

Fr. Joseph on the suicide crisis • Why all the emphasis on Purgatory?

• The world's most obvious remedy? • St. Faustina's lesson in dying

Fall 2018

Marian Helper

Inspiration and news from the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception

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IN HEAVEN**

Two years after Pope Francis canonized the Marians' Founder in St. Peter's Square, devotion to him has, in the words of the Marians' Superior General, "exploded in an inexplicable way."

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The answer is simple enough: Since Pope Paul VI published his encyclical letter on birth control, almost everything has changed. Dr. Robert Stackpole explains.

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WHO WE ARE



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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.



YouTube



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

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT US GOD'S MISSION THROUGH US

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

- Thirteenth of the Month Club: marian.org/13th
- Friends of Mercy: TheDivineMercy.org/friends
- Holy Souls Sodality: PrayForSouls.org
- or call (413) 298-1382.

Arrange a special gift:

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- or call (413) 298-1382.

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.

WE SWEEP. WE SANCTIFY.

You'll probably be pleased to know that here at the Marian Helpers Center, we take our building's maintenance seriously. That includes *spiritual maintenance*.

This explains why on July 25, the Very Rev. Fr. Kaz Chwalek, MIC, Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, and I went throughout the building armed with the Blessed Sacrament, holy water, holy oil, and a set of prayers.

First, we invoked God's help in overcoming the power of Satan and the spirit of evil, and we prayed for the removal of any spirits that should not be here. Then, we blessed each office and room with holy water while reading the prescribed prayers, thereby invoking God's power and care upon our center and our work. We then anointed each doorway with holy oil.

The reason for all this? We believe that periodically we need to cleanse the building of anything that may have inadvertently entered through our general spiritual brokenness. Our work here is too important to do otherwise. And we know this: Satan hates our work.

Think about it: Divine Mercy stands as the greatest grassroots movement in Church history, and the grounds here at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy have been the world's epicenter for the spread of the Divine Mercy since the 1940s.

Just put your ear against the wall of the Marian Helpers Center's old carriage barn, and you'll hear the frenetic *ka-plunking* of printing presses pumping out pamphlets, prayercards, newsletters, magazines, and appeals — some 50 million pieces of literature a year.

Inside these walls are headquartered our Office of Evangelization, which has brought renewal to millions of Catholics over the years. We also have our design and editorial departments working on ever-creative ways to bring the life-changing Divine Mercy message and devotion to



Beginning at the entrance way, Fr. Joseph, MIC, calls upon the Lord to cover the Marian Helpers Center with His love and His Most Precious Blood.

a hurting world through print and web-based media. We have our Divine Mercy Intercessory Prayerline, which receives nearly 900,000 prayer intentions a year, a vital service to our Marian Helpers struggling with serious burdens and everyday concerns.

We have our Divine Mercy Art program here, responsible for sending tens of thousands of Divine Mercy Images around the world. Also, our fundraising efforts are headquartered here, where we raise money for our worldwide evangelization efforts

and for the formation of our Marian seminarians. This is also where we answer your phone calls when you order spiritual materials; indeed, this is the place from which those materials are shipped.

This is why we take our building's maintenance so seriously. Inevitably, the evil one will try to thwart our efforts. But in the name of Jesus, the Divine Mercy, we won't let him.

We undertook this spiritual maintenance through the intercession of a patron of our spiritual Congregation, St. Joseph, who, out of reverence for the Incarnate Word, consecrated his life to the service of our Lord. Saint Joseph's eagerness to listen and respond to God continually gives us encouragement throughout our ministries.

One more thing: I encourage you to consider your own home's spiritual maintenance. Ask your local pastor to give you a house blessing to insure your shelter, like ours, is sanctified.

Fr. Joseph, MIC

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

SIGNS FOR THE TIMES



Workers of Mercy include (from left) Fr. Joseph Wormek (pastor of St. Francis Borgia Parish), Kenn Obermark, Jim Derner, Alan Jean, Bill Gegg, and Michael Tolksdorf.

In Washington, Missouri, the self-proclaimed corncob pipe capital of the world, framed and weather-proofed vinyl versions of the Divine Mercy Image began showing up in yards and roadsides about three years ago, the work of a group of seniors led by Kenn Obermark, a retired house painter. The group, which calls itself Workers of Mercy, conducts its make-shift assembly-line business almost daily out of Kenn's former paint shop. They sell the images at cost. It's a labor of love. We spoke with Kenn about it.

How did this begin?

Well, some of us were doing [Marian] Fr. Michael Gaitley's retreat 33 Days to Morning Glory. Afterwards, we felt called to go out and do something to spread mercy.

Did you already have a sense there was something special about the Divine Mercy message?

Yes. A few years back I was telling a friend of mine about

Divine Mercy and how Jesus gave us the Chaplet of Divine Mercy to pray for the dying, with promises attached. He never heard of it. I gave him a copy of the Chaplet, and he brought it to the hospital with his family to pray for a dying loved one, and he said it was the most beautiful time with that dying friend. He said, "I'm going to give you \$500 to carry on this ministry."

Did you know at the time what the ministry would entail?

Well, we all got to thinking. I had made trips to Colorado, and I saw Divine Mercy Images along the highway in Kansas, and we decided it might be best to use the money to create images to be displayed publicly. You see all these political signs in people's yards. We thought Jesus should have at least that many yard signs. So we started making them. We had bake sales to raise money to get things started. We now make varying sizes.

So they are in yards throughout Washington?

And highways and cemeteries. A woman bought one to put by her grandmother's grave.

How many images have you distributed at this point?

Probably over 1,000 — so far.

Whoa.

Everybody says, "My gosh, you see them everywhere." And we keep emphasizing that it's more than just a picture.

Yes, Jesus told St. Faustina, "By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls. It is to be a reminder of the demands of My mercy, because even the strongest faith is of no avail without works" (*Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, 742*).

And He instructed St. Faustina to have the words "Jesus, I trust in You" put at the bottom (see *Diary*, 327). We've enlarged those words three times, just to make sure people can read it as they're driving by [laughs].

So the people who obtain the images — are they mostly Catholics?

This is mostly a Catholic area around here. Oh, but I do have a good story. A local Baptist church wanted the biggest one they could get, so we donated it to them because they were having financial troubles. But then a week or so later, they called and said they had to take it down. Turns out the upper echelon in the congregation was upset, saying the image was "too Catholic." I had given them some smaller ones, too, and I asked, "Do I have to take those down, too?" And the gentleman said, "Oh, no. They are going in my yard. No one can tell me what I put in my own yard" [laughs]. The truth is, the image is a Christian image, not just strictly "Catholic." It's Jesus. And Jesus told St. Faustina that the image was to be venerated "throughout the world" (*Diary*, 47).

And you are doing your part.

We're a "fly speck," we always say. We didn't choose; He chose us. That's what we tell people. But everybody in our area knows what it's all about now. And anyone who asks, "What is this?" we tell them. People need to know the mercy that Christ has for them. His mercy is greater than our sins. It's all really exciting. And I love being in the shop with the guys. This is what we think about: Divine Mercy and how we can spread it.

What sort of feedback do you get?

We get a lot of "Keep up the good work." One woman brought an image down to Florida, and she's certain that having the image is what protected her home from a hurricane that damaged all the other houses in her neighborhood. But I don't emphasize that the image will protect your house.

Venerating it will protect your soul, though.

Exactly.

MH

— Felix Carroll

IN BRIEF

Two Marian Helpers Center staff members, along with Fr. Joseph Roesch, MIC, were traveling France in June preparing for an upcoming Marian Press title, *France: A Pilgrimage with Mary*. After two full weeks of researching and photographing, the three pilgrims found themselves in the village of Fougères looking for a place to eat. It happened to be the 26th anniversary of Fr. Joe's ordination to the priesthood.

"Let's say a Hail Mary that Our Lady will lead us to where we should eat," Fr. Joe said. So they did. Then, as they walked up the street, they saw a wrought iron "M" above a restaurant door. "M' for Mary!" one of them exclaimed. This was a good sign. They sat down at a table. Handed their menus, they were shocked to discover that "Saying Grace," the famous Norman Rockwell painting, was on the cover. Rockwell lived for a time in the same town as these pilgrims — Stockbridge, Massachusetts. More than 3,500 miles from home, with tears in their eyes, our staff members knew Our Lady was watching over them.



In an age of anonymous and often uncharitable remarks littering the comments sections across the Internet, we'd like to share a reader comment posted in July on our website TheDivineMercy.org that inspired us. Denise McGill of Ashland, Kentucky, was responding to a comment by a reader named Joe who expressed dismay at all the suffering in this life.

Denise responded, "Joe, sometimes a Christian feels like they're spinning their wheels with prayer and sacrifice and never making a difference. My grief of losing a daughter at 17 in a car accident feels like a life sentence of sadness. Watching loved ones descend into drug addiction even though you pray and pray for them. Lists of pain, suffering, and disappointments go on and on. With all this tragedy, though, God has given me greater compassion and understanding for others that I would otherwise not have known. My heart has expanded. He's shown me what we're really here on earth for, to do as He has done, to love and give ourselves for others; to be there for others when they suffer, leading them to Him. When life pulls me down, I look past the temporal to Heaven, to what's in store for me and for all those who suffer. The Church has given us so much to heal our spirits, but we must look to it. We must see the big picture. All the eternal beauty, joy, love, and happiness God has awaiting us is the end game — the pearl of great price. Never, ever give up or be disheartened. Grace awaits you."

FACES OF MERCY



Brandon and Lisa Woodrome

with their children
Mascoutah, Illinois

Brandon: My wife's sister has seven children and one of the youngest is battling leukemia back home. We've really felt a calling to pray — including the Divine Mercy Chaplet — for his healing. He's now in remission, and it's a blessing.

Lisa: Just seeing how they have come through that and trusting in God's mercy in whatever God's plan was for him has helped all of us grow in our faith. Seeing the broad community pray for him, reaching out for prayers on social media — we have seen God's mercy in that. Just in my own life, it's comforting to know that even with the sinfulness I

carry, God's mercy and love is so beyond my comprehension. I'm just beginning to understand. There's no way to actually measure it.



Karina Gildea

Elmhurst, Illinois

I've been praying the Chaplet for two years. One of my best friends introduced me to it. After my friend's mom passed away, she learned more about Divine Mercy. She said, "I should have prayed this when my mom was dying," because we knew her mom had terminal cancer. She feels a little guilty that she never prayed it when her mom was struggling with her health issues. But we continue to pray for her mom to make sure that she's in Heaven. I actually prayed for her today as part of my pilgrimage to the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. So that's what we pray for — for her and everybody else who is struggling right now.

Divine Mercy has really helped me to continue to grow in faith. Thanks to Divine Mercy, I know that Jesus is accompanying me all the time. I pray the Chaplet — it's part of my prayer life now. And it's made me more peaceful because I know that God is here with us, and He will be there at the time of our death.

Dusty Frank

Glens Falls, New York

I was diagnosed with stage-four prostate cancer in 2013. I was told I had three months to live. My friend Doc grabbed my hand and asked, “Do you want to beat this?” And I said, “Well, I’ve had a very rough life; at this point I really don’t care.” He said, “If you want to live, let me know.” Then he brought me here to the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

When I was a young child, I went to Catholic school and was terribly molested by a priest, so I was totally against Catholic churches. I went through my whole life with no one believing me, so for me to step inside a Catholic church was an act of God in itself. Long story short, we came here, and when I stepped inside this church back in 2013, I felt something. And with each recurring visit, which was at least weekly, every time I stepped down these stairs, something lifted and something came in. The spirit of God displaced whatever it was that was causing me to have such a horribly unhappy life. My most recent MRI was just last week, and the cancer is undetectable.

I tell my story to whomever will listen. Jesus saved my life.



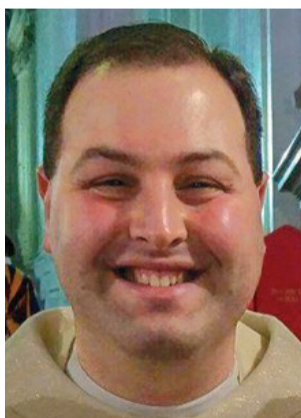
Fr. Matthew Guidi

Cheshire, Massachusetts

So much of my life is communicating Divine Mercy to others, especially through the Sacraments and particularly Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick. Even though I’m a priest and act in the person of Christ, I’m still just a man and a sinner. The more God bestows His Divine Mercy upon me in the different areas of my life, the more merciful I can be to others who are in need of the Divine Mercy. So, I need to receive the Sacraments as much as anybody. The more I receive grace, forgiveness, and mercy through the Sacraments, the better I can help others experience that same reality.

MH

— Marc Massery



IN BRIEF

Father Jim McCormack, MIC, received a heartening email from a Colorado friend being treated for cancer. She wrote, “Father Jim, I know that for years you’ve asked me to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. One day, I woke up early in the morning (since my surgery), and turned on EWTN. They were praying the Chaplet. Without any intention, I prayed it. I just couldn’t sleep. Prior to praying this, I would feel overcome when thinking about having cancer and everything involved with it. After praying it, I actually ... couldn’t feel overwhelmed and overcome anymore. Just wanted to let you know.” In a subsequent email, she said, “I truly believe that Mary was involved. That this happened in the month of May [Mary’s month] wasn’t a coincidence.”



