — a vision of hell, a call to reparation and consecration to her Immaculate Heart, and a vision of the suffering and martyrdom to come for the Church.

She came so that we could have hope, so that we could take action, so that we would pray the Rosary daily for peace in the world, make the First Saturdays devotion in reparation to the Immaculate Heart, fulfill the duties of our state in life with love and zeal, and embrace a deeper devotion to the Immaculate Heart, setting it alongside the Sacred Heart.





Our Lady came 100 years ago, at the Cova da Iria in Fatima, appearing to the three shepherd children Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta six times in as many months, culminating in the great Miracle of the Sun on Oct. 13.

Our Lady promised us:

In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she shall be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world (July 13, 2017).

No matter how dark things seem today, we look forward to Our Lady's triumph, a victory so powerful, it will bring about an era of peace in the world.

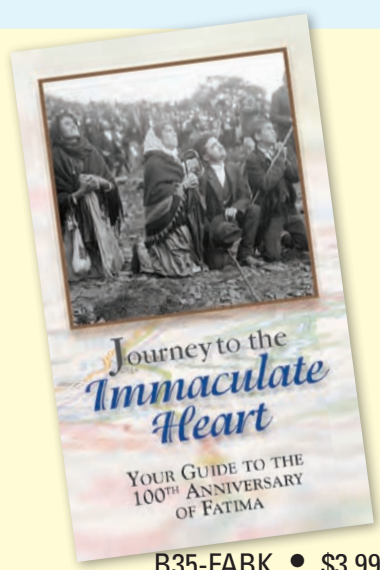
How do we know we are still looking forward to the Triumph? On May 13, 2010, the 93<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Our Lady's first apparition at Fatima, Pope Benedict XVI clearly, publicly recognized that the Triumph of the

Immaculate Heart has not yet taken place, saying:

May the seven years which separate us from the centenary of the apparitions hasten the fulfilment of the prophecy of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity.

What might that Triumph look like?

We can discern a great deal when we look at the second part of the secret of Fatima. First, even before World War I had come to an end, Our Lady specifically promised that she would come to make her requests for the First Saturdays devotion and the consecration of Russia *in order to prevent World War II.*



## **Journey to the Immaculate Heart** Your Guide for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Fatima

What was the secret of Fatima? What did Our Lady ask of us? Why do we need to respond? All this and more awaits in *Journey to the Immaculate Heart.*

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Sit with that for a moment. We could have avoided World War II.

Our Lady came to Sr. Lucia in 1925 to ask for the First Saturdays devotion, and again in 1929 to ask for the consecration of Russia. Both Jesus and Mary appeared to Sr. Lucia in the early 1930s to complain that their requests weren't being heeded. So the turning point toward the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart could have been in the early 1930s.

Consider the consequences. The Soviets only established the Iron Curtain after World War II; many of the Eastern Bloc states were still free and independent countries before the war. The stage was set for the Cold War in the wake of World War II, and if Russia had indeed been converted in the 1930s, and peace given to the world — well, many wars and persecutions of the Church could have been avoided.

But the Church did not respond in time, and so the errors of Russia spread, setting the stage for the destruction of many nations throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Saint John Paul II's 1984 consecration, whose acceptance by Heaven was confirmed by the last surviving Fatima visionary, Sr. Lucia, included the whole world, as well as "those individuals and nations which particularly need to be entrusted and consecrated" to the Immaculate Heart, because by that point, the errors of Russia had spread across the globe.

But Our Lady had promised: In the end, her Immaculate Heart would triumph. In the end, Russia would be converted, and an era of peace would be granted to the world.

Now peace, according to the Church, isn't just the absence of violence. True peace requires a rightly ordered society, and that society looks like the civilization of love described by many recent popes, a civilization born of a culture of life created by the New Evangelization. So an era of peace will be an era of faith and justice, of mercy and righteousness. The Triumph of the Immaculate Heart will likely involve the triumph of grace in many hearts, making them immaculate through the Sacraments, through the Blood and Water coming from the side of Jesus, the Divine Mercy.

The Triumph of the Immaculate Heart will probably involve the rout of the errors of Russia — atheistic Communism, yes, but also those errors that make up that one ideological system, including, but not limited to:



Visionary Sr. Lucia dos Santos confirmed that St. John Paul II's 1984 consecration of the whole world was accepted by Heaven.

- the belief that politics and economics are the most important things in the world, and are adequate to fully describe human nature and motivations;
- totalitarianism, or the belief that the state is God or can legitimately claim God-like status;
- materialism, or the belief that material reality is all there is;
- the willingness to do "anything in the name of" some good, even things such as justice, patriotism, or equality (God never calls us to do "anything in the name of" a good, but rather to do good and avoid evil, to be unwilling to commit mortal sin in order to achieve a good end);
- denying the rights and worth of the individual; and
- seeking to dissolve the family, rejecting the truth of marriage and sexuality, and embracing abortion.

In God's mercy, the Triumph could bring the end of the dominance of these errors across the world for an era of peace. At least for a time, the world could see a radical reorientation away from the post-WWII order, set on an entirely new course by the Triumph of the Heart of Mary, the woman who sang, "His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty" (Lk 1:50-53).

Perhaps any Marian triumph in the world will have these hallmarks — the lowly lifted up, and the proud cast down; the hungry filled, and the rich emptied.

So let us do our part as children of Mary and make the First Saturdays of reparation, inviting the swift Triumph of the Immaculate Heart, and praying the Rosary daily for peace in the world.

MH



# DIVINE MERCY AFTER SUICIDE

SHE STRUGGLED IN LIFE. SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE.  
BUT THERE'S STILL HOPE!

By Fr. Chris Alar, MIC

**E**very one of us has known someone who took his or her own life, or someone whose life was affected by the suicide of a loved one. It's so difficult to face this reality, and often people despair. Many give up hope for those who have committed suicide and believe their souls are lost.

But now I never give up. Instead, I pray. Let me tell you why:



Mary Alar is remembered for her free spirit and love for her family.

I'm an engineer by degree. I got my MBA from the University of Michigan and worked as an engineering manager in the tough auto industry of Detroit. I made great money, enjoyed the work, and loved the area. On paper, God had given me everything a young man could desire; yet, it seemed as if something was missing.

I decided to move to the Charlotte area of North Carolina and start my own business. It quickly became very successful. I had a house, a boat, and planned to marry a beautiful young lady from the local area. But something was still missing.

Being a "cradle Catholic," but not one who was really practicing my faith, I decided to start going to Mass again. I discovered a church in North Carolina that I still call home: St. Mark's in Huntersville. It used to jokingly be called "Our Lady of the Lanes," because it began with 12 families in a bowling alley. It grew to over 15,000 people in six short years. I started going to Adoration there and ended up doing something I would recommend to all of you: I made a general Confession.

In a general Confession, you mentally walk through your life, confessing your sins as you go.

My general Confession helped me tremendously as I recalled sins from grade school up through my professional career. I began to feel these burdens lifted off my shoulders.

So, while I was confessing my life's sins in 2003, I got to the year 1993. I told the priest, "What happened in 1993 still bothers me. It was my grandmother's death."

## My grandmother's suicide

My grandmother, Mary Alar, was a special lady. My

father told many stories about her, including how her family removed her from school in the sixth grade so she could work as a maid to help support them. Then, two days before her wedding day, her fiancé was killed in an auto accident. Later, she met my grandfather, but her life was still quite difficult. By 1993, she was suffering greatly — emotionally, spiritually, and physically. It became unbearable for her. At the time, I was finishing college and didn't even know how much pain my grandmother was enduring. In a shock to me, my grandmother committed suicide on Father's Day.

I didn't realize how much of a knucklehead I was at the time. Ten years later, I told my confessor that I was not "there for her" — even at the funeral. I mean, I was there physically, but not emotionally or spiritually. I was so concerned about my degree, my job, my new home, and my girlfriend, that I don't even remember praying for her.

I told him that this bothered me, because my grandmother had already been judged by God, and I missed my opportunity to pray for her and help her. What I really feared most arose from something I'd heard long ago about the Church teaching that if you commit suicide, you automatically go to hell.

Then the priest did something that changed my life. He said, "Go home tonight and pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for the salvation of your grandmother's soul. This is an incredibly powerful prayer." I had never heard of the Chaplet. I said, "Huh? Father, she's already been judged, so it's too late. She died 10 years ago! She's in Heaven (I hope) or hell (I hope not). At best, my prayers might relieve some of her time in Purgatory, if



She is shown above with her husband, Joseph, and with her daughter-in-law, Rosalie, and grandchildren: the future Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, and his sister, Pam.

she even made it that far, but her eternal fate has already been determined. There is nothing that can be done about that now.”

He said, “Look, God is outside of time. There is no past or future for God, but only one big eternal present moment. God sees everything at one instant. From the beginning of time to the end of the world, He sees it all instantaneously without compromising our free will. How do you think that the Virgin Mary was immaculately conceived?” I said, “By the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.” He said, “Yes, but how could Mary be immaculately conceived by these merits when Jesus hadn’t even been born yet? Because God is outside of time. Your prayers are eternal, and the graces given by God from those prayers, because He is not constrained by space or time, can go in any direction: past, present, or future. Christ’s sacrifice is eternally present before the Father, and so are our prayers if we unite them to the Cross of Christ.”

