

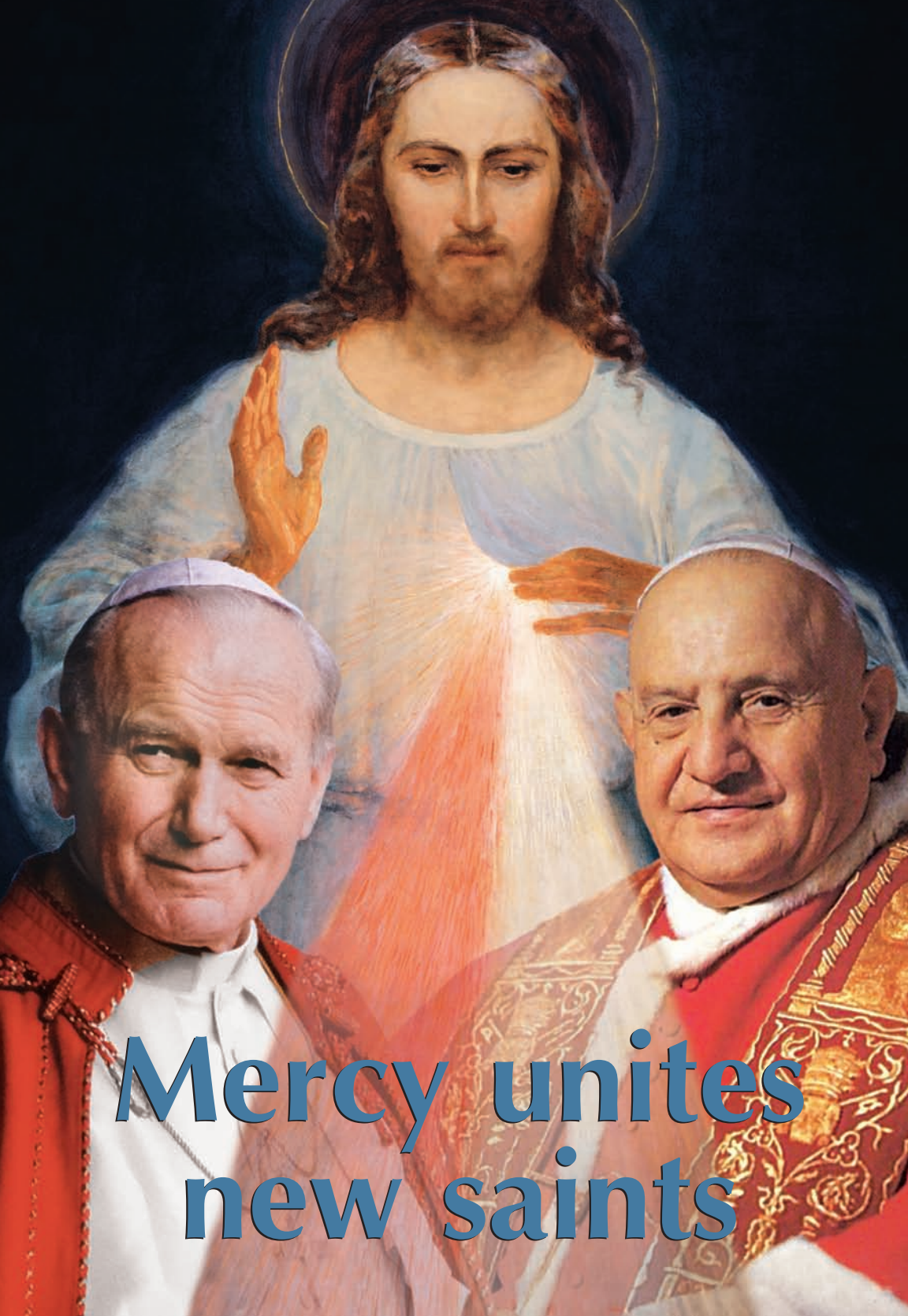
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Spring 2014 • \$2.25