Dr. Bryan Thatcher, founder and director of **Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy** (EADM), recently returned from the Solomon Islands where he spoke to diocesan and parish lay leaders on the message of Divine Mercy, the Eucharist, Our Lady, and pro-life topics. The leaders, trained to oversee EADM cenacle prayer groups, will begin cenacles across the islands.

“People left with a much better understanding of God’s love for them and how we are called to live the message,” Dr. Thatcher said.

Archbishop Christopher Michael Cardone, OP, welcomed Dr. Thatcher, who was also given the sort of tribal greeting typically reserved for high chiefs.

“I hope my efforts help build up the faith and lead more people to a personal conversion to the Merciful Lord,” said Dr. Thatcher.



Calling all healthcare workers: The third Cleveland Divine Mercy Medicine, Bioethics & Spirituality Conference is Nov. 7-8, in North Royalton, Ohio. Sponsored by **Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy**, the conference is open to everyone, but in particular, healthcare professionals (who may also obtain education credits). Keynote speaker is Dr. Marie T. Hilliard, ethicist and canonist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center; Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC; the Very Rev. Fr. Kaz Chwalek, MIC; Dr. Ronald Sobecks; Marie Romagnano, RN; and others. Visit TheDivineMercy.org/cleveland or call 1-800-462-7426 for more information.

FATHER JOSEPH'S PICKS

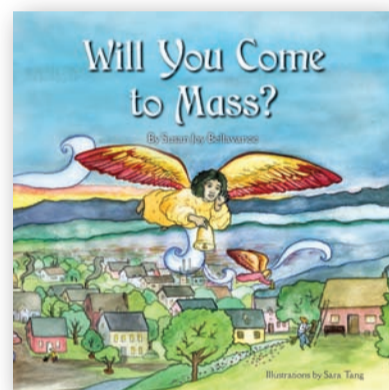
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As we move into fall, it's time once again for our children to return to school. Why not do the same? Delve more deeply into our faith, seeking to "be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect" (Rom 12:2). Here are some materials to help you do just that.

PIAZZAS, POPES & PASTA: NOTES FROM A ROME SOJOURN

BY LUANNE D. ZURLO

Acting on an inspiration from the Holy Spirit, Zurlo spent four months living in Rome and studying theology at the Angelicum Pontifical University. Through her heartfelt and vivid descriptions of the art, music, and sights of the Eternal City, you'll come to know the home of the Holy See while also gaining valuable insights into our faith. Part memoir, part travelogue, and part religious reflection, this book will encourage you to open your heart to God's will, even when it seems risky. \$14.95. **B39-PIAZ**



WILL YOU COME TO MASS?

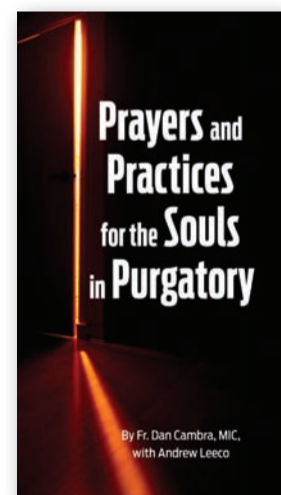
BY SUSAN BELLAVANCE; ILLUSTRATIONS BY SARA TANG

In a simple but memorable way, this beautifully illustrated book conveys the joy and graces available to all those who participate in the Holy Eucharist. Bellavance's story and Tang's colorful art will inspire children and families to love and console Jesus by coming to Holy Mass. Ideal for story time! \$12.95. **B39-WYCBK**

PRAYERS AND PRACTICES FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

EDITED BY FR. DAN CAMBRA, MIC

If you read just one book in the next few months, read this one. Why? So that come November and its special time of remembrance for the Holy Souls in Purgatory, you're ready to perform a powerful work of mercy: praying for the dead, and freeing as many of the Holy Souls from Purgatory as possible. In this book, Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC, shares the Church's treasures of devotion and grace for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. \$14.95. **B39-PRBK**



PURGATORY PACK

The latest pack to be included in our Divine Mercy (Product code B39-DMKIT) and Mary (Product code B39-MKIT) kits, this collection of pamphlets, a booklet, and a prayercard will equip you to perform a mighty work of mercy: helping the Holy Souls pass swiftly through Purgatory and reach Heaven. Informative and engaging, these materials will give you sound teaching, powerful devotions, and striking examples of the ways in which the saints have helped the Holy Souls in the past. Take, read, and do likewise. \$6.95. **B39-PURGPK**

MERCY TAKES ROOT

We Marians established a mission in India eight years ago, and it continues to grow. This move marked a profound expansion of our Congregation's efforts to spread the Divine Mercy message to the world.

May 18 is always a special day at the Marians' Divine Mercy Seminary in Kara-mathur, Tamil Nadu, India. Our Marian novices profess their vows on this day, the feast day of our Founder, St. Stanislaus Papczynski. This year, on the vigil, five young men entered the novitiate, where they will learn about the Marian charism in a house rented from the Jesuits in a mountainous region not far from Kerala.

On the feast day itself, three young Marians professed their first vows. Brother Inigo, MIC, has begun his theological studies in Mysore. Brother Manoj, MIC, will complete his philosophical studies in Chennai. And Br. Venish, MIC, will serve at the Divine Mercy Seminary. Four other Marian seminarians renewed their vows that day and now continue their studies for the priesthood. Three of them joined the Marians in 2010, first as candidates in our minor seminary while still teenagers. They lived with Fr. Antony Raja, a diocesan priest who works full-time helping the Marians get established in India. They began in a house rented from the Carmelites. The groundbreaking for the Divine Mercy Seminary took place on Dec. 8, 2010, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

Candidates for the Marians are found through vocation camps and at the recommendation of their pastors, but especially through Fr. Antony's activities.

During their first year, they work to perfect their English as they transition to living in a minor seminary setting. They then complete their secondary education, if need be, or they begin college or philosophical studies. Five now study theology in a Pallotine seminary in Mysore, Karnataka. Plans are underway to build a Marian House of Studies near this seminary.

Among the seminarians is Br. Amal, MIC, who professed his first vows in 2017. He said, "God always takes the simplest way, just as God chose a simple Congregation through a single person, St. Stanislaus Papczynski."



Our Indian seminarians gather on the Feast of St. Stanislaus Papczynski.

Brother Stephen, MIC, professed his first vows in 2016, along with Brs. Leo, MIC, and Sebasthi, MIC. Each of them recently received the ministry of acolyte as they advance toward final vows and ordination to the diaconate.

On the topic of renewing his vows, Br. Jenno, MIC, said, "God, by His unconditional love, created me, and gave me the precious gift of life. In return, I desire to surrender my whole being to Him by living out the evangelical counsels in every second of my life."

Brother Sebasthi, MIC, sees his renewal of the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience as a way to grow in holiness and conform to Jesus Christ. He also ties devotion to Mary to remembering the souls in Purgatory, as did our Founder, St. Stanislaus.

Brother Leo is pleased that the Marians give him the opportunity to develop his God-given talents. He likes to make short videos to commemorate Marian celebrations. He laments that many people nowadays aren't concerned even for their own families, and he contrasts this with St. Stanislaus, who concerned himself not only with the living, but also the dead. He credits his vocation to our Renovator, Blessed George Matulaitis, who said, "We should be willing to hasten to any place where there is an opportunity to do something for the greater glory of God."

Please pray for our Indian Marians as they embrace their calling to give great glory to God.

Father Joe Roesch, MIC, is the vicar general of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. He lives in Rome.



THE SUICIDE CRISIS

New book by
Fr. Chris Alar, MIC,
will offer hope
and healing

Father Chris Alar, MIC, received so much positive feedback from his Fall 2017 cover story on suicide that he was inspired to write a full-length book about it. "Suicide has become a 'pandemic of our times,' and this book will provide the sort of practical and spiritual information that has been so lacking," he said.

*The following is an excerpt from the forthcoming Marian Press title *After Suicide: There's Still Hope for Them and You* by Fr. Chris Alar, MIC:*

If you're reading this book, you've probably experienced (or know someone who has experienced) the searing loss of a loved one to suicide. In that case, please let me assure you: There's hope.

But maybe, right now, it doesn't feel like there's much hope.

For instance, maybe you doubt or barely believe that

your loved one could possibly enjoy the peace of Christ in Heaven. Or maybe you're wondering if it's possible that your own pain of loss (and perhaps, feelings of guilt), will ever allow *you* peace.

Well, let me say it again: There's hope — real hope.

Not only is there hope of salvation for your loved one, but there's hope of relief and peace for you.

Trust me — I know.

As I'll soon share, my family and I suffered the earth-shaking loss of someone very dear to us. And let me tell you, when I first heard the news, I not only despaired of that

person ever seeing the face of God, but I also felt the crushing weight of soul-numbing guilt for years.

And then I found hope.

This book is about the hope that I found, a hope I now feel called to share with you.

As a priest who speaks at parishes and conferences across the country, I've met hundreds of people who have lost a loved one to suicide. Each time I hear their stories, my heart breaks for them, and I want to scoop them up in my arms and hold them tight. I want to give them the same hope and consolation that I myself have received since learning of God's Divine Mercy, especially as it relates to suicide.

That's what this book is about: hope after suicide. Of course, the pain of losing someone will never completely end, but there is hope of salvation for your loved one and hope of consolation for your grief-weary soul.

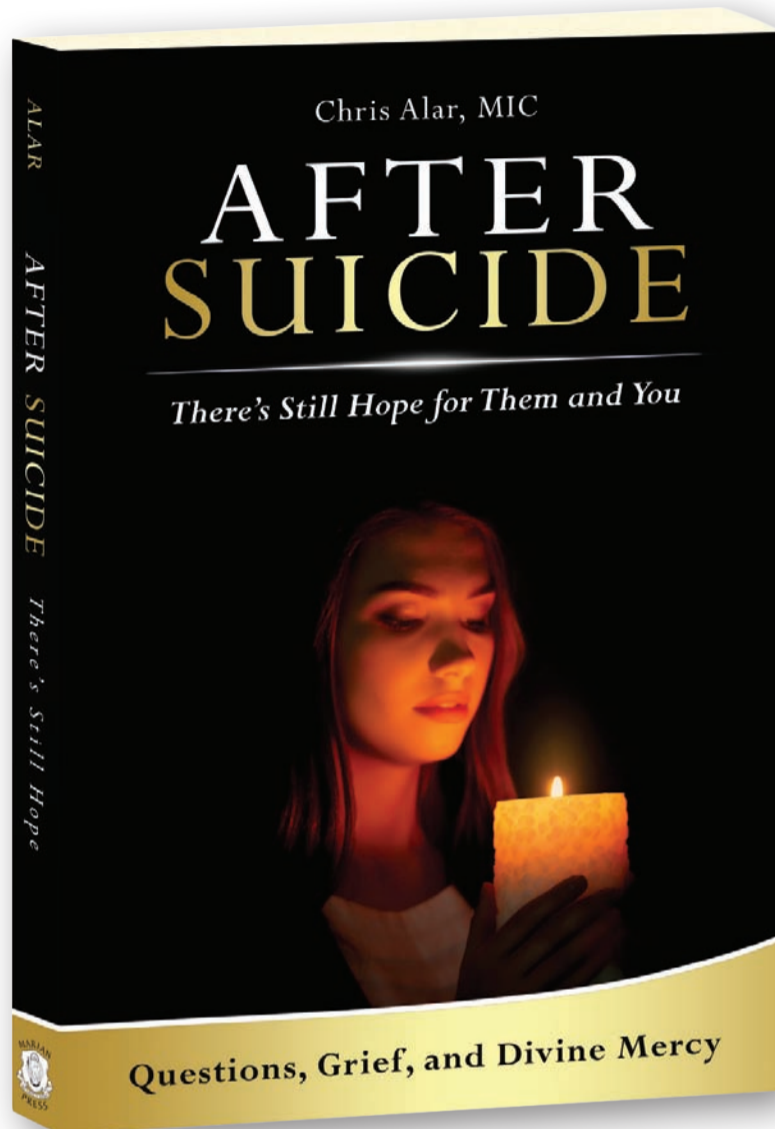
Again, right now, it might not feel like there's much hope — but here's a four-part trajectory to get you there.

First, in Part One, we'll look at the reasons there's hope of salvation for your loved one. Then, in the remaining three parts, we'll look at how there's hope of consolation for you in your grief. Specifically, in Part Two, we'll talk about the grieving process itself that comes after suffering the loss of a loved one. Then, in Part Three, we'll discuss suffering and forgiveness, the latter being an important part of the healing process. Finally, in Part Four, we'll explore how to bring about the healing of wounds from our generational past through the specific example of healing the family tree.

At this point it is very important for me to reiterate that I do not promise complete healing through this book. This isn't therapy, and I'm not a licensed mental health professional. I am not a "doctor of the body," but a priest such as myself is a "doctor of the soul" — and it will be from that perspective we will approach this book. Therefore, I do promise help. I do promise truth. I do promise hope.