I sat there shaking my head, saying, “Wow, Father, this is amazing.” But I still wasn’t totally getting it. It sounded too good to be true. He continued, “Think of it this way, Chris. God knew back in 1993 that you would be here today, in 2003, and tonight you would pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for your grandmother’s soul. And since God is so merciful, so loving, He will put those prayers into the hands of Mary, the Mediatrix of All Graces, and He will allow those prayers from today to be carried back in Mary’s hands and showered over your grandmother’s soul back in 1993, at the moment of her judgment, to help her.”

He continued, “You see, suicide is a grave sin, and she will need all the help she can get. So with God’s grace, through your prayers, she may be better able to say ‘yes’ to God.” (That is why John Paul II called each of us “mini co-redeemers” — because we can share in Christ’s act of redemption.)

The priest added, “In the *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, she records that Jesus visited the despairing soul three times to save it from hell (*Diary*, 1486), so we can infer that the souls of our loved ones have the chance to repent, say ‘yes’ to Him, and be saved.”

I said, “Father, we’re good here then, because there’s no way my grandmother will not say ‘yes’ to Jesus when she sees Him. This is awesome! Thank you, Father. Have a great day.”

### Blinded by sin

He stopped me: “Hold on — there’s a problem. You said she had fallen away from the Church. Do you know if she received the Sacraments?”

“I don’t know,” I replied.

“The problem,” he said, “is your grandmother, for whatever reason, may have turned her back on God. If this is the case, she may not recognize Jesus when He comes.”

“Oh, man,” I said. “I thought all was good, but now I am worried that she could be lost because she might not recognize Jesus, and therefore be unable to say ‘yes’ to Him!”

“You didn’t let me finish,” he said. “She may not recognize Him *without* your prayers. But *with* your prayers, she will be given more grace through intercessory prayer allowed by the mercy of God. That is why Mary said at



After a priest explained to him the power of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy back in 2003, the future Fr. Joseph, MIC (Chris Alar), vowed he would do everything he could to spread the message of Divine Mercy. He was ordained to the priesthood in 2014.

Fatima that there are many souls lost to hell ... because there is nobody to pray for them! Your prayers are like a squadron of dive bombers coming in from 2003, to aid in the war being fought for her soul back in 1993. They are coming in on the hands of Mary, back to your grandmother during her personal judgment (again, because God is outside of time). The graces from these Chaplets you pray for her may be enough grace for her to turn around and say ‘yes’ to God when otherwise she wouldn’t be able to.”

The priest went on, “What happens when we sin and turn our backs on God? We put a veil between God and ourselves, blurring our vision of Him. But your prayers can help to lift that veil so that your grandmother may see God more clearly, and she has a much better chance of recognizing God for who He is. But remember, she has to say ‘yes’ — you cannot say ‘yes’ for her. But you can certainly help. This is the whole point of intercessory prayer.”

My confessor continued, “Your grandmother is like a wounded soldier who cannot help herself as she lies on the battlefield, in danger of death. Your prayers come in like a fellow soldier, putting her on your shoulders, and taking her to safety. Now, she still has to cooperate and let you assist her, and she needs to have the will to live. That choice is hers. But your prayers, Chris, can offer her the help at the moment of her judgment to determine if she survives or not — meaning salvation.”

I said, “Father, this is absolutely amazing.”

## Hope for those who’ve committed suicide

I said, “I heard that the Church says that those who commit suicide are condemned to hell and lost forever.” He said, “The Church doesn’t teach that.” What does the

Church say about suicide? The *Catechism* tells us:

Grave psychological disturbances, anguish, or grave fear of hardship, suffering, or torture can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide. **We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives.**

By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives (2282-2283; emphasis added).

“So there is hope!” the priest said. “The Church says that we entrust these people to the mercy of God. So your prayers even now, 10 years later, can make a difference. And the Chaplet of Divine Mercy is one of the most powerful prayers you can offer for someone in dire need of God’s mercy.”

We then talked about a relative who had died after 20 years in which we all prayed for a conversion — and this person never converted, never came back to the Church. I told the priest that my dad said, “Well, there’s 20 years of prayer wasted.”

Is that true? No! Again, he referenced St. Faustina’s *Diary*, and this added the final straw to the proverbial camel’s back that was my former life. I was now changed forever.

Saint Faustina wrote:

God’s mercy sometimes touches the sinner at the last moment in a wondrous and mysterious way. Outwardly it seems as if everything were lost. [This is what it looked like for my grandmother.] But it is not so. The soul illuminated by a ray of God’s powerful final grace turns to God in the last

moment with such a power of love that, in an instant, it receives from God forgiveness of sin and punishment, while outwardly it shows no sign either of repentance or of contrition, because souls [at that stage] no longer react to external things. Oh, how beyond comprehension is God's mercy! ... Although a person is at the point of death, the merciful God gives the soul that interior vivid moment, so that if the soul is willing, it has the possibility of returning to God (*Diary*, 1698).

### Share God's Mercy

I broke down in disbelief. I said, "Father, we have a God so merciful, so loving, so generous, that He will allow my grandma this chance for salvation? And He will allow me to still help her even though I missed my chance so many years ago?"

He said, "Yes, this is the power of the Chaplet, even for those who have taken their own life or who have died years ago."

**He made it clear that a soul cannot be removed from hell — this is Church teaching.** What he was saying, however, is that as part of the Mystical Body of Christ, we can aid in each other's salvation through our prayers. As Jesus told St. Faustina, "Help Me, My daughter, to save souls. Join your sufferings to My Passion and offer them to the heavenly Father for sinners" (*Diary*, 1032).

I said, "Father, I need to spend the rest of my life



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spreading this message of God's Divine Mercy."

Now, this message is the foundation of my priesthood.

So, if you have ever known someone who appeared to be a lost soul, especially those who committed suicide, don't give up! There is hope! You can help, and this is all possible because we are members of the Body of Christ.

### Pray for the dead!

Therefore, I ask you all to pray for your loved ones who have died, even if they've died 10, 20, or 50 years ago. We should never conclude that a soul is definitely lost. As Jesus said to St. Faustina, "There are moments and there are mysteries of the divine mercy over which the heavens are astounded. Let our judgment of souls cease, for God's mercy upon them is extraordinary" (*Diary*, 1684).

Jesus, I trust in You!

MH

*Note: Ordinarily we pray for people and events that occur in the present moment. However, God may desire that in particular cases we pray for somebody or something in the past — things that pertain directly to us, like family members or loved ones. The Lord entrusts certain things to us to pray for, but perhaps not all things, such as world events that happened centuries ago.*

Father Chris Alar, MIC, is the current "Fr. Joseph, MIC," the honorary title given to the director of the Association of Marian Helpers.



# Help souls to Heaven

## Join the Holy Souls Sodality

When you join for the year or make a commitment to a monthly offering, you will receive a Holy Souls Rosary and the "For Heaven's Sake" newsletter.



**To sign up: Visit [marian.org/b35](http://marian.org/b35) • Call 1-800-462-7426.**

# SET THE CAPTIVES FREE

By Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC



I was fortunate to grow up mindful of the reality of Purgatory. When I was very young, about 5, I remember going to church with my grandmother. We would light candles and pray for deceased relatives. One time when she was allowing me to light the candles, I felt the heat of the flames on my arm and pulled it back quickly.

“Ooo, that’s very hot!” I exclaimed.

It was a teachable moment. She informed me that the souls in Purgatory suffer a similar discomfort, but are unable to pull away like I had. She said we have an obligation in charity to relieve their suffering through prayers and making sacrifices.

A month or two later, I was awoken in the night by a knocking sound and someone calling my name. I assumed it was my grandmother. I went to her bedside, woke her up, and asked her, “Did you try to wake me?” She said, “No, it’s probably just the souls in Purgatory. Go to your room, say three Hail Marys for the repose of their souls, and they won’t bother you anymore.” It was an experience that has repeated itself in my life many times.

November is the month of remembrance for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. The basis for this special month is that many souls, on departing from the body, are not perfectly cleansed from venial sins or have not fully atoned for past wrongdoing. They “are debarred from the Beatific Vision,” as the *Catholic Encyclopedia* puts it — that is, they are kept from Heaven, until their souls become purified in Purgatory.

Where do we get our basis for the reality of Purgatory? For one, in the Gospel of St. Luke (16:19-31) Jesus gives us the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Upon their death, the rich man goes to a place of eternal suffering while Lazarus, the poor man, goes to the bosom of Abraham. Remember, Christ is telling the story, so He hasn’t yet died and risen from the dead; therefore it would be impossible for Lazarus and Abraham to be in Heaven itself because Christ had not yet opened the gate of Heaven by His redemptive act. So as Christians, we believe that the bosom of Abraham and souls like Lazarus were all in that antechamber of eternal glory — Purgatory.

In our age, God seems intent on reminding us of the reality of Purgatory. In Fatima, in 1917, Our Lady tells the children about the fate of two young women who had died. One of the women was in Heaven, The second was in Purgatory.

God has given us a graphic account of Purgatory through St. Faustina, who wrote in her *Diary*:

In a moment I was in a misty place full of fire in which there was a great crowd of suffering souls. They were praying fervently, but to no avail, for themselves; only we can come to their aid. I asked these souls what their greatest suffering was. They answered me in one voice that their greatest torment was longing for God (20).

At another point, St. Faustina wrote:

One night, a sister who had died two months previ-



ously came to me. I saw her in a terrible condition. I redoubled my prayers for her. ... The next night she came again, but I saw her in an even more horrible state, in the midst of flames which were even more intense, and despair was written all over her face. ... Despite this, I kept on praying.