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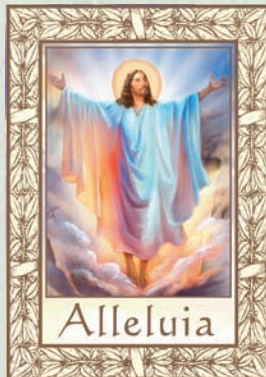
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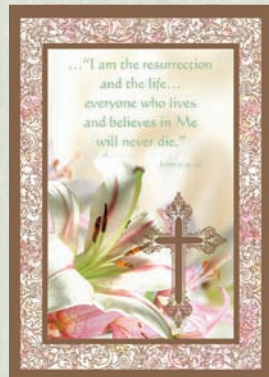
**Mercy unites
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MARIAN HELPER

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On the cover: Blesseds John Paul II and John XXIII will be proclaimed saints on April 27, Divine Mercy Sunday. These beloved Popes are united by a strong legacy of mercy. Graphic illustration: Andrew Leeco.

MISSION STATEMENT

MARIAN HELPER is intended to serve members of the Association of Marian Helpers (AMH), a spiritual benefit society of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The magazine seeks to provide spiritual nourishment, education about the Catholic faith, and information about the mission and good works of the Marians. It also provides information about Association services and presents opportunities to support the mission and good works of the Congregation.

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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:

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- 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.



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The Association is a spiritual benefit society that prayerfully and financially supports Marian priests and brothers.

More than 1.5 million members share in the spiritual benefits of the Holy Masses, prayers, and good works of the Marians.

Through *Marian Helper* magazine and many other resources, members receive information about the Marian family and are encouraged to strive for personal holiness.

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Father Joseph Writes *Fr. Joseph, MIC*

Living mercy: Papal examples for Lent

This Lent, let's journey with the saintly Popes of mercy. Why? Because this Divine Mercy Sunday, our "Mercy Pope" Francis will be canonizing two other great Popes of mercy: Blesseds John XXIII and John Paul II. And all three of these Popes provide us with powerful examples for our spiritual growth. In what follows, let's reflect on what each one of them has to teach us about living mercy this Lent.

For those who lived during his pontificate, Pope John XXIII is easily recognized as a pope of mercy. Popularly known as "Good Pope John," people could plainly see the gentleness and love in his kind and joyful countenance. Also, he is most famous for calling the Second Vatican Council, which has a rich theme of mercy, as I'll explain in the cover story. Finally, John XXIII is warmly remembered for *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*), his acclaimed encyclical letter on peace. In it, he addressed "all men of good will" during the Cold War, publishing it on April 11, 1963, only two years after the Berlin Wall was erected and several months after the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In view of Blessed John XXIII's example, we can challenge ourselves this Lent by asking, "Does my face radiate the joy and gentleness of Christ? Or do I often look angry, impatient, and severe? Is my attitude toward other sinners one of love and mercy? Or am I judgmental and self-righteous? Finally, am I a peacemaker among my friends and family, or do I stir things up by contributing to discord and tension through my gossip and the need to justify myself before others?"

In the case of John Paul II, we have someone who not only powerfully proclaimed mercy — for

instance, he wrote a whole encyclical letter dedicated to it — but he also put it into action. Most memorably, he forgave Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who tried to assassinate him, even going to visit him in prison.

Following John Paul's example, we can ask ourselves, "Do I also pray for and, if possible, visit those who have hurt me? Do I strive to forgive? Or do I hold grudges, give others the silent treatment, and refuse to forgive?"

Finally, regarding Pope Francis, in less than a year of being Pope, he has already been proclaiming mercy and giving examples of it with a frequency that seems unprecedented. Almost every homily, every gesture, everything about him is suffused with humility and mercy. He is constantly seeking out the lost sheep, the lonely, and the downtrodden. At the same time, he is clearly not afraid to exercise the "severe mercy" of courageously calling out those in the Vatican curia and the Church who live not for the flock but for themselves. Seeing the photos of Pope Francis embracing the sick, the weak, and the broken and reading about his latest battles against corruption, I can't help but recognize in our present Holy Father the figure of our Lord manifest in the Gospels.