After the suicide of my own grandmother, I was quite

surprised to learn how little the Church has to say on the topic of suicide other than a few lines in the *Catechism* — there are no encyclicals and few programs designed specifically to address this critical issue. That is why I felt it my calling, as a priest, to begin this ministry of needed education for so many people who have been involved, either directly or indirectly, with such a tragic loss.



***After Suicide: There's Still Hope for Them and You* will be published in 2019. Visit TheDivineMercy.org/hope to sign up for an email notification when the book is available for purchase, or text the word HOPE to 49892.**

There really is hope for them

In saying that there's hope for those who commit suicide, I want to emphasize that suicide is never the answer. It's a permanent response to temporary problems. Further, it hurts the people who are left behind, causing all sorts of personal heartbreak and harm in ways the deceased never would have realized.

I also want to emphasize that while what I'm about to explain reveals that there certainly is hope after suicide, there is often great cost to the souls of those who die. It's more than likely that they will have to go through great purgatorial pain, such as remorse over having cutting their lives short and knowing they've hurt those they love. As we'll soon see, however, there's something you and I can do that's very effective for

shortening or even eliminating that suffering.

And so, the hope remains.

Here in Part One, we'll be covering the topic of hope for those who have committed suicide in four chapters. In Chapter One, we'll cover the Church's hope-filled teaching on suicide. In Chapter Two, I'll tell my own story of experiencing what I call my "epiphany of hope." In Chapter Three, we'll look more closely at the consoling theology behind the epiphany of hope. Finally, in Chapter Four, we'll turn to the source of our hope, who is God.

So, thank you for joining me on this difficult, yet inspiring journey of hope. And may the power of God's Divine Mercy inflame your heart and strengthen your hope — even after the loss of a loved one — as it did me.

Let's begin with the Church's hope-filled teaching ... MH



From top left, clockwise, Fr. Andy Davy, MIC, and Mary Paver, with her children, Ken and Rhaena, following their Baptism last fall; Erik Paver with his children while battling a rare form of leukemia; the Pavers on their first day of classes at St. Mary; Ken holds out a story he wrote about how he wishes to be a priest when he grows up; and on the one-year anniversary of their father's death, Ken and Rhaena visit the bridge where their parents were married. There, they each send into the air lanterns with a loving message to their father in Heaven.

What happens when you RETURN TO THE SOURCE

By Melanie Williams

In the aftermath of a tragic death, the past year and a half has been nothing less than life-changing for Mary Paver of Plano, Illinois.

Born and raised Catholic, she eventually fell away from the faith. She married in 2000. For seven years, she and her husband, Erik, lived relatively normal lives in Sandwich, Illinois. Normal except for the fact that Mary suffered from severe endometriosis, a painful disorder affecting tissue lining the uterus. She underwent nearly a dozen surgeries.

Then, on Jan. 6, 2007, doctors diagnosed Erik with a rare form of leukemia. He began cancer treatment that month and was told it would make him sterile. The treatments failed, and he ended up hospitalized that summer with a 108-degree temperature. He had dropped about 60 pounds.

“They sent me a priest to plan his funeral,” Mary said. “He was in the hospital for three-and-a-half weeks before regaining his strength.”

After being discharged, he eventually landed in a clinical trial.

“The new treatments seemed to be working,” Mary said, “but over the next eight years he formed abnormal tumors around his spine that compressed the spine and temporarily paralyzed him.”

Despite it all, Mary became pregnant in the spring of 2008. They had a son, Ken, followed by a daughter, Rhaena.

“I just knew it was meant to be for me to be a mom,” Mary said, “and these two children truly are miracles.”

But in the end of July 2014, Erik lost his battle with cancer.

“After he passed, my mind seemed ‘fogged’ and I felt as if I had lost my sense of direction,” Mary said. “I missed my companion and felt as if a part of me had died along with him.”

She wasn’t used to making every family decision. Overwhelmed, she began to allow others to make decisions for her and her small children.

“I started dating and drinking to numb the feeling of my own emotions and the grief — the grief that I needed to feel to allow myself to heal,” she said.

For the next few years Mary struggled with depression.

“I was trying to find things to fill the void, not realizing that the One thing I needed was there for me all along,” she said. “I just needed to find Him myself.”

One morning, in the spring of 2017, Mary awoke with a strong desire to go to Mass. This came from out of the blue.

Moreover, though plenty of Catholic churches were closer to where they lived, she felt compelled to go to St. Mary Parish in Plano, Illinois. Her relatives had taken her children to Mass there years ago when she was in the hospital caring for Erik.

“That day I walked into the church, I knew I was guided there for a reason,” she said. “I decided I wanted to be a member of that parish and that my children deserved a Catholic education.”

Providentially, the Marian Fathers administer the parish,

including its school. Mary contacted the school, and her children were welcomed.

The following week, she took another leap of faith by renting a house just down the street from St. Mary, even though the cost was a little more than she had budgeted for. They ate a lot of peanut butter and jelly to make up the difference.

Once the kids were enrolled, Fr. Andy Davy, MIC, St. Mary’s pastor, urged Mary to have them baptized. They were baptized last fall.

Ken, now 10 years old, came home last November with a school assignment he was eager to show his mom.

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” was the class assignment. Most students chose police officer or professional baseball player, but not Ken. He wrote:

When I grow up, I want to be a priest. One reason is so I could baptize people. When I was baptized I was blessed. I became part of God’s family. God is really awesome. Another reason is we could have more Masses. Once we didn’t have a Mass because we didn’t have a priest. I would like to solve that problem. In addition, I could consecrate the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus. If you can’t consecrate the Host, you can’t have Mass. Those are just a few reasons why I would like to be a priest.

“I had struggled with doubts that I was doing the right thing for my family,” Mary admitted. “But when he brought that story home, I knew that this was what it was all for. ... Our hearts and our eyes have been opened.”

The priesthood remains Ken’s dream. This past May, he went to Confession and received the Eucharist for the first time. He was so excited that he asked to go to Eucharistic Adoration and Confession again just two days later.

During a recent parish retreat, Mary said she came to realize why God guided her to St. Mary: “It was because of Fr. Andy and the Marian priests. They have had such an impact on us.”

A highpoint for Mary and her children came this past June when they attended the ordination of Fr. Gabriel Cillo, MIC, at St. Patrick’s, the sister parish of St. Mary. His first Mass was at St. Mary.

Ken, she said, “was just glowing and taking notes the whole weekend. He introduced himself to most of the [Marian] brothers and had his story blessed by the bishop. It was another life-changing experience for us.”

Mary said, “As afraid as I was to leave my comfort zone, God gave me the strength to do this for us. I do believe that I was given this strength because I finally asked for help and guidance from the right Source and was open and willing to accept it — finally.”

MH

OUR FRIEND IN HEAVEN

TWO YEARS FOLLOWING CANONIZATION,
DEVOTION TO ST. STANISLAUS GROWS

By Felix Carroll

This past June, a Texas family returning home from Maine pulled up to the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in the late afternoon. One by one, they filed out of their car, all seven of them. By all accounts, it should have only been six.

The mother, Jessica Duarte, spied Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, and asked if the Very Rev. Fr. Kaz Chwalek, MIC, was available. They wanted to say hello to him — and thank him. She started to explain an incident that transpired at the Shrine five years ago, but Fr. Seraphim interrupted her. “Wait, is this Thomas?” he asked, pointing to her youngest.

“Tickle Tom,” the family called Thomas back in June 2013 when they last visited — back when they were worn and rattled and fully ensconced in a living nightmare.

Thomas, a smiling, happy baby, had been diagnosed with a rare bone cancer, Ewing’s sarcoma, that had rapidly spread throughout his chest and down his spinal cord. Doctors said surgery could remove only portions of a tumor and that follow-up radiation would disintegrate his tiny spine and damage his organs to an extent that made survival unlikely.

But then some-thing strange happened. When doctors at Boston Children’s Hospital opened him up that July, the huge tumor — unmistakable in images taken only weeks prior — was gone. Tissue and bone once riddled with disease revealed no sign of cancer.

This made no medical sense.

In answer to Fr. Seraphim:

Yes, the smiling boy horsing around with his older siblings was Thomas, now a vigorous and healthy 6 years old who likes to wrestle, read, and show off his surgical scars.

When Fr. Kaz got a look at Thomas, he showed no sign of surprise, just gratitude — to God and to one of the Church’s newest declared saints.

Science cannot explain the turn of events, but the Duartes can. Father Kaz can.

“When we came to the Shine five years ago, Fr. Kaz prayed over Thomas and invoked St. Stanislaus and then said that Thomas would be healed,” recalls Thomas’ father, Damian. “That’s pretty much exactly what happened.”

Father Kaz explains it this way: “I asked his parents to surrender their son to God in trust and thank Him for giving him to them. After a prayer of thanksgiving and of surrender to the Father, we asked for the grace of healing through the intercession of [then] Blessed Stanislaus. After praying an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be, we prayed trustingly Blessed Stanislaus’ invocation to the Mother of God — ‘May the Virgin Mary’s Immaculate

Conception be our health and our protection’ — during which God gave us peaceful confidence that He had heard our prayer.”

The “Stanislaus” in question is St. Stanislaus Papczynski (1631-1701), Founder of the Marian Fathers and friend in Heaven to those who call upon him in prayer. More specifically — and as approved by the Holy See — he is “patron of those in mortal danger.”

The evidence speaks for itself.

Devotion grows worldwide

The name St. Stanislaus Papczynski doesn’t exactly roll off the tongue like, say, St. Padre Pio. Nor has it yet infused



More than 100,000 people filled St. Peter’s Square for the canonization of Stanislaus Papczynski and Maria Elizabeth Hesselblad, the foundress of the Bridgettine Sisters.

itself into popular Catholic culture to the extent of, say, St. John Paul II, St. Faustina Kowalska, and St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

But two years after Pope Francis canonized the Marians’ Founder in Rome — an event the Marians eagerly awaited for more than 300 years — devotion to him has, in the words of the Marians’ Superior General, the Very Rev. Fr. Andrzej Pakula, MIC, “exploded in an inexplicable way.”

In Ukraine, soldiers now carry pictures of St. Stanislaus with them as their patron. Knowing that St. Stanislaus himself overcame difficulties in school, students in Asia carry his picture as well. In the Philippines, couples struggling to conceive children now pray through his intercession.

Pregnant women in Rwanda’s Nyakinama parish know to pray before a new St. Stanislaus statue before entering a health center there. Two years ago, a parish near Kigali became the first in the world placed under St. Stanislaus’ invocation.

In St. Stanislaus’ native Poland, he’s been a folk hero since the time he walked the earth. Following his canon-

ization on June 5, 2016, so many pilgrims began visiting his tomb that the archbishop of Warsaw established it as the Diocesan Shrine of St. Stanislaus.

More than 150,000 books on St. Stanislaus have sold in Poland and two films have been produced that feature him.

In the United States, Marian Helpers have taken on the side ministry of handing out St. Stanislaus prayercards.

Knowing what they know, the Marian Fathers and Marian Helpers cannot help but to extol the virtues of St. Stanislaus Papczynski. And what is it that they know?

That he answers prayers and that following his spiritual example leads to salvation itself.

“Saint Stanislaus is proof God is working in my life,” said Marian Helper Ricardo Escueta of Los Angeles, who credits his healing from cancer to St. Stanislaus’ intercession.

‘Inexplicable phenomena’

As to answered prayers, the Marians’ Founder has been doing that for more than three centuries. But in the two years following his canonization, his spiritual sons, working now in 20 nations, report his work in Heaven has exponentially increased.

“Many inexplicable phenomena have come to pass practically in every place where the Marian Fathers minister,” says Fr. Andrzej.

One recent case concerns a terminally ill Filipino baby healed in his mother’s womb after the mother recited a novena to St. Stanislaus.

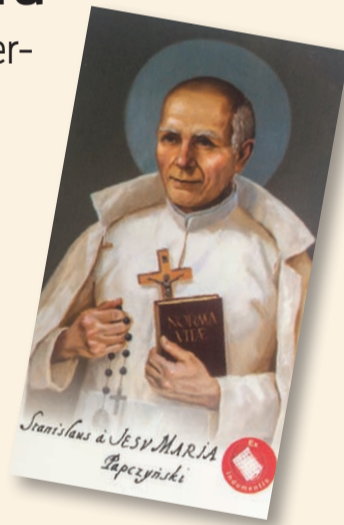
“In Rwanda a short time ago, great devotion to St.



In a photo taken by Damian Duarte, his family, including Thomas (center, front row) meets with the Very Rev. Fr. Kaz Chwalek, MIC, five years after Thomas’ unexplained healing.

Obtain a relic prayercard

If you are interested, we have prayercards available that were specially designed for the canonization of St. Stanislaus Papczynski. The prayercard carries an embedded second-class relic: a piece of cloth in which the bones of St. Stanislaus were wrapped. To order, visit ShopMercy.org or call 1-800-462-7426. (50 cents; product code: B39-CPPC3)



Stanislaus broke out, after which a woman was healed of cancer,” says Fr. Andrzej. “In Brazil, many ask for St. Stanislaus relics and novenas because the news spread that a pregnant woman received the grace of the survival of the baby in her womb, despite incurable diseases.”