After some time she came back again to me during the night, but already her appearance had changed. There were no longer any flames, as there had been before, and her face was radiant, her eyes beaming with joy. She told me that I had a true love for my neighbor and that many other souls had profited from my prayers. She urged me not to cease praying for the souls in purgatory, and she added that she herself would not remain there much longer (58).

You see, prayers work!

For the Marian Fathers, a key figure we turn to is our own St. Stanislaus Papczynski (1631-1701), Founder of our Congregation, who made devotion to the souls in Purgatory one of our charisms. In one account, during a gathering of family, friends, and religious, St. Stanislaus had a profound mystical experience of Purgatory. He later told his confreres: “Pray, brethren, for the souls in Purgatory, for they suffer unbearably.” He then locked himself in his cell and spent three days praying for them.

Indeed, without our attention to their plight, the souls in Purgatory are like the infirm in a hospital or nursing home who are without the care of an attentive

nurse. They are like shut-ins waiting for a Eucharistic minister to bring them the Bread of Life.

Seven years ago, I was tasked to revitalize the Marians’ Holy Souls Sodality in order to promote devotion for the souls in Purgatory. Thousands of Marian Helpers have since joined. I discovered that there were a lot of people who had a hunger for education in this particular aspect of our faith. They have loved ones — spouses, children, and friends — who have died and for whom they still have an abiding love, but they didn’t know what they could do for them.

In the Sodality, we stress that Purgatory is not primarily a form of punishment. On the contrary, Purgatory is an example of God’s enduring mercy for us — that He gives us still one more opportunity to prepare ourselves, to perfect ourselves, for His Heavenly glory.

The souls in Purgatory need us. Through our prayers and sacrifices, we help set them free from those human failings that block their path to the eternal joy of paradise.

*In this spirit, see the [marian.org/b35](http://marian.org/b35) to join the Marians in our November remembrance.*

*Father Dan Cambra, MIC, is the author of the new Marian Press title Prayers and Practices For the Souls in Purgatory (Product code: B35-PRBK). He will host the Seventh Annual Mercy for Souls Conference on Sept. 10, at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. Visit [PrayForSouls.org/conference](http://PrayForSouls.org/conference) or call (413) 298-1382 for more information and to register.*

MH



Sherry Zimmerman writes a letter to an inmate. On the desk are gifts she has received from inmates.

# SHE ANSWERS CHRIST'S CALL — to the letter

By Melanie Williams

**S**herry Zimmerman, 76, lives on a five-acre ranch in Sierra Vista, Arizona. She spends her days doing various chores, caring for several 1,200-pound steer, a donkey, two goats, and 12 chickens — and, following Jesus' command that we engage in deeds of mercy, she ministers to inmates.

Twice a month on Sundays, she visits a local jail with a group from her parish to give a Communion service. The inmates are invited to read the Scriptures, and Sherry gives a reflection. What she stresses most is the very thing the inmates struggle with the most: forgiveness — of others, but mostly of themselves.

She's known to many of the inmates as "Nanna Sherry."

"They are always beating themselves up about what they did in the past," she said, "but I try to explain to

them that if God can forgive them, then they need to forgive themselves. There is an ocean of mercy for them, and the greater the sinner, the greater the right he or she has to His mercy" (see *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, 723).

She said, "It's amazing when you see their faces when the light bulb finally goes on, and they say, 'Oh my gosh, He does forgive me.' You see a great peace come over them, and that is exactly what my ministry is for."

Yearning to do more for those in jail, Sherry started going to court twice a week to attend sentencing hearings. She's a pen pal to 18 inmates.

"It's a retreat every time I receive a letter from them," she said. "They evangelize me with their meditations on the Bible and God's mercy!"

James is one of the inmates with whom Sherry cor-

responds. Abandoned as a child, he's serving a life term for killing a man who he says sexually abused him. Sherry shared with him her self-published book, which chronicles her conversion to the Catholic faith after having dabbled in New Age practices and then becoming a sidewalk counselor outside an abortion mill.

Soon after receiving Sherry's book, James started hearing voices through the air vents coming from two inmates also in lockdown. As James read Sherry's book, he started sharing and evangelizing through the air vents. Before she knew it, Robert and Octavio, the men next to James' cell, were writing "Nanna Sherry," too.

Robert wrote to Nanna Sherry:

There was a time in my life when I didn't have a heart. I had no peace in my life, and no joy. I never smiled. Every day that I woke up in prison I was in torment. I felt like a man trapped alive in a tomb. But thank God, I've been saved and resurrected from that tomb, and freed from that prison of hatred that kept me bound for so many years. Now when I get up in the morning, I always have a smile on my face and peace and joy in my heart which consumes me like a fire. ... I do know and understand that there is no prison so secure, no walls so high, no pit so deep, no soul so lost, and no heart so cold, that God's love cannot penetrate. ...

Octavio wrote:

My dad left when I was 6 and my mom worked hard just to keep a roof over our head and food on the table. By age 13 all I knew was the street. I smoked, did drugs, and drank alcohol all by 14 years old. After a crime, I was sent to prison for five years. After I was released, I met my wife and had a child. I started going to church, and it was good for me, until I fell back into alcohol and drugs. The devil had a very strong hold on me. My wife and I split up, and I moved away.

The day after my grandmother died, I decided to drink with a friend to heal my broken heart. In this state, I decided to drive my truck. I had a terrible accident. The other car had four passengers: two parents, a child, and her grandmother. The parents passed away, the grandmother was seriously injured, and the child was paralyzed. I was seriously injured as well and my family was told I would not make it. Somehow I did, and when I woke up I was told the news of the other passengers. All I can remember is yelling out why it couldn't have been me instead of them. For days and months I

have prayed for God's forgiveness and the family's.

On the day of my sentencing I begged everyone's forgiveness and cried when I saw the child in her wheelchair. I thought people like me had no hope. I was sentenced to 18 years in prison, and I wondered how I could live my life without forgiveness from everyone involved. ... When I got to my cell, I prayed for a miracle. I left my cell

to call my wife, and when she answered she immediately said, "You are not going to believe what happened after court — the little girl in the wheelchair asked me to tell my husband that she forgives him." The little girl was four years old and her name was Esperanza, which means "hope." That was God answering my prayers. ... I want everyone to know that no matter what the situation, salvation is for everyone, no matter what you have done in your past.

Sherry focuses most of her time on her jail ministry. She also spends a lot of her own money to print prayer-cards for the inmates and has them blessed by a priest.

"It's the most unbelievable ministry," she said. "When I walk in, I am so excited to be there. Some of them just look at me because they can't believe I'm not judging them, but I never ask them what they did. Even if I do find out somehow what they've done, I still pray for the grace to not judge them, because 'but for the grace of God, there go I.'"

MH



Sherry, with some of her fellow parishioners who participate in the jail ministry. From left, Margarita Fate, Pat Del Vecchio, Sherry, Deacon Gene Tackett, Mary Tackett, and Deacon Reynaldo Romo.

# HOW TO RIDE THE STORM

Stepping on the  
Serpent: The Journey  
of Trust with Mary



Trust: This Has Been  
My Journey



The following is an excerpt from the debut book by Fr. Thaddaeus Lancton, MIC, Stepping on the Serpent: The Journey of Trust with Mary (Marian Press):

Let us imagine for a moment that we are in that boat on the Sea of Galilee. The waves are crashing over the sides, bringing in the water that could eventually sink it (see Mk 4:37). The apostles are terrified for their lives. They wake the Lord, who is peacefully sleeping during the storm. The contrast between the apostles and the Lord could not have been greater! The apostles were filled with terror and fear in the face of possible death, while the Lord was sleeping peacefully. The Lord could sleep through the storm because He trusted in the Father.

Trust during storms is a fruit of persevering prayer, and prayer is the only appropriate response to any storm. In the face of His Passion, the Lord resorted to prolonged prayer to gain the strength necessary to face that tempest: “My daughter, consider these words: ‘And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly’” (Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, 157). Earnest prayer is necessary because it sets our gaze upon Jesus, the Face of

the Father, and immerses us, not in the waters of doubt, but in the unfathomable ocean of His Mercy — the Holy Spirit — who opens our hearts to trust, even in the most difficult of situations. If we trust our senses during the storm, we will have reason to despair instead of reason to hope. We will only see the lightning, the thunder, the peril, and the suffering (see Mt 14:30). Our reason for hope, Jesus Christ, is not something we can see with our eyes (see 1 Tim 1:1); it is spiritual and only seen by faith.

The response of our Lord in the face of such a storm was not to frantically try His best to control it by human efforts. The apostles’ human efforts were failing, so they became even more terrified of dying, but the Lord remained calm, trusting in the merciful Father, knowing that everything that happens is in accord with His Providence. That is why He could sleep in the boat and trust in the Father so completely that He could endure the sleep of death in peace. We are saved by Jesus’ sleep, by the entrustment of Himself to the Father, even unto death upon the Cross. As the Psalmist prays: “I lie down and sleep; I wake again, for the Lord sustains me” (Ps 3:5). In the Resurrection, the Father awakens Jesus from



the sleep of death by the Holy Spirit, just as during difficulties and storms, we are called to “sleep,” let go of control, and patiently wait until the Father intervenes. We are called to “rest” in the truth that our good Father orders all things for our good. Even storms are used by the Father to help us grow! The storms, and all of the serpent’s attacks, serve our spiritual growth so that we can share once again in the divine life.

It has been said that the goal of the captain is not to keep the ship safe, but to reach the harbor — Heaven.