And so, inspired by Pope Francis's example, we can ask ourselves this Lent, "Do I also have the heart of the Good Shepherd, a heart that is sensitive to the poor, the weak, and the suffering? Do I also have the courage to address the injustice and corruption that may be in my family, community, and in my own heart?"

I hope these reflections on three great Mercy Popes — John XXIII, John Paul II, and Francis — will help challenge us to live mercy this Lent. Specifically, following their examples, I pray that we will all strive to become more kind, loving, forgiving, peaceful, courageous, and mindful of the suffering and the poor. If we do, this Lent will bear a rich harvest of mercy in our lives, and we'll be able to celebrate this Divine Mercy Sunday to the full.

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

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Father Joseph's Mailbox

Marian Helpers shared their reactions to Pope Francis's prescription of Divine Mercy "medicine" that he distributed to the faithful in St. Peter's Square after the Angelus on Nov. 17. It consisted of a small box containing a rosary along with a prayercard explaining the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. The Pope called it "a spiritual help for our soul and to spread love, forgiveness, and fraternity everywhere."

'Given a green light to continue efforts'

I was thrilled, absolutely thrilled, when I heard about Pope Francis and his prescription for mercy. It is as if I have been given a green light to continue my efforts to spread Divine Mercy. In my work as a nurse, I see so many people come into our emergency room who don't know about Christ. They need to know that Christ has been walking with them, and He wants to shower them with His mercy and His love. It makes so much of a difference when they realize that He is with them. They are so comforted by this.



I noticed that the Holy Father's kit contained wooden rosary beads. I have carried wooden rosary beads for years. Wood can go into a CT scan or an MRI. Many patients have told me they have recited the Rosary while in the machine. The rosary beads remind them that He is there. It reminds them to pray and ask for the intercession of Our Lady.

— DS, Pawtucket, R.I.

► She's a nurse for Divine Mercy.

'The medicine that will heal us all'

When I heard about Pope Francis handing out spiritual medicine kits, it moved me deeply. I facilitate a number of EADM prayer cenacles in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and he completely affirmed our works of mercy that we have been doing in the parishes.



We need these spiritual mercy kits to give energy to the world during these dark and difficult times. This spiritual medicine Pope Francis is offering is so desperately needed. It is the medicine that will heal us all. In my

journey of faith, I have found that we seem to be lacking spiritual works of mercy. That's why I am so pleased that Pope Francis is really witnessing to the world the importance of spiritual works of mercy.

— PN, Glendale, Calif.

► Discovering God's mercy.

'The only medicine I take'

The medicine of mercy is the only medicine I take, while all of my friends are on six or more prescribed medications. The Rosary is the only prescription that can be taken anytime without fear of overdosing, without side effects, and the only prescription that can be shared with everybody. Praying the Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and trusting in Jesus brings healing spiritually.

— TM, Lindenhurst Ill.



► Her Divine Mercy conversion story.

'Spiritual medicine is just what we need'

I am so glad that we have a Holy Father like Pope Francis. He is helping spread the message of mercy that people so desperately need to hear. This spiritual medicine that he is offering is just what we need. We just can't give lip service to the idea of mercy. We need to show the world acts of mercy.

I reach out to the poor, the sick, and the dying. There are people who are dying who have not had the chance to learn about God's mercy. I go and pray with them. I teach them about the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and the message of Divine Mercy. This is how I'm following the lead of our Holy Father and the Marian Fathers.

— DU, Bellevue, Wash.

Inspired by the Holy Father and your letters, we are offering Mercycardin. See page 30 for details. My prayer is that all of you and many more Marian Helpers would share this mercy prescription with your family, friends, and neighbors. Just imagine Christians everywhere praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet every day, especially at the 3 o'clock hour. The graces would overflow!