And of course there’s Thomas. Had it been needed, Fr. Kaz, the Marians’ provincial superior, says Thomas’ medical case could easily have been submitted to the Holy See for approval as a miracle, a step required for beatification and canonization.

The miracle approved by the Holy See that led to St. Stanislaus’ canonization involved the healing of a 20-year-old, terminally ill Polish woman shortly after Blessed Stanislaus’ beatification in 2007. The beatification miracle itself involved a fetus brought back to life in Poland as a result of prayers by a desperate family member.

The Marians are quick to point out that not everyone who prays for a physical

healing through St. Stanislaus receives one. That’s up to God. Moreover, when we talk of “mortal danger,” that includes spiritual crisis, as well.

“For instance, many, many people have had family members return to the Church through prayers to Father Founder,” says Br. Andrew Maczynski, MIC, vice-postulator for the Marian Causes of Canonization, who has stacks of letters from around the world reporting graces received through St. Stanislaus’ intercession.

All signs point to mercy

Coupled with his continuing work from Heaven, St. Stanislaus’ spiritual legacy on earth continues to attract devotees. Saint Stanislaus modeled holiness. He called upon



With the official portrait of St. Stanislaus behind him, Pope Francis canonized the Marians' Founder on June 5, 2016, thereby enrolling him "among the saints ... to be venerated as such by the whole Church."

people to build themselves into a "mystical temple of God," maintained by means of prayer, sacrifice, submission to the Lord, and love of neighbor.

"We can talk about a true devotion to a saint only when the faithful consciously choose to imitate his virtues," said Fr. Wojciech Skora, MIC, former custodian of St. Stanislaus Papczynski's tomb in Poland. "And this is already happening. Our pilgrims tell us, 'Father Papczynski had to overcome so many obstacles in his life, but he always trusted in God, in every circumstance. I would like to do the same.'"

Born into a blacksmith's family, St. Papczynski had the Virgin Mary by his side from the outset. His mother entrusted him to Our Lady when he was still in the womb, during a harrowing river crossing that nearly drowned mother and child.

So strong was his devotion to the Blessed Mother, he named his religious Congregation for her Immaculate Conception — nearly 200 years before the Church proclaimed the Immaculate Conception a dogma of the faith. As St. Stanislaus knew, the mystery of Mary's Immaculate Conception reveals God the Father's great love for humanity, shown through the redemptive sacrifice of His Son, Jesus, first in preserving His Mother from original sin and then through Baptism to all mankind.

It has not gone unnoticed that, in St. Stanislaus, God has provided yet another powerful Pole through which to promote His merciful love. Indeed, the spirituality of St. Stanislaus flows along the same circuitry as that of 20th century Polish saints Faustina, John Paul II, and Maximilian Kolbe.

At a time when most preachers dwelt on a wrathful God

and the fate of the unfaithful, St. Stanislaus predominantly focused on the *mercy* of God and the *fate of the faithful* — a catechetical corrective that remains at the heart of the Marians' apostolic work today.

Indeed, the Marians today point to Divine Providence to explain the remarkable and reaffirming fact that the central theme of St. Stanislaus' ministry reoccurs later in the Divine Mercy revelations of St. Faustina, which the Marians have promulgated since the 1940s from their Stockbridge, Massachusetts-based province.

Furthermore, the Marians' flourishing Holy Souls Sodality, based in Stockbridge, has as its taproot St. Stanislaus' own visions of the Holy Souls in Purgatory. He would tell his confreres, "Pray, brethren, for the souls in Purgatory, for they suffer unbearably."

Saint Stanislaus taught that we are to live with our attention on dying, looking toward our ultimate meeting with God.

He modeled such a life, one of intimate engagement with God and with the world. He himself served as a chaplain in the Polish army at a time when foreign invaders plundered his native land. Having experienced poverty and even homelessness, he was especially sensitive to the needs of the poor. He took the Word of God to the socially marginalized whose spiritual needs were overlooked. Witnessing widespread alcoholism, he taught sobriety and prayer as effective curatives against all forms of dependency.

This is St. Stanislaus, our friend in Heaven.

"He's still making sure the work is being done," says Fr. Kaz.

MH

Prayer to Obtain Graces through the Intercession of St. Stanislaus Papczyński

Saint Stanislaus, gracious intercessor before God, defender of the oppressed and patron of those in mortal danger, you always zealously served Jesus and His Immaculate Mother for the salvation of immortal souls, and you took pity on every misery. Trusting in your intercession, I have recourse to you, and I ask that you do not deny me your help. By your earnest prayers, obtain for me from God the grace ... [state prayer intention] for which I beg you with trust, and help me, all my life long, to fulfill the will of the Heavenly Father. Amen.



Father Dan Cambra, MIC, serves as director of the [Marian Evangelization Team](#) and the [Holy Souls Sodality](#).

MARY IMMACULATE AND THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?

By Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC

I'm often asked, "Why is it that your religious Congregation — named for the Immaculate Conception — puts so much emphasis on the Holy Souls in Purgatory? What's the connection?"

I'll give you the simplistic answer first: Our Founder, St. Stanislaus Papczynski (1631-1701), had an abiding devotion to the mystery of Mary's Immaculate Conception, *and* it so happens that, like many great saints, he also received visions of the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

That's an easy and accurate explanation, good enough for most people. Others want more. "But," they wonder, "surely something more profound was afoot when God saw to it that a Congregation named for the Immaculate Conception has as a founding mission a devotion to the Holy Souls in Purgatory."

To them I say, "Excellent point! How much time do you have?"

Seriously, it is an excellent point, one that draws us into deeper realities of our faith. Let's take a look.

Reality 1: Heaven

Heaven exists, and God "wills everyone to be saved," St. Paul tells us (1 Tim 2:4). Those who die in God's grace and friendship — and who are perfectly purified — go to Heaven, joining the Holy Trinity, Mary, the angels, and saints (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1023).

Reality 2: Hell

Hell exists, and "whoever does not love remains in death," the Apostle John writes (1 Jn 3:14). Indeed, "we cannot be united with God unless we freely choose to love him. ... To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God's merciful love means remaining separated from Him forever by our own free choice" (*Catechism*, 1033).

Reality 3: Purgatory

Purgatory exists. Saint Paul writes that we are to be brought "holy, without blemish, and irreproachable before [God]" (Col 1:22). The existence of Purgatory logically follows from two facts: our imperfection on earth and our perfection in Heaven. Therefore, the souls in Purgatory, though destined for Heaven, must first undergo their "final purification" (*Catechism*, 1031), which cleanses them from past wrongdoing for which they have not fully atoned.

Yes, God gave St. Stanislaus the grace to see the reality of Purgatory. I've heard it described that at least on one occasion a hole opened up under the altar, and he encountered the souls in Purgatory begging for help. Knowing full well that the souls in Purgatory cannot gain merit for themselves, St. Stanislaus urged people to double up on prayers and penances on their behalf.

On another occasion, while he was saying Mass, the ground underneath him suddenly became transparent. He could see the souls of those who were benefitting from the prayers he

was offering for them through the sacrifice of the Holy Mass.

During his lifetime, St. Stanislaus ministered to the marginalized. For him then and for us today, the marginalized include both the living and the dead, though the latter are concealed by a very thin veil.

How does Mary's Immaculate Conception figure into all of this?

By her Immaculate Conception — which kept her free from sin — Mary became a channel of graces and living proof of God's love and care for all of humanity. And St. Stanislaus explains, "[S]he is concerned for us in the same way that she was concerned for Christ the Lord."

By "us," he means both the living *and* the dead.

When it came time to write the Marian Constitutions, St. Stanislaus made it clear that we Marians, "under the guidance and patronage of Mary, Immaculately Conceived, [are] to strive earnestly with the Church, in the Church and through the Church so that all who are still journeying here on earth, *as well as those who are being purified after this life*, may attain the fulness of maturity and eternal happiness in Christ with all the saints." (Emphasis mine.)

In other words, we Marians dedicate ourselves to purging sin from individual souls and ultimately from all of creation. And we do this through Mary.

Remember at Lourdes that Mary identified herself to St. Bernadette as "the Immaculate Conception," implying she's not *merely holy*, but rather, by the special indwelling of the Holy Spirit, she is *holiness realized*.

We know her concerns extend into Purgatory. In Fatima, Our Lady speaks of a particular woman in Purgatory. In one of St. Faustina's visions of Purgatory, she discovers Our Lady providing comfort to the suffering souls.

Inevitably I am also asked, "What does this mean for all of us in practical terms?"

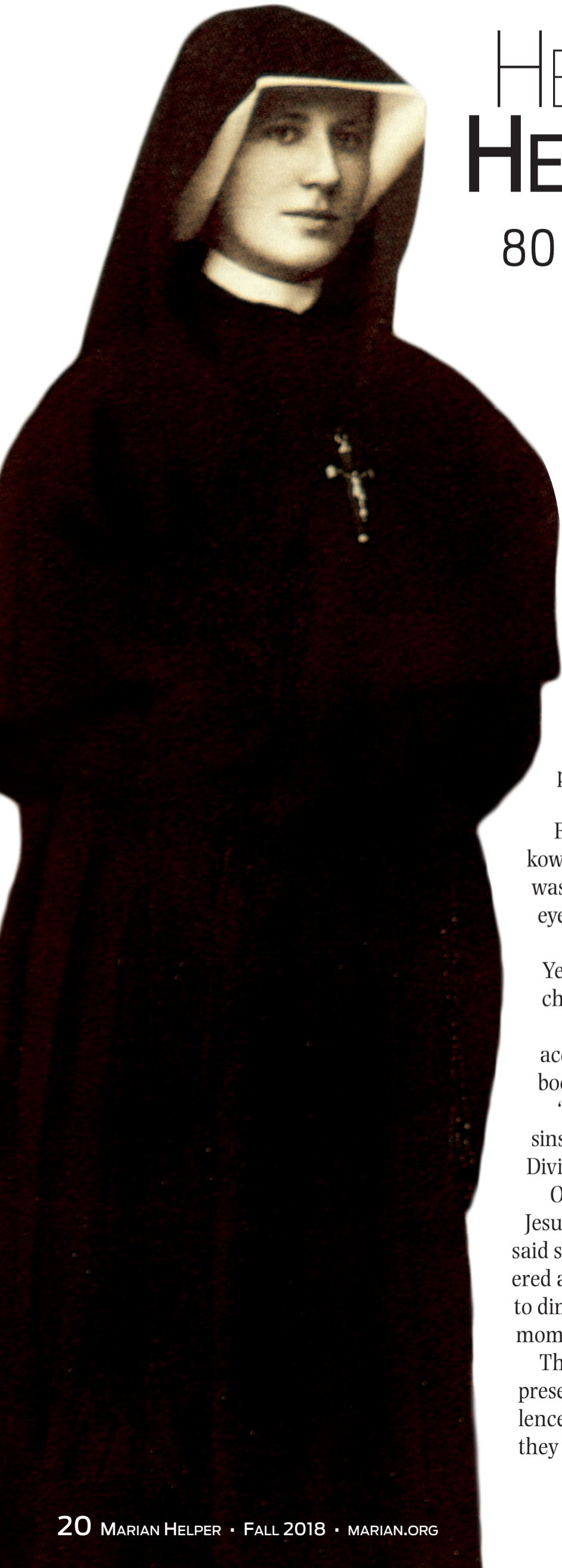
Part of St. Stanislaus' plan — part of God's divine plan — is that we, the living, become holy by aligning ourselves with Mary, the "model and source" of holiness (*Catechism*, 2030). We thereby become, with her, merciful as God calls us to be merciful (see Lk 6:36).

We're to entrust to Mary Immaculate our own salvation — and that of the Holy Souls.

God invites us to continuously turn to Mary, offering her all our prayers, works, joys, and sufferings. And as we pray to hasten the purification of the souls in Purgatory, keep in mind we also hasten our own purification. MH

We invite you to join the Marians this November in our month-long remembrance of all the faithful departed. Visit marian.org/b39 to join us in our November Remembrance.

Visit PrayForSouls.org to learn more about the Marians' dedication to the souls in Purgatory.



HER LESSON IN LIVING HER LESSON IN DYING

80 YEARS AGO, ST. FAUSTINA LEFT
THIS WORLD FOR THE NEXT

This is what tuberculosis can do to you: Attack the lungs, kill tissue, and spread to the brain and the bones. Coughing becomes a given — sometimes mucus, sometimes blood. Breathing can become difficult. You may wheeze and feel chest pains and sweat excessively. You may become fatigued and feverish and lose weight such that you become a mere fragment of your former physical self.

Eighty years ago, on Oct. 5, 1938, St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, the great apostle of Divine Mercy, died at the age of 33 from complications from tuberculosis and other ailments, which included internal hemorrhaging.

Firsthand accounts collected by biographers over the years attest to the fact Faustina suffered a physically agonizing death. Yet, just as Faustina shows us how to live — united to God's will — in her death, Faustina shows us how to die. She was prepared and unafraid.

Here is how Sr. Stella Kozłowska described the once-attractive Faustina just days before her death, as explained in Ewa K. Czackowska's *Faustina: The Mystic & Her Message* (Marian Press): "Her face was gaunt, and its shape had changed. Her skin was yellow, and her eyes were huge and sunken"

Other sisters later said they found it painful to even look at her. Yet they reported that, all the while, Faustina remained stoic, even cheerful and smiling.