Jesus was the one who told the disciples to cross the Sea of Galilee (see Mk 4:35) and their voyage represents our own passage from the shore of this life to the shores of eternal life. Often during storms we want to turn back and return to the harbor and safety of our routines and normal lives, but we are called to make our pilgrimage to Heaven. Jesus directs us to make our journey in the boat of the Church, but even in the Church we can expect storms. As Pope Benedict XVI stated: “The ways of the Lord are not easy, but we were not created for an easy life, but for great things, for goodness.” We were created to weather the storms and conquer them by trust in the Father. His Providence does not stop or prevent the storms, but sees us through them. If we are aware of our royal dignity, that we are created in His image and likeness, we will be able to say with St. Faustina: “I am going forward through life amidst rainbows and storms, but with my head held high with pride, for I am a royal child. I feel that the blood of Jesus is circulating in my veins, and I have put my trust in the great mercy of the Lord” (*Diary*, 992).

If we are to reach our destination — Heaven — we must pass through the sea, the symbol of evil. Upon that sea, the serpent will attempt to bring about every possible kind of storm to prevent us from safely reaching the harbor. He will try time and again, hoping that eventually we will tire out and shipwreck. But we are on our voyage in the boat of the Church — the true ark of Noah — upon the sea of this world, traveling toward the shores

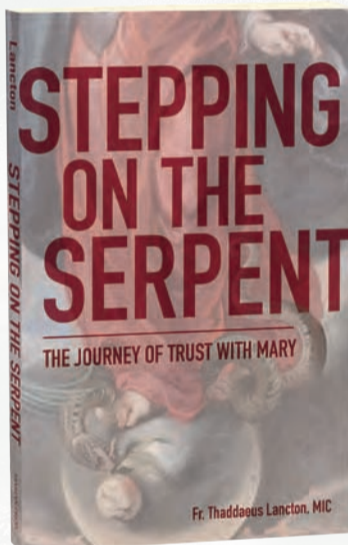
of Heaven. Jesus has promised that this boat will never fail nor sink and that we have only to remain in her, for her course is always directed by the Holy Spirit to Jesus our Lord (cf. Mt 16:18). Unfortunately, many abandon the ship of the Church because of the storms she must endure — and many abandon the Church because of those on the boat. We must not give in to Satan’s temptation to leave the Church. This is exactly what the serpent wants, for he knows that outside this boat, the storm will overwhelm us and prevent us from safely

reaching harbor. Alone, we will drown, but in the boat of the Church, we will survive. As St. Boniface once wrote, “In her voyage across the ocean of this world, the Church is like a great ship being pounded by the waves of life’s different stresses. Our duty is not to abandon ship but to keep her on her course.” Jesus is always present in the Church, although it can often seem that He is asleep and that He does not care that we are perishing. But, are we truly perishing? What exactly are we perishing from?

The disciples were indeed perishing, but not because the storm was too strong. They were in the boat with the Lord, who by His command calmed the storm. Their lack of faith allowed them to think that the storm would destroy them. They feared that

the Lord had forgotten about them or was incapable of helping them. The real problem in the story was not the storm, but their lack of faith. So often in our own lives, we complain about the storms as if they are the real problem, but this is not true. The storms are never the problem. The real problem is our unwillingness to step out in faith like St. Peter. Even though St. Peter fell because of his doubt, we ought to imitate him because he dared to take steps toward Jesus. We will probably fall through doubt also — not once, but many times — just like children learning to walk. If we do fall, Mary will be watching over us and Jesus will lift us up out of the waters. We must not give in to the fear that would prevent us from even getting out of the boat.

MH



To order *Stepping on the Serpent: The Journey of Trust with Mary*, visit [ShopMercy.org/b35](http://ShopMercy.org/b35) or call 1-800-462-7426. Product code: B35-JBK



MARIE ROMAGNANO

Juan Arroyo, Seamus Kettner, Mark Fanders, and Stephen Camara kneel before Fr. Joseph Roesch, MIC, the Marians' vicar general, before professing vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience on Aug. 15.

# CONTINUED BLESSINGS

## Four men profess their first vows

In yet another sign of God's continued blessings upon the Marian Fathers, four men professed their first vows on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Aug. 15, at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy.

The four are among a total of 34 men in formation here in the United States. That's 34 men seeking to serve Christ and His Church through a vocation with the Marian Fathers.

"There's a sense that Our Lady is using our Congregation in a powerful way," said Fr. Jim McCormack, MIC, prefect of formation of the Marian Fathers in the United States. "The fact that we have so many vocations is a sign of God's mercy, that He is choosing us to do something special through His mercy."

Before a packed crowd of family, friends, and fellow Marians, the four men — Juan Arroyo, Stephen Camara, Mark Fanders, and Shea "Seamus" Kettner — professed the one-year vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience

"for the glory of God and the honor of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints."

With the vows, they became Br. Juan, Br. Stephen, Br. Mark, and Br. Seamus, with the suffix "MIC" indicating their membership in the community. They were presented with the blue scapular of Our Lady, which serves as a sign of honoring and imitating Mary, an invitation for the wearer "to give Christ ... your undivided service in the Church." They now wear the white, ecclesial collar.

The evening before, the Marian Fathers also welcomed eight men into the community as novices.

"All of our men would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to all of our Marian Helpers who financially and spiritually support them as they prepare for the priesthood or permanent brotherhood," said Fr. Jim.

The men in formation are studying philosophy and theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville and the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. MH

**G**rowing up in Anaheim, California, I experienced at an early age the separation of my parents and a lot of domestic violence. In my teens, my closest friends were affiliated with gangs. Jail time was the norm for us, like an initiation into manhood.

It was not until the tenth grade that I was freed from this way of thinking. My teacher, Mr. Robinson, told us, “I’m already 50 years old, and I’ve never been in jail.” I thought to myself, “What? No way. How can that be?” I was inspired. I wanted to be like him. His words empowered me to stay in school.

In my early 20s, I lived to party — the club scene, desert raves, bar hopping. I joined rock bands. I didn’t believe in God. I wanted nothing to do with Jesus. That all changed when, one night, asleep in bed, I sensed a dark figure standing over me. It paralyzed me. A second time, I saw the dark figure going towards my younger brother, and it did the same to him. Scared, I went and grabbed the Crucifix off the wall and slept holding on to it. That was the first time I prayed to God. That was the first time I was made aware that the devil is real.

In 2002, when I was 32, I decided to enter the RCIA program. After cohabiting for five years with a woman, I moved out so that I could live a faithful Catholic life and be able to receive the Sacraments. The date was March 6, 2003. That very night, I received my calling to the priesthood through a dream I had that included Pope St. John Paul II, although I didn’t know who he was at the time.



Five weeks later, on April 9, 2003, I went to sleep scared, because I was going to make my first Confession the following day. That night, in a dream, a nun came to me. I didn’t know who she was. Then I woke up and I looked at the clock — it was 3 a.m. Months later, while in line for Confession, I saw a painting on the wall of a nun, and I recognized her as the nun from my dream. Turns out it was St. Faustina. I went on and received my Sacraments and had a radical conversion.

Still, for 10 years I had a tug-of-war with the Lord about being a priest. He closed every opportunity for me to date anyone. Then I was laid off from my job of 16 years. On May 13, 2010, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima, I woke up with the priesthood on

my mind. I told the Blessed Mother in prayer that I had had enough, to tell God to leave me alone regarding this priesthood idea. I didn’t have a job, and I was in financial debt. After I returned from Mass that day, I was offered a job. That was a confirmation from Our Lady that she was with me. If that still wasn’t enough, Fr. Angelo Casimiro, MIC — he’d been a friend since before he entered the Marians — came home to visit, and he encouraged me to visit the Marians.

I entered the Marian Congregation on Jan. 7, 2014. This August, I renewed my vows.

As I reflect over this journey, I’m convinced that Our Blessed Mother has always been there for me. I am very honored and grateful to be able to do God’s will as a Marian.

## Steubenville construction update

Last year, thanks to the generosity of many of our Marian Helpers, the Marians purchased a former elementary school from the city of Steubenville, Ohio, and are now in the process of converting it into a 40-bedroom religious house.

If all goes well, the Marians should be able to inhabit the building by the end of the year. The chapel and offices

have yet to be designed and will be constructed at a later time.

“We are grateful for all of our Marian Helpers who have helped us, financially and spiritually, with this project,” said Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, the Marians’ vocations director. “Please continue to keep this project in your prayers, especially as we have many men joining our community every fall. They are all excited to come and study for the religious life.”



Peggy Lengemann (center) shortly before she died, surrounded by loved ones, including Mary Zogg (back, right).

# WOULDN'T CHANGE A THING

By Mary Zogg

A few days after Christmas 2015, we found out my sister-in-law, Peggy Lengemann of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, had Stage 4 colon cancer. It had spread to her neck and hip and was causing her tremendous pain. After several radiation treatments, her pain was under control, but the cancer had progressed to various parts of her body and required several rounds of chemotherapy throughout the following year.

Her suffering affected our whole family. She was not only my sister-in-law; she was also godmother to my youngest daughter, a second mother to my children, and she was my neighbor and best friend. Because of her faith, Peggy was always upbeat and positive, constantly looking for ways to serve others and grow in her relationship with God. She and her husband, Dan, were a mentor couple for engaged couples. She sang and played flute at Mass. She helped with music at Vacation Bible School. She had an active prayer life, studied her faith, and loved receiving the Eucharist.