— Fr. Joseph, MIC

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Tell us your reaction to Pope Francis's prescription of Divine Mercy "medicine" on Facebook at [Facebook.com/MarianHelpers](https://www.facebook.com/MarianHelpers) or e-mail us at mailbox@marian.org.



Father Joseph's Bookshelf



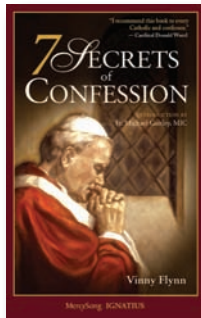
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7 SECRETS OF CONFESSION

BY VINNY FLYNN, INTRODUCTION BY FR. MICHAEL GAITLEY, MIC

MERCY SONG/IGNATIUS PRESS, 200 PP., \$12.95

PRODUCT CODE: **B21-7SOC**



In the *Diary of St. Faustina*, Jesus tells us, "Pray for souls that they be not afraid to approach the tribunal of My mercy" (975). I believe that people have been praying for this intention and that *7 Secrets of Confession* will help many come back to confession.

When I was in the seminary, I used to go to confession every Saturday morning. But getting there wasn't easy. Nearly every time, before confessing, there'd be a barrage of what I believe were spiritual attacks.

The closer I got to the confessional, the more my fear would grow, usually accompanied by thoughts such as, "The priest is going to yell at you." ... "You're the worst sinner; there's no mercy for you." ... "You just confess the same sins over and over, and this time God has had enough of you."

Then, one day, I read these words of Jesus to St. Faustina in the *Diary*: "Every time you go to confession, immerse yourself entirely in My mercy, with great trust, so that I may pour the bounty of My grace upon your soul" (1602).

I realized that Satan wanted to rob me of the graces of confession, and he knew that fear kills trust. So I made a firm resolution to approach the confessional with contrition and great trust in the Lord's mercy. That resolution has helped, but there's often still a battle.

Thanks to *7 Secrets of Confession*, the battle has become easier to fight. Vinny's "7 Secrets" are like seven explosions that blow away the obstacles keeping us from confession. If you've ever dragged your feet on the way to confession, gotten discouraged about confessing the same sins, or wondered how your confessions could be more fruitful, then you'll love this book. It turns what many see as a tiresome obligation into a precious, longed-for encounter with the Lord.

MEET JOHN XXIII

JOYFUL POPE AND FATHER TO ALL

BY PATRICIA TREECE

SERVANT BOOKS, ST. ANTHONY MESSENGER PRESS, PP. 208, \$13.99

PRODUCT CODES: **B21-MJXX**



In this engaging and popularly written biography of Pope John XXIII, meet Angelo Roncalli, the son of Italian peasant sharecroppers, who grew up feeling the pinch of poverty but also enjoyed the security of his loving and devout Catholic family. He would endear himself to the Church and the whole world as "Good Pope John," known for his love, humility, and good will toward all.

Biographer Patricia Treece traces how his steady progress in holiness across a long lifetime of service to Christ and the Church prepared him for his election as Pope at the age of 77. Expected to serve only as an interim Pope after the long reign of Pius XII, he instead became one of the leading figures of the 20th century.

Chief among Pope John's achievements was his becoming a catalyst for great renewal in the Catholic Church by convening the Second Vatican Council in 1962. He also helped call the world back from the brink of nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 through his appeals for negotiation between the superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States. After the immediate crisis had passed, he penned *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*), his great encyclical on peace.

What is most compelling about this biography, though, isn't the big picture of Pope John's achievements. It's the humble and loving way in which he showed himself to be a father to all. Treece shares many poignant stories illustrating this. For instance, when Pope John learned in 1960 that the United Kingdom's ambassador to the Vatican was dying in Rome, he quietly visited the ambassador, who wasn't Catholic. He even prayed with the ambassador and his wife during his visit — breaking the taboo before Vatican II of Catholics praying with non-Catholics.