"Sister dear, you are not afraid of death?" Sr. Crescentia asked her, according to Maria Tarnawska in her now-out-of-print Marian Press book, *Sister Faustina Kowalska — Her Life and Mission*.

"Why should I be?" Faustina responded from her deathbed. "All my sins and imperfections will be consumed like straw in the fire of the Divine Mercy."

On the day of her death, Faustina, in agony, announced, "Today Jesus is going to take me with Him," writes Czackowska. Faustina said so, not only with confidence, but with longing. The sisters gathered around her for one last time and prayed for her as her mind began to dim. The future saint took her last breath at 10:45 p.m. In her last moments, she lay quiet and peaceful.

The sisters who visited her in her last days reported feeling God's presence in the room. Even those few sisters who showed ambivalence with regard to Faustina in her healthier days reported feeling they were in the presence of a saint.

Her pursuit of mystical union

Saint Faustina's now-famous *Diary* gives us a fuller picture of her state of mind as she approached death. As her physical pain and exhaustion grew in intensity, so, too, did her mystical union with Christ.

She details a three-day retreat less than four months before her death (see *Diary*, 1753-1779).

During the retreat (led by Christ Himself), He assured her of the sanctification and salvation available through the Sacraments, particularly the Holy Eucharist and Confession. He taught her to totally abandon herself to His will; to put her "self-love in the last place"; shun gossip "like the plague"; act kindly to those who sought to cause her harm; hide in His Heart whenever confronted by temptation and discouragement; trust He is always with her; pray for the sick and dying; and to always be adorned by the virtues of humility, purity of intention, and love.

But He also minces no words with regards to the sufferings ahead. He says He will "not delude" her "with prospects of peace," and tells her that her "body and soul will often be in the midst of fire."

"Although you will not feel My presence on some occasions," Christ says, "I will always be with you. Do not fear; My grace will be with You" (1767).

Jesus directs His words as much to Faustina as to us. Her recording of the retreat reads like a crash course geared to all who seek holiness.

An eternal ellipsis

Prepared thusly, Faustina's happiness, spiritual strength, and glorification of Jesus became all the more pronounced.

By then, she could no longer live a normal community life. Still, strengthened through the Holy Eucharist, she taught herself to put her sufferings to divine use, to trans-



In 1966, 28 years after Sr. Faustina's death, her mortal remains were transferred to their final resting place in the small chapel outside Krakow, Poland, on the grounds of the convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy.

form them into a daily oblation for the salvation of souls.

Though undated, Faustina's final *Diary* entry is believed to have been in mid-June 1938. She no longer had the strength to continue. But by then, what else could she say? Save for a final Confession and Last Rites, she was fully prepared to die. In her final *Diary* entry, she writes:

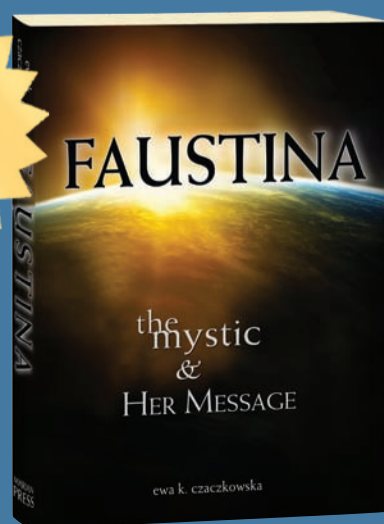
Today, the Majesty of God is surrounding me. There is no way that I can help myself to prepare better. I am thoroughly enwrapped in God. My soul is being inflamed by His love. I only know that I love and am loved. That is enough for me. I am trying my best to be faithful throughout the day to the Holy Spirit and to fulfill His demands. I am trying my best for interior silence to be able to hear His voice ... (1828).

That's how the *Diary* ends — with an ellipsis. That's how St. Faustina died, too, with an ellipsis, so to speak, a dot, dot, dot indicating that the story continues. Yes, life everlasting has only just begun.

As it was for a saint, so it is for ourselves: When we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus' Merciful Heart, we should rest assured that someday, like Faustina, we will rest in peace. MH

— Felix Carroll

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THE GENTLEST WEAPON

THE WORLD NEEDS TO HEAR FROM MOTHERS

By Terry Peloquin

If you were in a war, would you be afraid of 18 women in the basement of a shrine?

Depends what kind of war you're fighting. Mind you, they were no innocuous bunch engaged in idle chit-chat. These women were personally recruited by Br. John Luth, MIC, to serve in a spiritual war — a war for souls. And they were armed with something Pope Francis said could heal the world.

Inspired strategy

Brother John's inspiration for the gathering came from Pope Francis' homily on Jan. 1. Particularly, these words:

If our faith is not to be reduced merely to an idea or a doctrine, we must have a mother's heart, one which knows how to keep the tender love of God, and to feel the heartbeat of all around us.

Brother John thought to create a roundtable to "break ground" in discussing the maternal heart and "its role in healing our Church, in healing our world."

He quoted the Venerable Servant of God Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, who said, "The world in which we live is the battleground of the Church."

"Now 44 years later," said Br. John, "we still face a threat to Christian civilization. ... If we don't [rescue] the family, we will lose the Church."

And so, on Saturday, July 21, the 18 women and more than a dozen observers gathered in the lower level of the

National Shrine of The Divine Mercy to participate in a "Motherhood and Faith" roundtable.

Winning the battle

The event was moderated by Rose Folsom, a lay member of the Dominican order, a speaker, author, and workshop leader. The guests and invited observers identified themselves as wives, mothers, grandmothers, professionals, volunteers, homemakers, and, above all, Catholics.

Rose quoted Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC, from his homily that preceded the roundtable: "The mothers of the Church are women who converse to share the wisdom of the ages on how to bring the Kingdom of God to earth. Because souls are won over — *won over* — by love."

"That's why you are here," she emphasized. "You, mothers ... are the ones that the *world* needs to hear from!"

Rose divided Pope Francis' quote into sections, each building in meaning and scope. After each topic, Rose would give a summarized response for all to approve or amend. For example, she asked panelists, "What reduces faith to mere

doctrine?” and distilled their responses to: “What I’m hearing from you is *When the heart is missing, faith becomes just an idea.*”

Never give up

Rose asked participants to list words that describe a mother’s heart. *Vulnerable. Gentle. Open. Pierced. Forgiving. Understanding. Grateful. Docile. Patient. Reflective. Protective.* And more.

Persevering. This word resonated with the group.

“You never stop being a mother,” said Barbara, who works with the Marians’ Divine Mercy Intercessory Prayerline in Stockbridge. She noted that the Prayerline continually receives prayer requests from mothers concerned about their children. “Women in their 80s and 90s ask, ‘Please pray with me. I do not want to leave this earth until my children are saved.’”

“You can’t give up on your own children,” said one panelist. Another continued the sentiment, “If distances make it more difficult to communicate, send holy cards, send medals. Maybe you’ll never see what it does, but it’s *there.*”

Others said they *had* seen the results of their persistence. One panelist spoke of how her son had moved to Utah to be with his Mormon girlfriend. For years, the mother prayed for him to be a faithful Catholic. Then the young man called her to say her prayers had been answered. He had witnessed a Mormon assembly that pained him. There he learned that because a member, a girl, had committed an offense, the church excommunicated her and her family disowned her.

“He told me, ‘We wouldn’t do that. That’s not in our hearts.’” The mercy he had learned from his own mother enlightened his judgment.

One woman recalled the time her estranged teenage daughter announced she wanted to return home. “When I went to meet her at the bus, she cried and said, ‘I didn’t think you’d be there.’”

Others shared stories of sons and daughters involved in extra-marital affairs, abusing drugs, and even dabbling with Satanism.

“Give them to Mary, and Mary does the work,” said one. Another recommended a specific prayer: “‘Our Lady of Guadalupe, crush the demons seeking to destroy my son/daughter.’ And pray it every day.”

Building the Kingdom of God

“So,” Rose asked, “what practical things can we do to bring the heart of a mother to our community, the Church, and the world? How do we build up the Kingdom of God?”

Participants suggested:

- Notice the needs of others. Much like St. Mother Teresa, actively look.
- Follow up. After you ask someone facing difficulty how they are doing, ask again at another time. Some people are inclined to put up a good front.
- Learn from our children. Be honest, be observant, be open.
- Compliment someone. Find something good to say. People punish themselves by comparing themselves to unrealistic standards.
- Imagine what others are going through. See every



Lay Dominican speaker and writer Rose Folsom moderated Br. John Luth’s round-table for “Mothers and Faith.” She writes a blog at VirtueConnection.com.

person as a child of God.

- God sends people into our lives. Sometimes all you have to do is listen.
- We can’t do everything. But do something, and it will create a ripple effect.
- Be available to those in your path.
- Mentor those who have not been mothered.
- You may be the only Church the world ever sees. Show your faith and love.

One panelist, Sheila, asked everyone in the room to make a commitment to one another. “Let’s promise to pray the Three Efficacious Hail Marys every day for each other’s children.” The group agreed.

One guest said, “Now we need to complement what we did today with a roundtable for fathers.”

Brother John lowered his head, failing to hide a big grin. He looked up again and said, “When I asked my superior [the Very Rev. Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC] for permission for this roundtable, he said, ‘Make sure it won’t be one event. Not just for women. Do one for fathers.’”

It was a condition Br. John admits he was happy to accept. MH



2018 First Vows and Renewal of Vows.



2018 Perpetual Vows.

An answer to the ‘culture of death’

By Marc Massery

Despite the culture of death — and a nationwide drought in vocations to the priesthood — the Marian Fathers continue to spring to new life. In fact, this year they’re harvesting a bumper crop of zealous men willing to give their lives to Christ and His Church.

By God’s grace, the community welcomed 11 men into formation this summer — more new vocations than they’ve accepted at one time in decades. The Marians in the United States now have more than 30 men in formation — bucking both national and worldwide trends. Worldwide, vocations have been in decline since 2012, according to the Vatican.

What’s going on here?

Well first, the Marian Fathers have not always enjoyed such growth. After the sexual revolution of the 20th century, vocations to the priesthood plummeted throughout the United States, including for the Marians.

For instance, Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, the director of vocations, joined the Marians in 1993 with three other men. “All of them left,” he said. “Just to give you an idea of how things were not going very well for vocations, the last person before me that entered and stayed was Fr. Joseph Roesch, MIC, in 1986. So between 1986 and 1993 — seven years — no guys who entered stayed. None. Not one.”

Father Joe, the vicar general, remembers these rela-

tively barren years well. He said, “[When I joined in 1986], I was the only one [to enter novitiate] that year ... I remember one of the older priests saying to me, ‘You are the hope of our province.’ They looked at me like, ‘Finally, God sent us a decent vocation here.’ Back then, if just one vocation came along and it was good, it was like they were holding onto some hope.”

Throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s, new vocations for the Marians remained stagnant, even after they had established a formation house at Franciscan University of Steubenville, in Ohio.

Father Donald said, “We were getting one, two, maybe three per year. Maybe. Quite a few of them wouldn’t even stay. They would end up leaving and sometimes we’d be left with none.”

Then Pope John Paul II died.

Phone ‘ringing off the hook’

The whole world watched the funeral of that saint on TV in 2005.

“Since then,” said Fr. Donald, “my phone at the vocation office has been ringing off the hook, and it hasn’t stopped. After 2005, we began to accept three to four per year, then four to five, then six to seven, and now we’re averaging between six and nine guys.



“I really think that when John Paul II died, his legacy still lives on. His example of priesthood was so strong and so powerful, and I think that his great love for Divine Mercy and Our Lady has carried over ... and that legacy continues.”

Father Donald said that at least 90 percent of the men who join the Marians today have experienced a conversion. “It’s very rare to find a man who grew up in the perfect family and never strayed from the faith or dabbled in the things of the world,” he said.

Mercy and Mary

Father Donald, who had a radical conversion himself, considers the recent growth of the Marians a testament to Divine Mercy.

Father Donald said, “They’ve experienced mercy and now they’re going to be apostles of mercy. When you share that commonality with other guys, they come in and they talk to each other about their struggles in the past with purity. They talk about their struggles with materialism in the world.

“God is calling men to be apostles of Divine Mercy and to want to promote Our Lady and to want to promote solid teaching. I can honestly say not one man who is joining us has got funky theological ideas. They want to be part of a movement that gives people solid catechesis and theology, because they know themselves that they didn’t grow up with it. For most of them, it led to them getting involved in bad stuff and acting out sinfully. Now they want to be in an environ-

ment where they don’t have to fight that battle.”

Father Thaddaeus Lancton, MIC, ordained in 2015, said, “Generally, devotion to Our Lady, Divine Mercy, and fidelity to the Church are the hallmarks of the Marians and are qualities that often attract vocations. The Marians try to be in the heart of the Church — neither ahead nor behind her. That appealed to me.”

Father Joe believes the Marians’ mission — which includes faithfulness to the Magisterium, promoting and honoring the Immaculate Conception, praying for the Holy Souls in Purgatory, assisting the Church wherever the need is greatest, and promoting Divine Mercy — addresses many of our culture’s biggest problems.