My mother-in-law was ever present to give Peggy a hand while she went through radiation, and together they began praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 p.m. each day. Throughout all of her suffering, Peggy continued to pray, "Jesus, I trust in You!" When anyone asked Peggy how she was doing, she always replied with a huge smile,

"I'm doing great!" She believed she would kick cancer, but she also always wanted to do the will of God.

As time went on, her treatments kept changing because they were no longer effective. Finally, in March 2016, her doctor told her nothing more could be done. He turned her over to hospice. She and I cried together for quite a while. She spoke mostly about how sorry she felt for Dan, who would soon be a single parent to three children, aged 20, 17, and 14. She was also sad that she would not be here to see their children grow up.

Then Peggy said to me, "I don't understand what God is doing, but if this is His will, I would not change it if I could." She wanted to stay at home as long as she could, and she asked me if I would help take care of her while Dan was at work. I had already cleared my schedule.

Later that day, I notified my book club that Peggy was beginning hospice. They immediately jumped into action, including praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet each day at 3 p.m. for Peggy. My friend Kendall brought over a large canvas Divine Mercy Image for Peggy. Several book club members came and prayed the Chaplet outside of Peggy's house (they didn't want to bother her). When Peggy found out they were there, she welcomed them in so we could all pray the Chaplet together.

When Peggy's siblings heard she was starting hos-

pice, they made haste to visit that weekend. This might seem normal, but Peggy has five siblings who, aside from my husband, all live three to 12 hours away. I could see the hand of God in all of this. We set a chair next to Peggy so that each person could have some one-on-one time with her. Peggy smiled the whole time, so full of joy, while those talking to her were, at times, in tears.

On Saturday, we all went to Mass at 5 p.m., but Peggy was too weak to go with us. She cried because she could not go to Mass and receive Jesus. My husband, Scott, brought her Communion after Mass, and she was so thankful. It was an incredibly grace-filled weekend.

Peggy's strength declined rapidly after the weekend. On Tuesday, she had to be transferred to the hospice house. Wednesday she had several of her family members by her side. At around 2:45 p.m., I needed to leave to pick up her youngest son from high school. When I returned, I saw a drastic change in Peggy's appearance. I realized we needed to say the Chaplet. It was the 3 o'clock hour, the Hour of Great Mercy when Christ calls us to honor His death on the Cross. I just had a feeling that Peggy's death was imminent.

Jesus tells us through St. Faustina:

As often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it. ... In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world — mercy triumphed over justice (*Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, 1572).

I grabbed my rosary beads and knelt down next to Peggy. I said to her, "Peggy, you are walking your passion. You are carrying your cross, and Jesus is right there with you. We are going to say the Divine Mercy Chaplet."

As we were on the last few beads, her breaths came more slowly. Upon finishing the Chaplet, I said, "Fly to Jesus, Peggy." In that moment, I could feel His presence taking her away. It was a beautiful moment. My feelings can be summed up in Peggy's words from barely a week before: "I would not change it if I could."

God said "no" to all of our requests for a miracle to restore Peggy's health. After witnessing her death, I know He had something much better planned for her.

Peggy turned 50 on March 16. She entered eternal rest on April 5. Jesus, I trust in You!

MH

## 'THE MOST IMPORTANT THING'

*The following is a letter Peggy Lengemann wrote specifically to be read at her funeral:*

Welcome family, friends, and all my prayer warriors! Thank you for coming today, and thank you for all your prayers, love, and support during this journey. If you are reading this, it means that I am dead.

Bummer!

OK, not really a bummer — I have just moved on to the final leg of a person's life: eternity. Please continue to pray for me in hopes that I am lucky enough to make it to Purgatory. And please continue to pray for my husband, children, and Mom. They are going to need some extra love and care.

The one thing I learned from this journey is that life is uncertain and life is short, which means that one needs to focus on the most important thing in life, which is loving God with all your strength, might, and soul. So how do you do this?

**Step 1: Attend weekly Mass.** Not only is it important to be a part of a Church community, but one must also become involved and serve in that community. Don't just wait to be served — but serve others as well.

**Step 2: Prayer** — Very important to take times from our day and talk to God. How do you have a relationship with God if you don't talk to Him? Reading the Bible is good.

And the Rosary and Divine Mercy [Chaplet] are powerful prayers. Also, just sitting and listening and asking God what He wills for you to do is great.

**Step 3: Reconciliation** — Keep reevaluating our relationship with God and our shortcomings so we can do better in the future.

**Step 4: Study** — There are so many wonderful books out there to read about the Church, saints, etc. If you need guidance at where to start, ask your parish priest or deacon.

Putting God first in your life is the most important thing you can do. Nothing else in your life matters if God is not first. No accomplishment, no plaque on your wall — nothing matters. If something or someone prohibits you from placing God first in your life, remove it.

I promise to spend my eternity working to get my family and friends into Heaven. But I need your help. Don't try to settle for "good enough." You need to love God with all your heart, strength, and soul and place Him first in your life.

I LOVE you all dearly and miss you all so much! Thanks for traveling this journey of life with me! I have not left you, but will be by your side and helping you along your life's travels.

MH



# MOVEMENT ON MEDJUGORJE

The Church may be coming closer to a decision on the alleged apparitions at Medjugorje, a decision that looks a lot like an earlier decision at another site of reported apparitions: Kibeho, Rwanda, where the Marian Fathers have long ministered. At Kibeho, the Church has approved a limited set of reported apparitions given to certain visionaries, even though many other miracles and apparitions have been reported there up to the present.

Pope Francis, citing the Ruini report (a study of Medjugorje overseen by Cardinal Camillo Ruini from March 17, 2010, to Jan. 17, 2014), said that the first apparitions reported at Medjugorje deserve further study, but that he's extremely skeptical of all the reported apparitions since.

Noted Vatican journalist Andrea Tornielli reported that he'd received a leaked copy of the Ruini report. The commission had cast 13 votes "in favor of recognizing the supernatural nature of the first seven appearances in Medjugorje [between June 24 and July 3, 1981], one vote against and one 'suspensive' ballot, which will give a final answer later." But the commission was extremely hesitant about the alleged apparitions that have taken place since 1981, reportedly continuing to the present day.

Tornielli further explains, "The commission has endorsed the end of the ban on pilgrimages organized in Medjugorje. In addition, 13 members and experts out of the 14 present voted in favor of the constitution of 'an author-

ity dependent on the Holy See' in Medjugorje as well as the transformation of the parish into a pontifical sanctuary," all in order to better meet the pastoral needs of the millions of pilgrims who travel to Medjugorje every year.

In a May 13 interview, the Holy Father said, "Now, in order to look at matters with all these findings, with the responses sent to me by the theologians, a Bishop has been named — a good one, good because he is experienced — in order to take a look at how the pastoral part is going. And at the end, something will be said."

The Vatican pastoral visitor mentioned by the Holy Father, Archbishop Henryk Hoser, traveled to Medjugorje earlier this year in order to evaluate the pastoral needs of those who come on pilgrimage. The bishop of Warszawa-Praga in Poland, Archbishop Hoser also served on a medical commission in the 1990s that evaluated the Marian apparitions at Kibeho.

No final decisions have been made. However, it seems likely that the Church will approve at least a portion of the Medjugorje apparitions and that some form of shrine or place of prayer will be established at Medjugorje under papal administration.

No matter what the Church decides, our call as Catholics is clear: We must pray for the Holy Father and all the bishops, asking the Holy Spirit to guide those involved in discerning the truth of the situation so that God's will is done.

MH

— Chris Sparks



Workers this August removed mold from the Shrine residence, one of the many projects to repair the building.

# It's happening

This old house is getting some tender, loving care

By Fr. Joseph, MIC

If you've recently been to the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy and had to navigate your way around tradesmen's trucks, sorry for the inconvenience. But this is all for the better.

Indeed, I want to thank you, Marian Helpers, for answering our urgent appeal last spring for prayers and financial assistance in our efforts to repair and renovate portions of the Shrine and the attached Marian monastery. The historic structure incurred severe weather-related damage a year ago. We sent out an urgent appeal last spring seeking to raise \$248,000. I'm happy to report we met that goal, and a good portion of the work has already been completed.

A torrential rainstorm in the summer of 2016 flooded the Shrine basement, requiring us to spend the better part of two days in a bucket brigade to bail it all out. As we stood in the ruins of sheetrock, ceiling tiles, and insulation, we came to a conclusion: Our Shrine and the attached Marian monastery had aged into vulnerability to the whiplash shift in weather for which New England is well known, and we couldn't keep going on this way.

As I explained in our urgent appeal, so much of our work here on Eden Hill since moving here in the 1940s has been directed outward — to the world — through our efforts to spread the message of Divine Mercy and

devotion to Mary Immaculate and the Holy Souls in Purgatory. In the process of bringing people home to God, we neglected our own home, our earthly home, here in Stockbridge.

Now, thanks to you, the Shrine and residence are being repaired and buttoned up to withstand the weather. We have re-graded around the building; installed new drainage; replaced downspouts; raised several window wells and put covers on them; removed mold from the basement; and rebuilt interior walls and flooring, including in our archives room, which incurred severe damage.

Within the next year, we expect to replace soffits and wood trim that have succumbed to deterioration and dry rot; install new windows; repoint the exterior masonry; repair portions of the roof; and remove mold that was recently discovered off the foyer.

This whole project is huge, costly, and necessary.

While we Marians do make for a pretty impressive bucket brigade, I believe God's design for Eden Hill — His design for the Marians and Marian Helpers — is not to drown us in storm water, but rather, to bless us in our work of being instruments for opening the "floodgates" of His mercy.

Thank you so much for your support!