I highly recommend you read *Meet John XXIII* so you can get to know this holy Pope, who will be proclaimed a saint on Divine Mercy Sunday.

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Ask a Marian

with Fr. Joe Roesch, MIC

What is the Easter or Paschal Triduum?

Q. I'm confused about the difference between Lent and the Easter Triduum. Aren't Holy Thursday and Good Friday part of Lent?

A. There's no easy answer. The "Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar" found in the *Roman Missal* define Lent and the Easter or Paschal Triduum as follows: "The 40 days of Lent run from Ash Wednesday up to but excluding the Mass of the Lord's Supper [on Holy Thursday evening]. ... The Paschal Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, has its center in the Easter Vigil, and closes with Vespers [Evening Prayer] of the Sunday of the Resurrection." While Lent is 40 days long, we might think of the Paschal Triduum as a mini-liturgical season that spans key holy days (including the last part of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and most of Easter Sunday) and focuses our attention on the central mystery of our faith in Christ. The difference in tone is evident in the change in liturgical colors. After the violet of Lent, the priests wear white on Holy Thursday, red on Good Friday, then white again for the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.

The purpose of the season of Lent is to prepare for the celebration of Easter. It is a penitential season marked by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The Church also observes the sacred Paschal fast on Good Friday, and we are encouraged to extend it to Holy Saturday until the Easter Vigil if possible.

After Lent, we enter into the Paschal Triduum as the high point of the Liturgical Year. Through the Paschal mystery — that is, the Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension into glory of Jesus — the Lord accomplished the work of our redemption. In light of this mystery, Easter in Italian is called *Pasqua* (Passover), reminding us of the connection between Easter and the Old Testament Passover, the feast that celebrates the redemption of the Jewish people. So, too, the word "Paschal" in English can describe Jesus as the Passover or Paschal Lamb who was sacrificed for our sins.

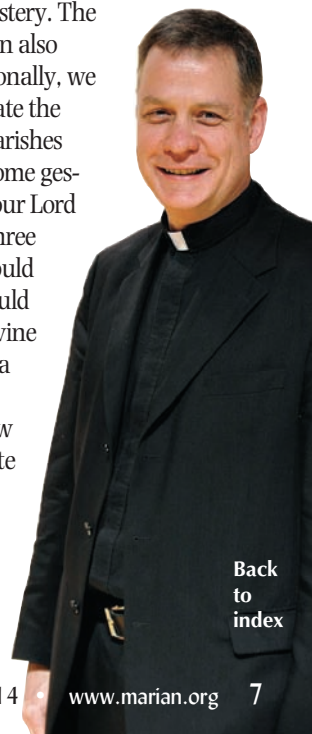
Q. Can you give me some advice for celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday in my parish?

A. In the *Diary of St. Faustina*, our Lord revealed, "I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and a shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners" (699). The Lord desires that all Catholics and all souls find refuge in His great mercy, especially on Divine Mercy Sunday. Our Lord wants to pour out extraordinary graces on this feast (see *Diary*, 300, 699, and 1109), yet not all Catholics will be able to attend an enhanced celebration in their parishes on that day. What is essential or strictly necessary for us to receive the graces of the day, and what more can we do to celebrate the feast more solemnly if it is possible?

To receive the extraordinary graces connected with the Feast of Mercy, we should receive Holy Communion worthily on Divine Mercy Sunday by going to confession beforehand (preferably during Lent), and then remain in the state of grace on the feast. If we open our hearts with trust when we receive our Lord in Holy Communion on that day, we will be given the promised graces.

Divine Mercy Sunday can be observed more profoundly through the priest or deacon proclaiming God's mercy in his homily. All of the Scripture readings and the prayers on that day speak of this mystery. The Prayers of the Faithful can also reflect this theme. Additionally, we are encouraged to venerate the Divine Mercy image in parishes on that day by making some gesture of devotion toward our Lord in the sacred image. A Three O'clock Prayer Service could be held as well, which could include the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Benediction, and a Eucharistic Procession.