“Our charism is an important one for the world, because our culture is just a ‘culture of death,’ as John Paul II said, and not of life. And our charism is really tied to life,” he said. “Countries all over the world want the old to die because of the cost associated with caring for them and it’s easier to just get rid of them. There’s a lack of attention to life at conception. They’re discarding children because they’re not perfect or they’re inconvenient. Praying for the Holy Souls in Purgatory — people die and everybody forgets about them and they think they don’t have to pray for them.”

He continued, “The Church today, in all different parts of the world, needs the Marian charism.”

Thankfully, the more Marian priests, the further the seeds of their charism can spread, with the hope that the Lord will one day transform our culture into one of life.

MH



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FIVE FIRST SATURDAYS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

WE CANNOT
CONTINUE TO
IGNORE THIS

By Chris Sparks



One of the clearest examples of spiritual attack that I've ever seen is the misdirection and silence around the First Saturdays devotion.

Now, even as I write that, I bet you're being tempted to distraction.

Or you're thinking, "Oh, yes, I've been meaning to make the First Saturdays." But somehow, by the time the first Saturday of the month rolls around, you'll forget, or you'll be busy, or you just won't be able to find the energy, or ... or ... or.

I'm speaking from experience. It's a fight to remember the First Saturdays, let alone find the time to perform the devotion. Further, I often hear from good Catholics that they've never heard of the First Saturdays, or else they've heard of them, but don't know what's required.

I'm going to venture out on a limb here and say that the First Saturdays are the most obvious remedy for the state of the world today, and at the same time, the most neglected.

But why? To understand, let's briefly review the First Saturdays.

What are the First Saturdays?

The First Saturdays devotion comes to us as a result of Our Lady's apparitions to Servant of God Lucia dos Santos and her cousins at Fatima in 1917. In the secret of Fatima, given July 13, 1917, we read:

You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. ... I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays. If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace

True to her word, Our Lady came to then-Sr. Lucia on Dec. 10, 1925, and said:

See, my daughter, my Heart encircled by thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. Do you, at least, strive to console me. Tell them that I promise to assist at the hour of death with the graces necessary for salvation all those who, in order to make reparation to me, on the First Saturday of five successive months, go to Confession, receive Holy Communion, say five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for a quarter of an hour, meditating on the ... mysteries of the Rosary.

Why *five* First Saturdays in particular? Jesus explained this to Sr. Lucia on May 29-30, 1930, saying:

There are five kinds of offenses and blasphemies spoken against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

First: blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception

Second: against her Virginity

Third: against the Divine Maternity, refusing, at the same time, to receive her as the Mother of mankind

Fourth: those who seek publicly to implant, in the hearts of children, indifference, disrespect, and even hate for this Immaculate Mother

Fifth: those who revile her directly in her sacred images

Here, dear daughter, is the motive that led the Immaculate Heart of Mary to petition Me to ask for this small act of reparation. And, out of regard for her, to move My mercy to pardon those souls who have had the misfortune to offend her. As for you, seek endlessly, with your prayers and sacrifices, to move Me to mercy in regard to these poor souls.

If we've made the Five First Saturdays once, are we done for life? "No!" writes noted Mariologist Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC. "You can and should make the Five First Saturdays

more than once. In fact, I highly recommend it as a great spiritual practice!"

At war

Here we have a blindingly obvious and fairly simple request from Our Lady. Everything we need to perform this devotion is available to us in the average parish. Most parishes wouldn't have to add anything to their Saturday schedules! Just stick a reminder in the bulletin the week before a First Saturday.

The devotion is easy. All its elements are basic Catholicism. And Fatima is about as fully approved by the Church as any Marian apparition can ever be.

The Blessed Mother didn't ask us for much, did she? In exchange for the consecration of Russia and for the practice of the Five First Saturdays devotion, she promised us that her Immaculate Heart would triumph and an era of peace would be given to the world.

Further, the devotion can and should bring Catholics from across the political spectrum together in

unity. After all, the First Saturdays joins together private devotion, answering the menace of the errors of Communist Russia, and pursuit of world peace.

But how many of you have made the First Saturdays since we last discussed them in these pages ("Fatima: What are we missing?" Winter, 2017)? And how many parishes have a First Saturday devotion as part of the life of their community?

We're approaching the 100th anniversary of Our Lady's request for the First Saturdays, in 2025. So let's set a goal! Working together with our priests, deacons, and bishops, let's make sure the First Saturdays devotion is being practiced in every parish by 2025.

We've tried everything else to bring peace these last 100 years. Now let's try Our Lady's way!

MH

What to do

On the first Saturday of five successive months, do the following, all with the intention of reparations to her Immaculate Heart:

- **Go to Confession;**
- **receive Holy Communion;**
- **say five decades of the Rosary; and**
- **keep Our Lady company for 15 minutes, meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary.**

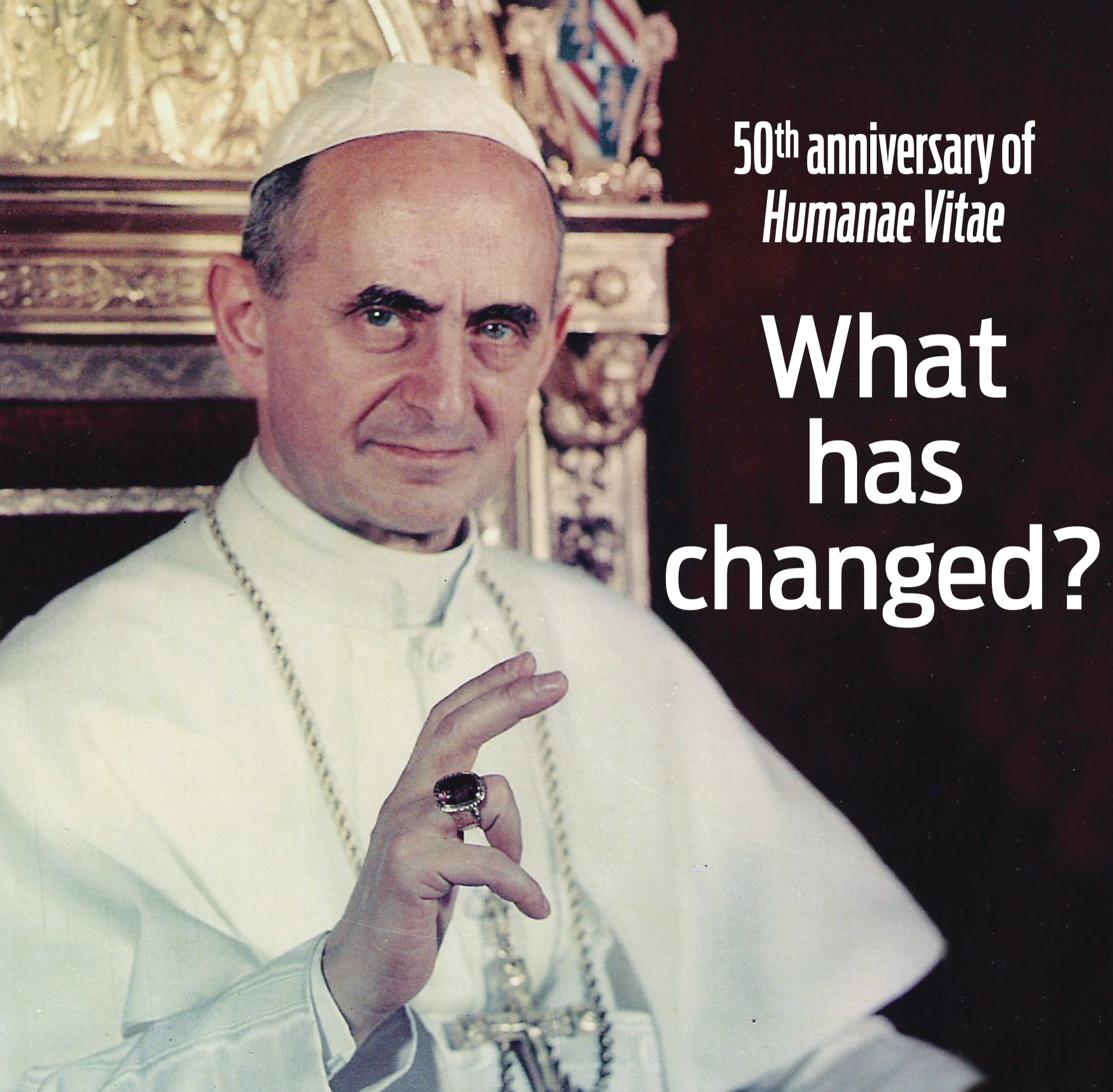


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50th anniversary of
Humanae Vitae

What has changed?

By Robert Stackpole, STD

Since Pope Blessed Paul VI published his encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae (Of Human Life)* on birth control in 1968, almost everything has changed.

The world has gone from the sexual revolution to the hook-up culture. Europe, Russia, and China give birth to so few babies that experts now call this population implosion a “demographic winter.” Pornography has spread through the Internet. Families are falling apart or never form at all. In the United States, less than a third

of children now grow up with married biological parents under the same roof.

What does all this have to do with *Humanae Vitae*? Several things seem clear enough.

In the 1960s and 1970s, when the birth control pill and other forms of contraception became socially acceptable, their advocates hailed them as the magic solution to a whole host of social problems. They argued that contraception would lead to a decrease in sexually transmitted

disease and teen pregnancy. They argued that abortion and child abuse would become rare — because “every child would be a wanted child.” Birth control, they argued, would reduce marital stress caused by too many children, and thus reduce the divorce rate. Contraception would also lead to greater respect for women, who could now take control of their bodies and no longer be seen as mere “baby-making machines.” Women finally could have fulfilling careers, uninterrupted by the “slavery” of child-bearing and child-rearing.

Pope Paul VI, however, predicted that the new contraceptive culture would have precisely the *opposite* effects, including a sharp increase in divorce, abortion, and pornography.

The effects on divorce were, perhaps, the easiest to predict. With the spread of contraceptives came the sexual revolution and a vast increase in promiscuity, especially pre-marital and extra-marital promiscuity. Contraception made extramarital affairs less “risky,” and more extramarital affairs inevitably leads to more divorces. Incidentally, research shows that those who engage in premarital intercourse have a 50-70 percent greater likelihood of ending up divorced than those who practice premarital chastity.

Within marriage itself, contraception reduced the birthrate in most families in the western world to fewer than two children per couple. Research shows that the fewer children in a family, the greater the statistical likelihood of that family suffering a divorce. One reason for this is that couples with more children tend to work extra hard to make their marriages work, if only for the sake of their children.

Finally, contraception has proven itself an alienating factor for married couples. Instead of being bound in unconditional love — offering themselves as self-gifts to their spouses — couples who use contraception protect themselves from their own fertility. Pope St. John Paul II famously called this “the body-language of a lie.”

In all these ways, contraception became a major contributing factor to marital breakdown in the developed world. The social decay we see all around us (crime, drugs, child abuse, etc.) stems, in large part, from this breakdown in the family.

Some argue that contraceptives negate the need for abortion. But that’s not true for several reasons. The first: because contraception fails more often than people think. The condom is only about 93 percent effective. For the first year of use for young women under the age of 20, the pill has an annual failure rate of 8-13 percent (one study has it at more than 20 percent for teenage girls).

Secondly, the effects of contraceptive failure are magnified by the exponential rise in sexual promiscuity brought on by contraceptives. Moreover, some forms of contraception act as hidden abortifacients (that is, they chemically

induce abortions, with or without their users’ knowledge). That said, it’s no wonder we lack statistical evidence to support the notion that increased contraception use leads to a reduced abortion rate.

In short, since the explosion in the use of contraceptives in the 1960s, we haven’t seen a decline in the rates of divorce, abortion, sexually transmitted disease, teen pregnancy, child abuse, and pornography, as the advocates of contraception so confidently predicted. On the contrary, the rates of all of these social ills have risen, in some cases dramatically.

Who then were the true social prophets at the start of this mess back in the 1960s: the contraception advocates, or the Vicar of Christ?

As for women and their career opportunities: Paul VI did not teach that every married woman must have as many children as possible and thereby limit themselves to a life of childcare. Families have legitimate reasons for

limiting the number of children, and the Church does not oppose “responsible parenthood.” Married couples can take moral steps to avoid having more children for whom they can reasonably care. Natural Family Planning can achieve the same end — limiting the number of children conceived by a married couple in difficult circumstances — without any of the moral, medical, and social ills endemic to artificial birth control.

For his teachings on contraception in *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI was widely denounced and ridiculed, especially by western academic elites. Turns out, 50 years later, he was right all along. MH

Robert Stackpole, STD, is director of the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy, an apostolate of the Marian Fathers.