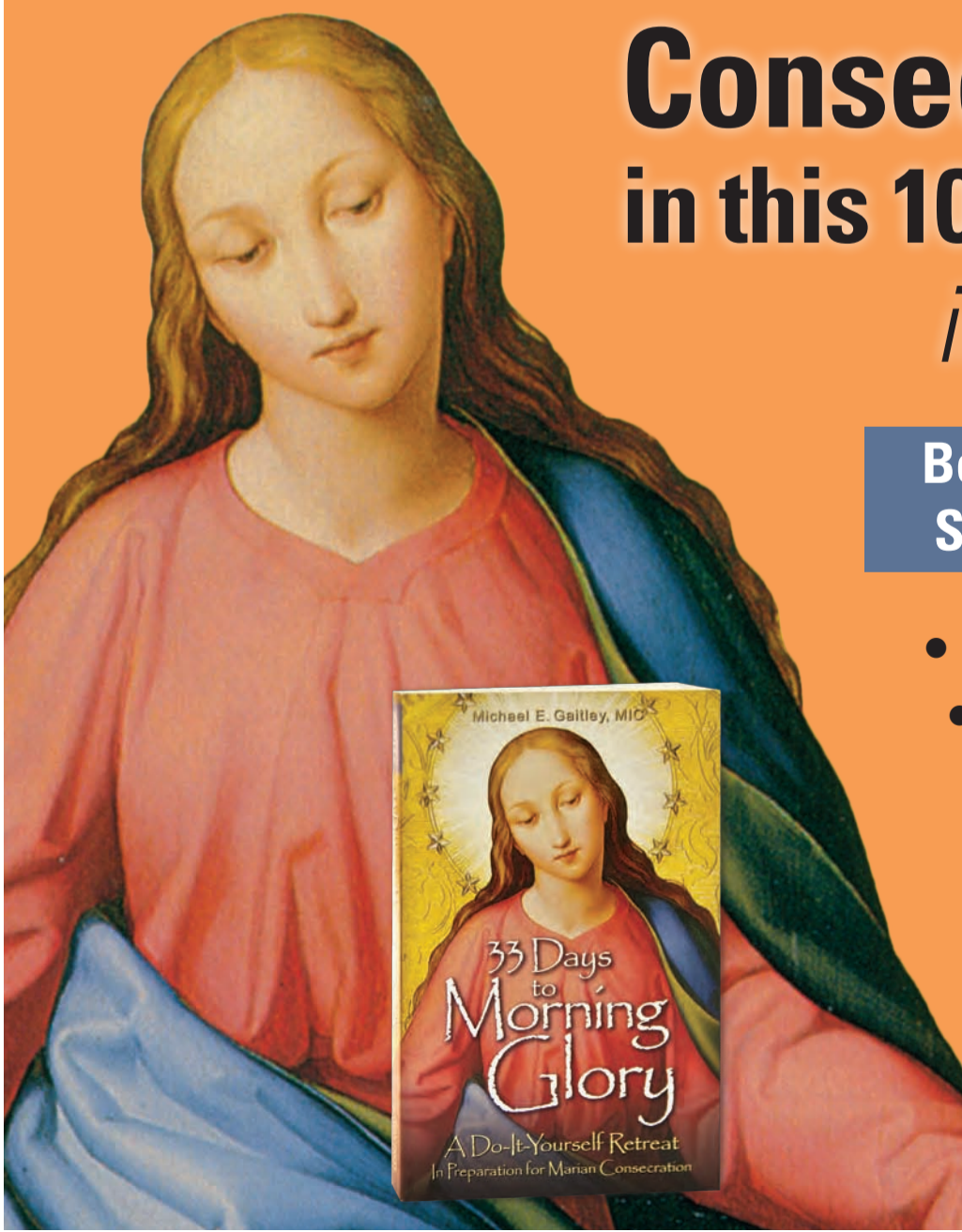
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# A LEGACY OF MERCY

**R**ose Marie Docherty moved me to tears before we ever spoke. The depth of her faith was evident when she sent in part of her inheritance to support our seminarians because she knew her mother “would have approved,” she said.

She could have splurged on a big-screen TV or a new car. Who gives away money that unexpectedly comes to them? Our Marian Helpers do! Rose Marie’s is the fourth such gift we’ve received this year. And the stories are inspiring.

I hear from people who have purposefully forgone going out to eat for a year in order to put that money towards supporting the Marians. Likewise, I hear from people who forgo taking vacations. They share how grateful they are for the opportunity to serve the Lord by making such a sacrifice. I can’t help but ask myself what sacrifices I could make to serve the Lord.

A Marian Helper wrote to Fr. Joseph, MIC, this summer, saying, “You have been so generous to give your life to God, and He cannot be outdone in generosity; so I am sure others will also give!”

The path that led to Rose Marie’s desire to share her wealth to create “a legacy of mercy” (another Marian Helper coined the phrase) began when she was a child. What a story — of her father (born in 1887) immigrating to Canada as a young boy, and of her mother, growing up in the first Polish settlement in Canada, to which Rose Marie’s great grandparents had emigrated in the last quarter of the 1800s.

With such a sense of history, it is no wonder that Rose Marie also grew up with a strong sense of her faith and of a corresponding duty to that faith.

Rose Marie learned about the Marian Fathers when a friend enrolled her in the Association of Marian Helpers

as the 21<sup>st</sup> century began. She developed the same interest in our seminarians’ welfare that her mother had for the seminarians of her day.

She reads with interest our articles about the men preparing for religious life and the priesthood, and recently asked that we let two, in particular, know that they are in her prayers. Both men were grateful to hear of Rose Marie’s prayers.

As Marian seminarian Br. Jon, MIC, so aptly said when he was asked about his appreciation for our Marian Helpers, “Without your help, my brothers and I would not be able to pursue God’s call to the priesthood or develop our specific gifts and talents for His greater glory.”

No wonder so many of our Marian Helpers forego splurges for themselves to support these men — so that the future Marians may lead us all in sharing the powerful, healing message of Divine Mercy and devotion to Mary Immaculate and the Holy Souls in Purgatory. What a beautiful legacy of mercy it is to help the Marians to continue this important mission into the future.

If you would like to create your own “legacy of mercy” with either a donation, a charitable gift annuity, or by including the Marian Fathers in your will, please feel free to contact me at [mflournoy@marian.org](mailto:mflournoy@marian.org) or call 413-298-1381.




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Mary Flourney is a donor relations officer for the Marians. Contact her at (413) 298-1381; [helpers@marian.org](mailto:helpers@marian.org); or Association of Marian Helpers, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Visit [marian.org/PlannedGiving](http://marian.org/PlannedGiving) to learn more.

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▶ Fr. Joseph explains enrollments.

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## Father Casimir to the rescue

When friends requested help in prayer, Fr. Casimir came to the rescue. He has become the guy to go to when we need miracles fast.

First there was Jude, a 16-year-old boy born with a severe bone malformation in his chest cavity.

The only hope to alleviate the pain was to surrender to a five-hour-long surgery. We prayed to Fr. Casimir for his intercession. Joan, his grandmother, reports that the surgery went miraculously well, and Jude is doing just fine.

Then there was Kelleigh. She had endured four complicated surgical procedures on her spine within three months to correct injuries from an automobile accident. But Kelleigh still needed another surgery to correct a bone pressing on a nerve. Payment for this surgery meant emergency certification through her insurance company for an additional \$15,000. When the certification didn't come through in time, Kelleigh had to borrow against her home equity to pay for the surgery. Again appealing to Fr. Casimir for his intercession, within days her insurance company refunded her the entire \$15,000. Though still recuperating, Kelleigh is doing well and is actively back to her work as a dedicated journalist.

— SF, Worthington, Massachusetts

## Son turns away from sin

I am writing to thank Venerable Servant of God Fr. Casimir Wyszynski for turning around my son's life. My son was involved with the wrong crowd and was leading a life of sin. I prayed to Fr. Casimir to intercede with God for my son. I asked that the Lord would instill in my son the character to be a good young man and strong enough to deny the lifestyle. And my son did just that! He even entered into a nice relationship with a good girl.

But then he didn't want to marry this girl, so again I prayed to Fr. Casimir. I asked him to help my son gain the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and marry his girlfriend. Again, Fr. Casimir answered my prayers right away. My son had a change of heart and married his girlfriend. They now have a wonderful family.

I have Fr. Casimir to thank for my son being the man he is today.

— JC, Hopewell, New Jersey

## Wife avoids major surgery

I would like to share two graces received through the intercession of the Venerable Fr. Casimir Wyszynski.

First, my wife of 54 years suffered a heart attack. She was rushed to the hospital and spent six days there. After undergoing a battery of tests, she was told that she was facing major surgery. She most likely needed a heart valve operation, but they wanted to run one more test.

I prayed to Fr. Casimir to intercede for my wife's health. After undergoing that final test, it was determined that my wife would not need the operation after all. Thanks to Fr. Casimir's intercession, everything worked out well.

Then, one of my grandsons earned his master's degree with a 4.0, but he couldn't find a job anywhere. He was getting discouraged. Again, I turned to Fr. Casimir. Three weeks later, we got the good news that he finally found a job.