He was right

In section 17 of *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Blessed Paul VI made the following controversial predictions of what would happen in society as a result of widespread contraceptive use:

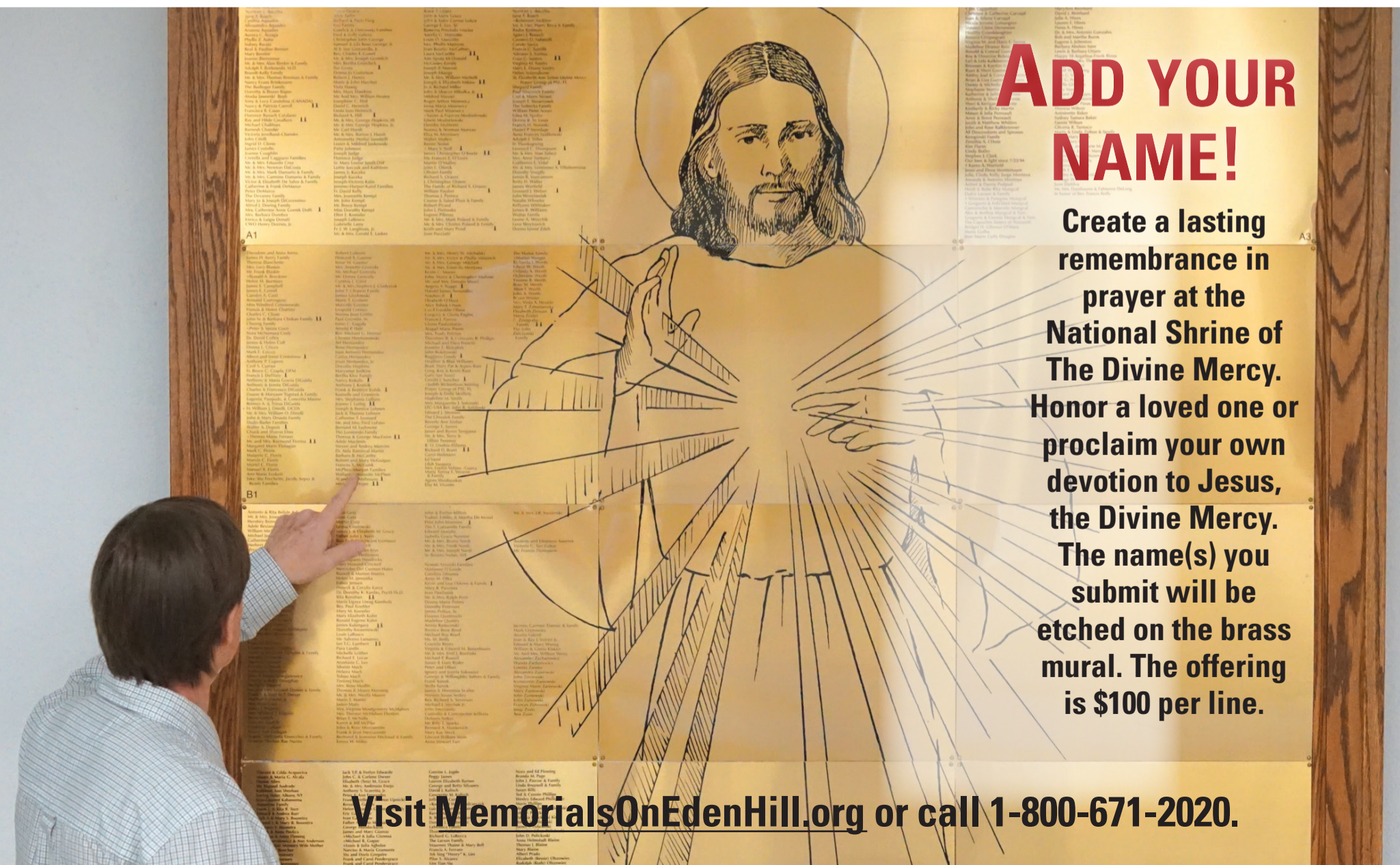
- 1) An increase in marital infidelity.
- 2) A general lowering of moral standards.
- 3) A loss of respect for women. (Man would “reduce her to being a mere instrument for the satisfaction of his own desires.”)
- 4) Governments would coerce people into using contraception and intervene in citizens’ sexual relationships.



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GIVING, FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

George and Marian Creel first heard about the humble Polish visionary St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, the Lord’s “secretary” of Divine Mercy, from their daughter, Susan, who graduated from Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio.

As the Creels drew deeper into the spirituality of this amazing young nun, they discovered the Marian Fathers, who have been official promoters of the Divine Mercy message and devotion since 1941, hardly three years after Sr. Faustina’s death. The Creels began receiving *Marian Helper* magazine — and the rest, as they say, is history. (They never expected to actually be *in* the magazine!)

Features they read on various Marian priests inspired them, including one on Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC. At a time when religious vocations are in decline, they viewed the Marians’ burgeoning vocations as a sign of the Congregation’s faithfulness to the Gospel and to the Magisterium. Clearly, God has tasked the Marians with an important work of salvation in a world desperate to know God’s mercy.

The Creels are impressed with the Marians’ formation, including their extensive theological and philosophical studies at Franciscan University and the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. By the time Marian seminarians profess their final vows, they are fully prepared for religious life. “They are the lifeblood and hope of continuing the faith,” says George, “and we need to encourage that.”

The Creels, from Davidsonville, Maryland, do, in fact, encourage the Marians’ seminarian program — prayerfully and financially. Their efforts recently hit close to home. One of their grandchildren is discerning a religious vocation. “Religious life is a process,” Marian says. “All we can do is pray for him.”

Other grandchildren — for whom Divine Mercy plays an important part in their lives — have volunteered for the Marians’ annual Divine Mercy Sunday celebration at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy.

George and Marian also have a strong devotion to the Holy Souls in Purgatory. And Marian prays the Rosary daily. These two devotions are at the core of the Marian Fathers’ spirituality, a fact that only reinforces the Creels’ affinity for each.

George has an extensive background as a business executive, so when it came to giving, he was interested in something that provided flexibility. He and Marian met with their financial advisor who helped them come up with several creative ways to make their gifts through grants from a donor-advised fund and through qualified charitable distributions from his IRA. George even served as a trustee for a time with the National Catholic Community Foundation (NCCF), which has a donor-advised fund. NCCF helps with national and international giving.

“It makes a lot of sense for anyone interested in charitable giving to use donor-advised funds and direct-from-IRA gifts,” George says.

For the Creels, supporting Marian seminarians, the priests of tomorrow, amounts to an investment in eternity itself.



Hope Ponsart Hansen is a donor relations officer for the Marians. To support our Marian seminarians, contact Ellen Miller, director of Special Gifts, at (413) 298-1380; helpers@marian.org; or Association of Marian Helpers, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Visit marian.org/PlannedGiving to learn more.

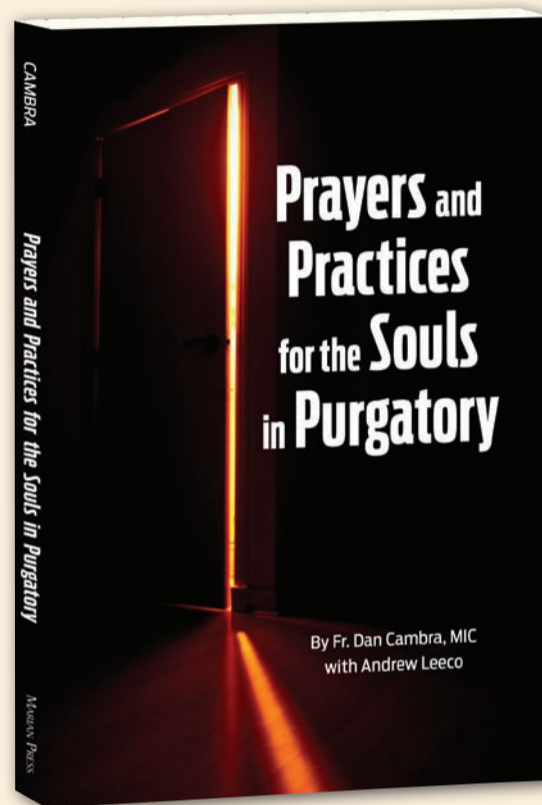


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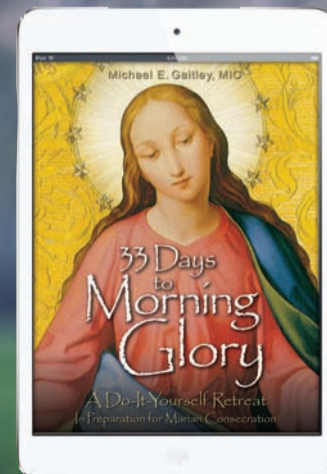
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GRACES RECEIVED

Son starts new career

When I received your Fall 2017 Marian Helper, I read with interest the “Graces Received” article about graces received through Venerable Casimir. I started crying as I thought about our youngest son, Jimmy. In recent years, he was misdiagnosed and almost died from undetected diabetes; has been in two car accidents; suffered a severe concussion; and lost his job. He ran into all kinds of health complications until he was finally cleared to pursue a new career. After reading about Fr. Casimir, I prayed to him and asked that he intercede for our son. On the following day, our son got an offer for the job he wanted, and now he’s in training. Talk about a fast response!

— JK, Liverpool,
New York

Family receives several graces

I wanted to let you know of several special graces that God granted my family and me through the intercession of Fr. Casimir. I prayed the prayer for his intercession [below] every day for several months. I prayed for a better house for us to be able to buy. We weren’t able to buy a house, but we were able to rent a much bigger house in a nice area for a price we can afford. The opportunity basically fell in our laps, and I am sure it was a special blessing granted to us through Fr. Casimir’s intercession. He also worked another grace for our son, who had been sad and seemed depressed. He wasn’t interested in anything, and he hardly smiled anymore. We found out he was being bullied in school. My husband and I also realized that we were being too hard on him. The bullying minimized,

and we began to show him more love. He’s a happy boy now. I believe it was through the intercession of Fr. Casimir, because it all happened shortly after I began praying for his intercession.

— LK, email



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

Testimonies collected and reported by the Marian priests and brothers from Portugal:

Leg pain disappears

A woman visited the tomb of Fr. Casimir in thanksgiving for a grace of healing of her knee, which the Lord granted through Fr. Casimir’s intercession. She had experienced unbearable pain and was unable to use her leg. She entrusted her health to Fr. Casimir, and shortly afterwards she was relieved from pain that had tormented her from her early youth.

Girl’s wounds finally heal

A girl had about five or six wounds on her leg. She was given various medications for a whole year without achieving any relief. Her leg remained swollen and covered with wounds. When she began praying to the Venerable Servant of God Fr. Casimir, her leg began to heal, and she eventually experienced a full recovery.

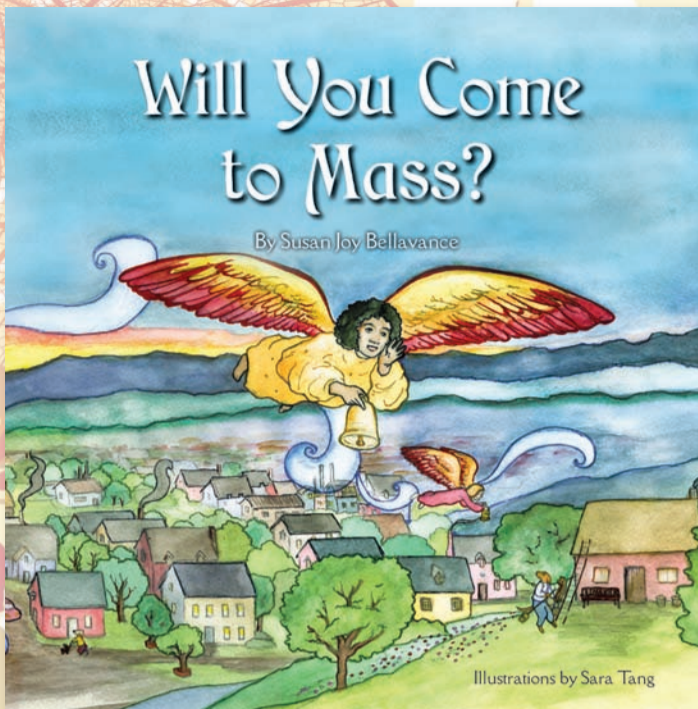
For a Venerable Casimir prayercard (B39-BCWP), call toll free 1-800-462-7426. If you have received graces through his intercession, please write: Br. Andrew Maczynski, MIC, Vice Postulator of the Marian Causes of Canonization, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Email: graces@marian.org

Prayer for a Special Grace through the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God Casimir Wyszynski

O God, Merciful Father, in the heart of Your Servant Casimir, You aroused such a great zeal for accomplishing corporal and spiritual deeds of mercy; deign to grant to me (to us) through his intercession the grace ... for which I (we) implore You. Amen.

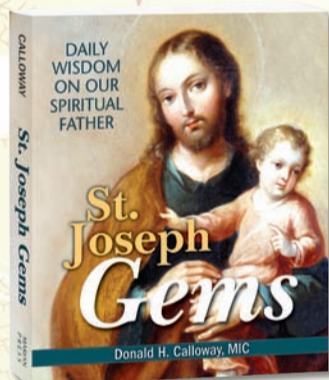
Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be to the Father ...

Newest releases from Marian Press



Will You Come to Mass?

This beautifully illustrated book inspires children and families to love and console Jesus by coming to Holy Mass. Young hearts will follow the little lamb into the arms of Jesus. In a simple but memorable way, it conveys the joy and graces that are available to all those who participate in the Holy Eucharist. **B39-WYCBK • \$12.95**

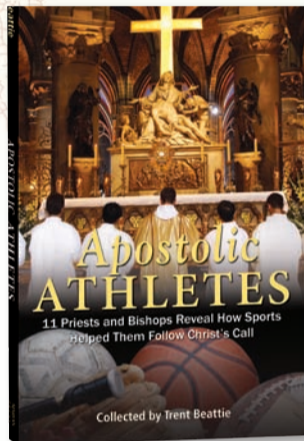
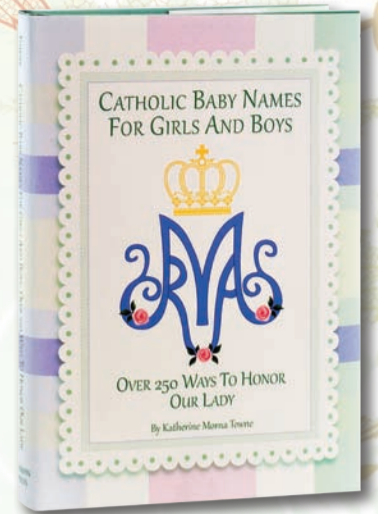


St. Joseph Gems: Daily Wisdom on Our Spiritual Father

Father Donald Calloway, MIC, has gathered the largest collection of quotes about St. Joseph to ever appear in print. Selected from the writings of popes, saints, blessed, and the many venerables of the Church, these quotes will help you rediscover the second-greatest saint in the Church, after the Blessed Virgin Mary! **B39-SJEM • \$12.95**

Catholic Baby Names for Girls and Boys

Over 250 Ways to Honor Our Lady Katherine Morna Towne has turned her ardent faith and passion for the history behind the origin of names into required reading for all Catholic couples welcoming children and even teens trying to decide on a Confirmation name! This useful, informative, and illuminating guide opens a window into the history of our faith. **B39-BABY • \$19.95**



Apostolic Athletes

11 Priests and Bishops Reveal How Sports Helped Them Follow Christ's Call The perfect gift for the sports-obsessed person in your life! Gathering the testimonies of 11 athletes turned priests and bishops, Catholic journalist Trent Beattie's latest book bears witness to the surprising ways the mercy of God can call us into His service. **B39-ATHL • \$14.95**

Shop Mercy exclusives



Marian Helper Tote

This roomy tote has plenty of pockets to keep you organized. A zippered closure and sturdy polyester construction will stand up to frequent use. Bag imprint reads, "Do justice, love goodness, walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). 18 3/4" x 14" x 4 1/2". **B39-MTBC • \$12.99**

Divine Mercy Blanket

Perfect as a throw or wall hanging, this blanket is woven from 850g cotton/polyester fiber. Machine washable. Measures 50" x 60" with 2" fringe on all four sides. **B39-WARM • \$49.95**



"Jesus, I Trust in You" Glass Water Bottle

This streamlined, glass water bottle will fit perfectly in your purse, backpack, brief-case, or tote. Let every sip you take remind you to pray "Jesus, I Trust in You." Glass with a stainless steel cap and attached carry strap. 21 oz. capacity. Dishwasher safe. 9" x 2 1/2". **B39-JWB • \$11.95**



Remember the Holy Souls in Purgatory

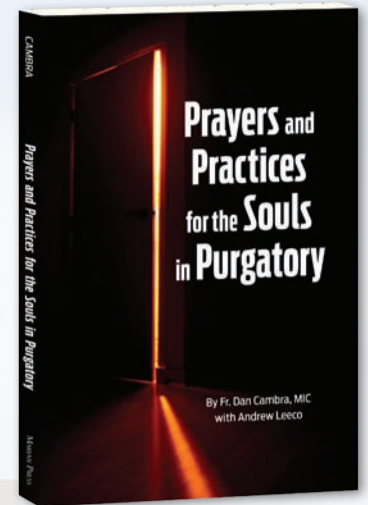


Purgatory Pack

Includes: *Purgatory: A Guide* booklet, Pamphlets: *Explanation of the St. Gertrude Prayer*; *To Eternity*; *Heaven, Hell, & Purgatory*; *Your Sorrow Will Be Turned to Joy*; *Teaching Kids to Pray for the Souls in Purgatory*; *An Introduction to Indulgences*; *Prayers with Partial Indulgences*; *The Four Daily Plenary Indulgences*; and St. Gertrude prayercard. **B39-PURGPK • \$6.95**

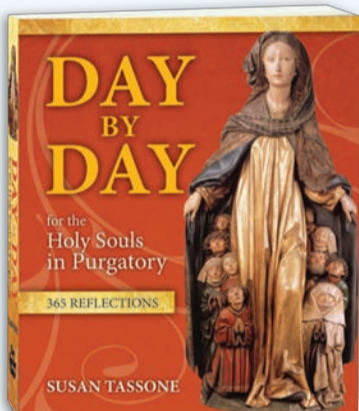
Prayers and Practices for the Souls in Purgatory

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 a treasure trove of teaching and practice on one of the most neglected (and yet most essential) of the works of mercy. **B39-PRBK • \$14.95**



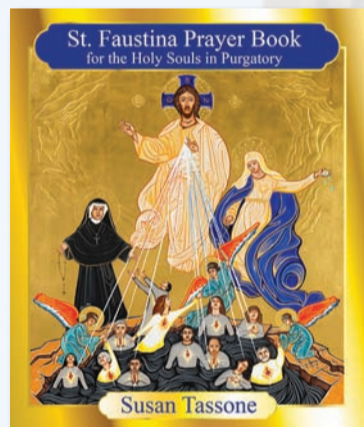
Purgatory: A Guide

This pocket-sized overview of the doctrines and practices of the Church regarding the Holy Souls in Purgatory equips you to explain and defend one of the greatest works of mercy. See how you can help the Holy Souls. **B39-SOULS \$3.99**



Day by Day for the Holy Souls in Purgatory

Insightful quotes with powerful prayers to offer readers a day-by-day guide to loving and aiding the Holy Souls. Includes quotes from Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, and Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC. **B39-DBD • \$16.95**



St. Faustina Prayer Book for the Holy Souls in Purgatory

Here you'll find a wealth of spiritual tools, including devotions, meditations, novenas, and prayers, coupled with the wisdom of St. Faustina, to help you join in this soul-changing mission of prayer. **B39-FSBK • \$15.95**



Holy Souls Rosary

The different colored beads of this Rosary signify bringing souls from the darkness of Purgatory into the light of Heaven. **B39-HSR1 • \$9.95**



B39-HHP

B39-EOGPF

B39-CLDPF

Pamphlets:

10 FOR \$1.60

100 FOR \$14.00

1,000 FOR \$100.00

Order Info

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

toll free: 1-800-462-7426 **shop online:** ShopMercy.org

mail: Order Department
Association of Marian Helpers
Stockbridge, MA 01263

Checks payable to: Association of Marian Helpers

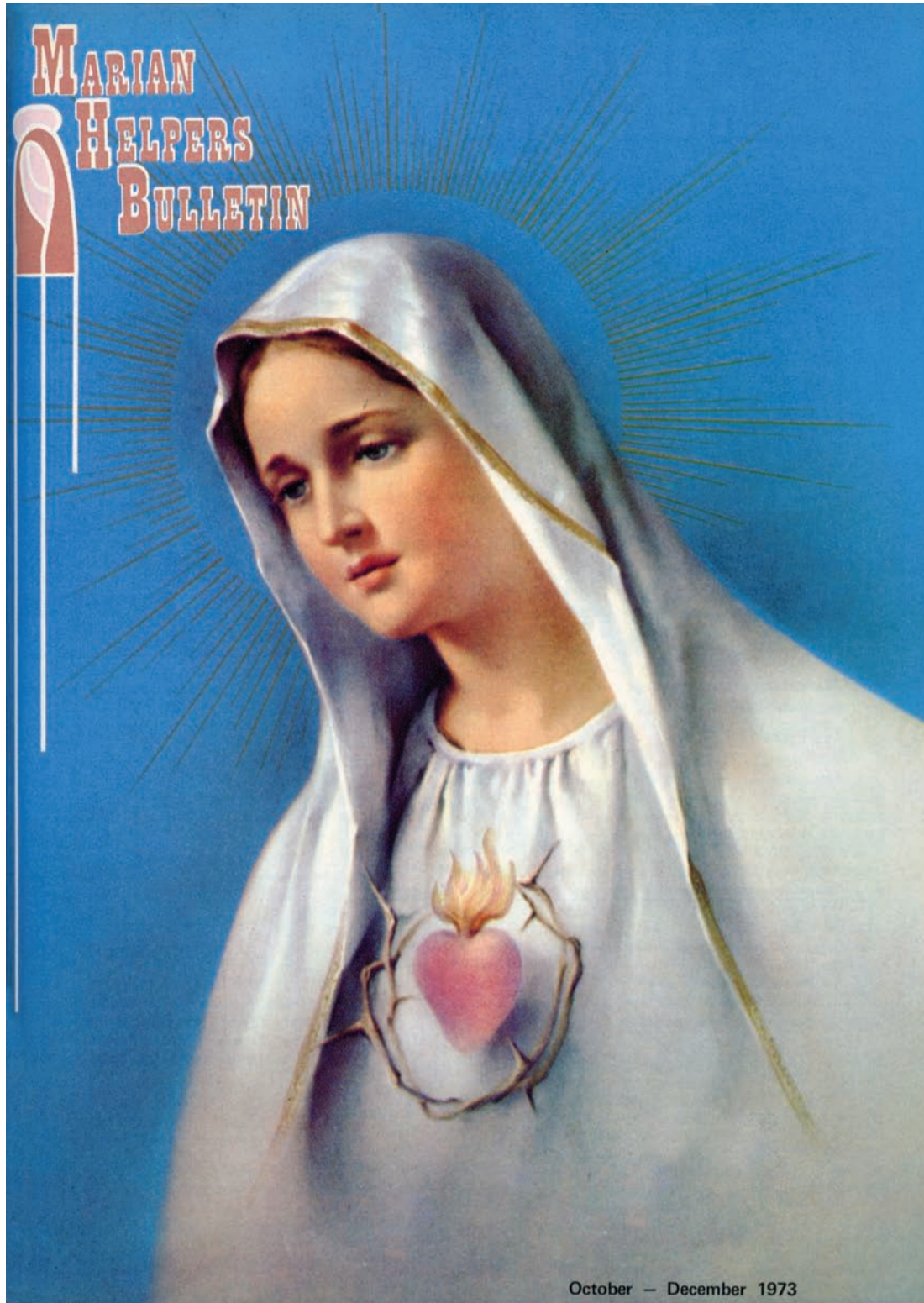
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From Our
ARCHIVES



Forty-five years ago, the pages of the Fall issue of *Marian Helpers Bulletin* (now *Marian Helper magazine*), contained a letter from Pope Paul VI to the Marians' Superior General at the time, Fr. Joseph Sielski, MIC.

In light of Blessed Paul VI's upcoming canonization on Oct. 14, and the approach of November, the month of remembrance for the Holy Souls in Purgatory, we share an excerpt from Pope Paul VI's letter to Fr. Sielski 45 years ago. In it, the Holy Father offers encouragement to the Marians and their work spreading devotion to the souls in Purgatory:

As you continue to offer your spiritual assistance to the souls who are still being purified after this sojourn on earth, you must teach people at the same time that they do not have a lasting dwelling place here, but must seek the one to come (Hebr 13, 14). Thus a really spiritual and holy way of life will give you the strength to carry out that apostolate — so rich in profit and spiritual return — which has been entrusted to your spiritual family. In this way for sure you will be living stones in the building of the Church, which has not been created for anything else, except to make all people sharers in the saving redemption of Christ by spreading His kingdom all over the world. MH

Live the call!



Marian Helpers Riccardo and Sophia

We followed our call to support vocations, and we came to know Marians like Br. Sean. We love them as our children. They are a source of tremendous comfort to people. Riccardo has prostate cancer. When we get a good report from his cancer doctors, we feel like running to the Shrine to thank the seminarians for praying for us. Without these courageous men, there would not be any priests. Who would hear our Confessions? Baptize our babies? Marry our children? What hope would the sick have? And who would bury the dead?

Brother Sean, MIC:

I had been trying to discern my calling for a few years when I picked up Fr. Donald Calloway's book No Turning Back. While reading the last chapter, I said to myself, "I could be a priest if I could be a priest like *that*." I quickly signed up to visit the Marians to investigate my calling more thoroughly. It was a great retreat, but when I got back on the plane I was still uncertain. Then, at 30,000 feet in the air, somewhere over western Texas, God answered my decade-long prayer for vocational clarity. God asked me to trust that He would lead me into a life of greater fulfillment if I answered this call to join the Marians.

Attend a retreat

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

The next retreats will be:

Nov. 23-25
Dec. 7-9
Feb. 8-10
March 29-31

Learn more

Email: vocations@marian.org
Call toll free: 1-877-261-8806
Visit: marian.org/vocations

Write: **Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC**
Vocation Director
Marian Fathers of the
Immaculate Conception
515 Belleview Blvd.
Steubenville, OH 43952

Support

Want to help the seminarians?

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