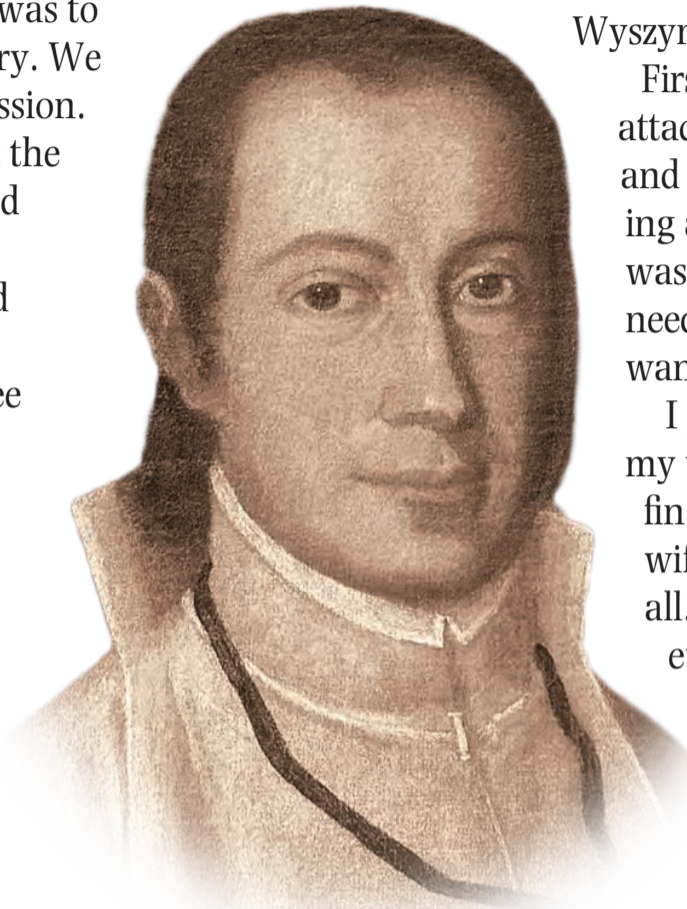
Once he started work, his boss told him he was one of more than 500 applicants for this one job.

— EH, South Hadley, Massachusetts

## Grandson finds work after prison

My grandson was released from prison in April. He was only able to get a job landscaping for four days a week and was making about \$200 a week. I prayed to Venerable Casimir to intercede and help him get a better job. About two weeks later, he obtained a full-time job that pays him better wages. I continue to pray to Fr. Casimir as my grandson starts his new life.

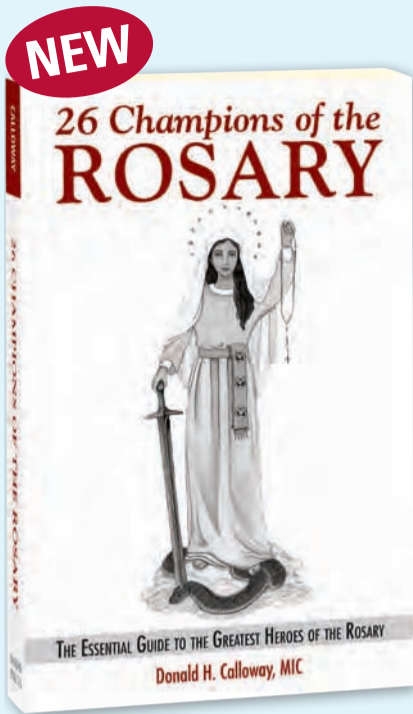
— DD, Lithia, Florida



Acknowledgements of graces received through the intercession of Venerable Servant of God Casimir Wyszynski (1700-1755).

For a Venerable Casimir prayercard (B35-BCWP), call toll free 1-800-462-7426. If you have received graces through his intercession, please write: Br. Andrew Maczynski, MIC, Vice Postulator of the Marian Causes of Canonization, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Email: [graces@marian.org](mailto:graces@marian.org)

# October is the month of the Holy Rosary

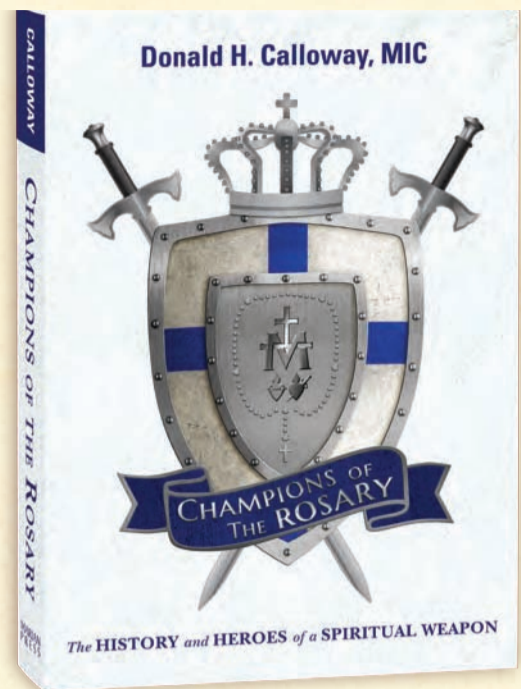


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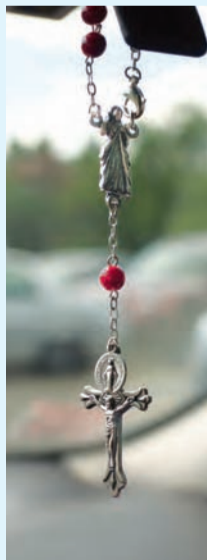
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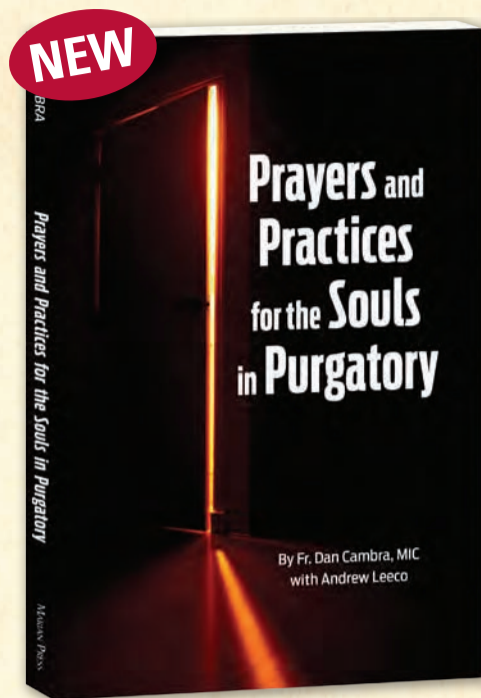
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# Remember the Holy Souls in Purgatory

## Prayers and Practices for the Souls in Purgatory

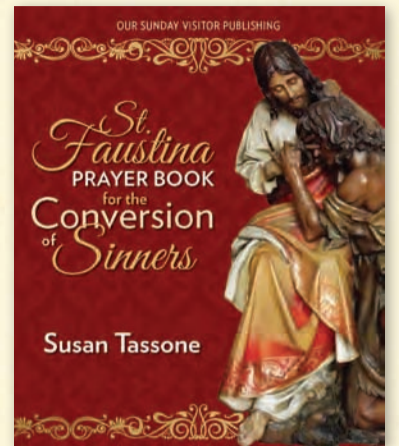
Sharing a wealth of devotional practices, all with remarkable power to aid the Holy Souls in Purgatory, Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC, spiritual director of the Holy Souls Sodality, has gathered an essential treasure trove of teaching and practice on one of the most neglected (and yet most essential) of the works of mercy.

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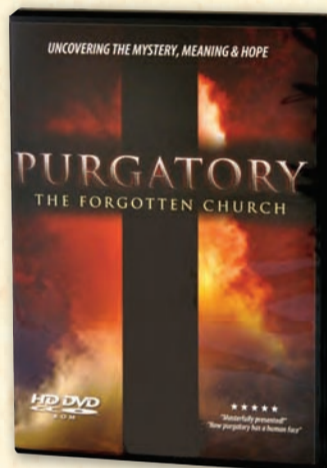


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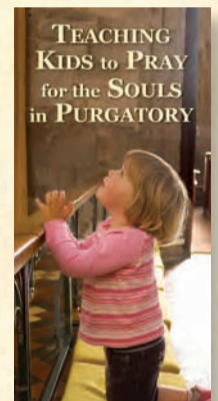
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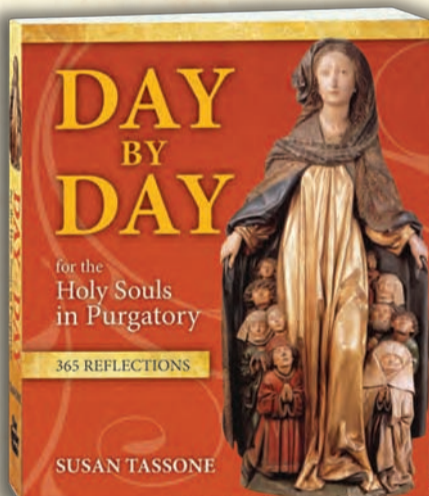
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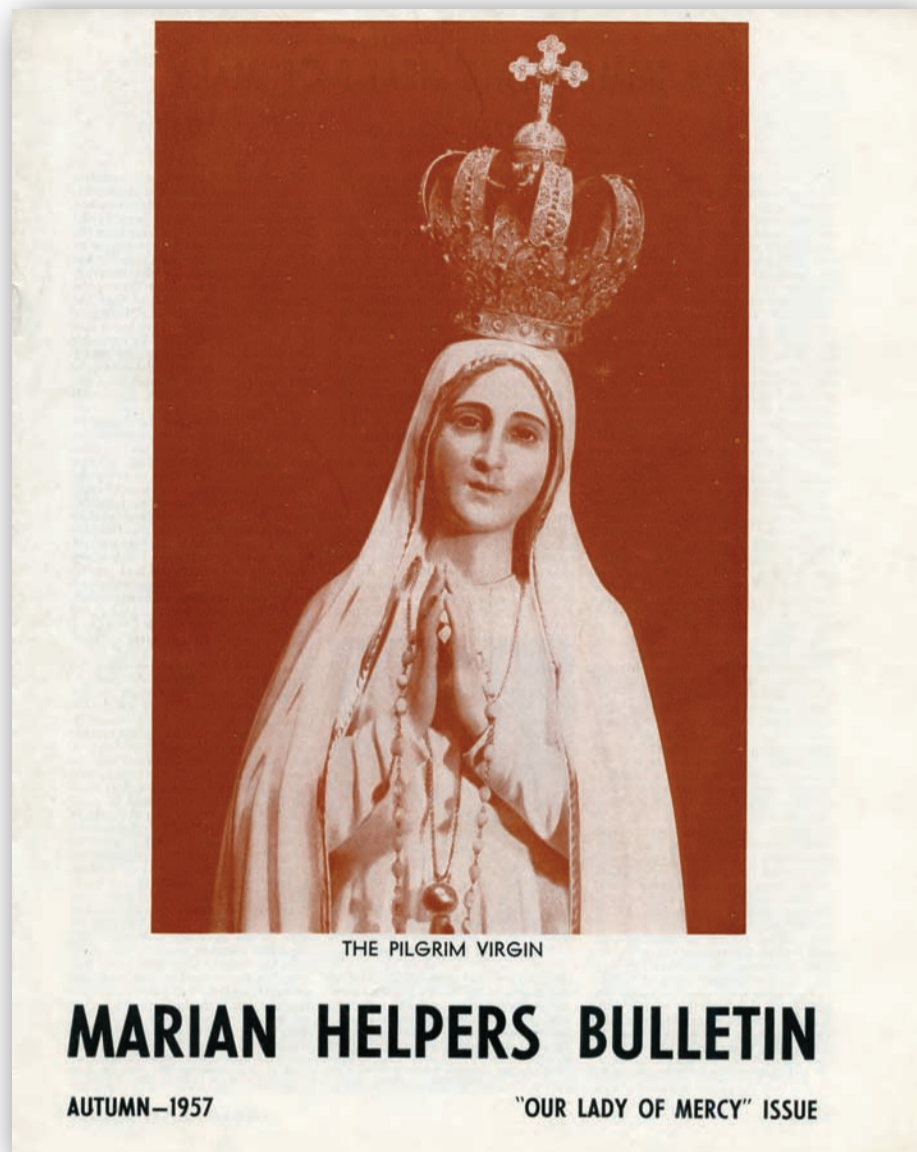
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*Let's go back 60 years to 1957 — the year when the USSR launched Sputnik 1, South Vietnam was attacked by Viet Cong guerrillas, Elvis Presley purchased Graceland, and the first nuclear reactor plant opened (in Pennsylvania).*

*In these pages, we were celebrating and contemplating — you guessed it — the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Our Lady's apparitions in Fatima, Portugal. Here are some words of wisdom and warning gleaned from a story in our Fall issue, titled, "Some Thoughts on Forty Years of Fatima":*

1917. 1957. Forty years since the Blessed Mother appeared to the three children, Lucy, Francisco and Jacinta, in the Cova da Iria, in Portugal, and told them to tell the world that unless people prayed, especially the Rosary, and did penance, terrible things would come upon the world.

News travelled slowly in those first years; a war was ending, and radio had not been perfected to the degree in which we have it today. The message spread around the world slowly, until it burst upon the United States of America and gathered momentum, until it seems almost incredible that there are still some Catholics who, forty years after the apparitions, still do not know what you mean when you mention the word "Fatima."

The fearsome thing is that the Mother of God said when ENOUGH people prayed and did penance and made reparation, there would be PEACE. Then, obviously, not enough people have done enough even now in 1957, otherwise there would either be peace, or a noticeable change toward peace in the world. Since the signs of peace are practically non-existent, it is logical to sadly assume that prayerful counteraction is not strong enough. ...

It seems inexcusably ignorant, or cold, or insane, to disregard her warnings, and at the end of forty years, we have either not begun or we have done too little. Could anything be more urgent than bringing souls, including our own, close to Christ? ...

Forty years after Fatima! Where are you, where am I, in the picture? In the accounting?

MH

# Live the call!



## The Trause family:

We credit the Holy Spirit who inspired our family to support the Marian seminarians — our priests of tomorrow! We know how important material and spiritual support is for today's seminarians. The Marians truly are our extended family, our brothers in Christ, unceasingly spreading the joy, love, and mercy of the Gospel to our hearts, our minds, and our souls. We cannot achieve or fulfill our call to holiness without the support of our priests!

## Brother Tyler, MIC:

My journey to the Marians began when I consecrated myself to the Blessed Virgin Mary just before entering diocesan seminary. Our Lady completely took over my heart. While reading *St. Faustina's Diary*, I was graced to experience the explosive and tender power of Jesus' *Divine Mercy*. I felt forgiven for my past sins. Shortly after this experience, I noticed the Marian logo on the back of a prayer pamphlet that I was praying from. I immediately sensed the Holy Spirit saying: "Tyler, this is it: Be a Marian!"

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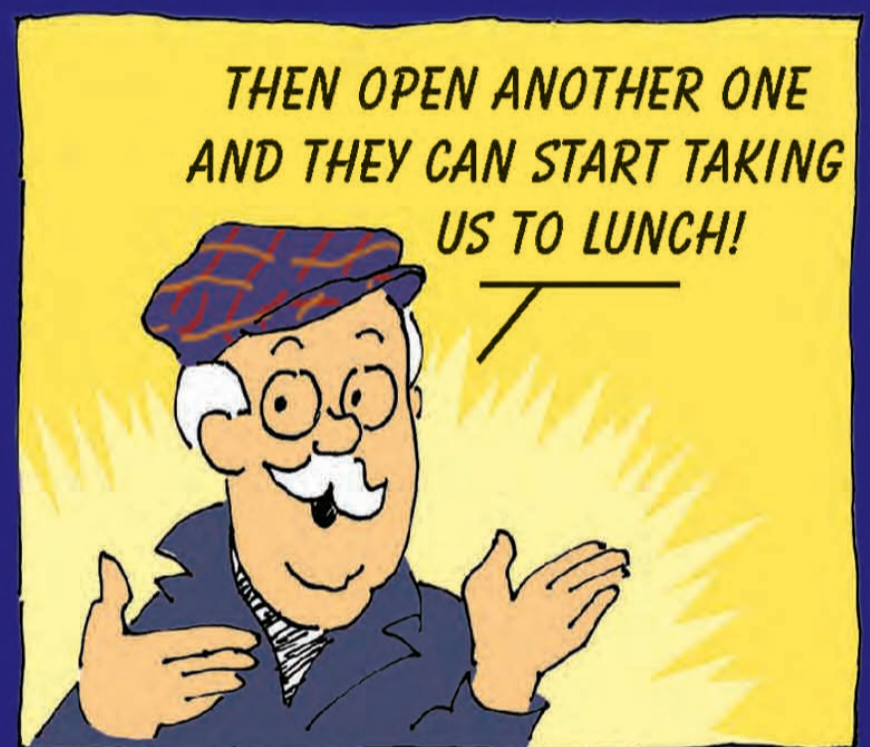
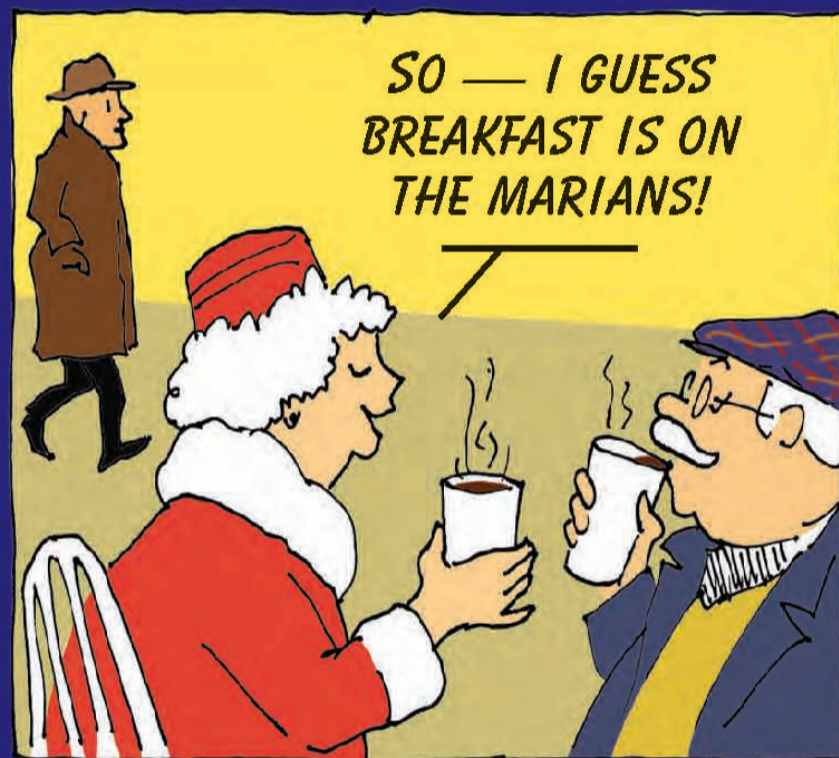
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