Find out more on how your parish can celebrate at our special section, thedivinemercy.org/celebrate.





Inmates Pornchai Moontri (second from left) and Fr. Gordon MacRae (third from left) make their consecration to Jesus through Mary on Nov. 24 in New Hampshire State Prison for Men. They pray to become instruments in Mary's "immaculate and merciful hands for bringing the greatest possible glory to God."

'Mary is at work here'

Inmates are first prison group to make 33 Days Marian consecration.

by Felix Carroll

It was a break-in, not a breakout. Led by a group of volunteers who understand the high spiritual stakes, the Blessed Virgin Mary has made her way through prison walls in New Hampshire, entering into an atmosphere hitherto described by one inmate as a "crucible of discouragement and humiliation."

In November, 13 inmates at New Hampshire State Prison for Men comprised the first prison group to make the consecration to Jesus through Mary using the group-retreat program for *33 Days to Morning Glory*, a do-it-yourself retreat written by Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC.

The momentous event in the lives of the inmates was also an historic moment in the evangelization efforts of the Marian Fathers, who pray that the prison group is the first of many to make the Marian consecration.

"Jesus said, 'I was ... in prison and you visited Me' (Mt 25:36). To this day, prisoners are our forgotten brothers and sisters," said Fr. Michael. "Now, seeing how Mary has so profoundly touched the lives of inmates in New Hampshire is inspiring us to redouble our efforts to get *33 Days* into more prisons

across the country. I firmly believe that Our Mother of Mercy desires this for her forgotten children."

God doesn't give up on us

On a cold Nov. 24, the solemnity of Christ the King, inmates enter the prison chapel for Sunday Mass, all dressed in drab green, their first names stitched upon their shirts.

Visiting priest Fr. Wilfred Deschamps greets them one by one. An ardent supporter of the *33 Days* program, he wanted to be here for the inmates' consecration. He's thrilled to learn of the Gospel reading for the day, from Luke 23:35-43. It couldn't be more suitable for the setting and the occasion. In it, Jesus, dying on the cross, promises heaven to the repentant criminal hanging beside Him.

"No matter what we have done," Fr. Deschamps tells the inmates in his homily, "God loves us. He doesn't give up on anyone."

Moments later, he invites the inmates participating in *33 Days* to come before the altar. Between Oct. 20 and this day, the inmates met weekly to pray together, watch Fr. Michael's DVD presentations, and then discuss the material on Marian consecration. And as

the *33 Days* program progressed, they felt a brotherhood developing between them that has helped to strengthen them against the bouts of loneliness, despair, and fear they face in prison.

“Mary is at work here,” says Deacon Jim Daly, the prison’s Catholic chaplain.

Led by Fr. Deschamps, the inmates make their consecration, pledging to “renew and ratify” the vows of their Baptism, renounce Satan, and give themselves to Mary to be formed into the image of her Son.

“I felt this overwhelming peace coming over me,” an inmate named Lawrence said afterwards.

So what has been so extraordinary about the experience?

“Knowing that we are loved,” Lawrence said, “in a place where you can be so bitter and angry, to know we can go to Mary.”

Why these inmates?

Nearly two million copies of *33 Days to Morning Glory* are now in print. It has consistently been among the top 10 Catholic books on Amazon.com for the past two years.

Prison volunteer Nate Chapman of New Hampshire and three fellow devotees of Mary named David Kemmis, Jean Fafard, and Jim Preisendorfer are among the hundreds of thousands who have made the consecration. Having done so, they knew the inmates would benefit from it. When approached about it, Deacon Daly welcomed it as a “dream come true.”

The Marians believe Mary chose this particular group of inmates to be the first. That reason eventually was revealed. It turns out that one of the participating inmates was Pornchai Moontri, who was featured in last year’s Marian Press title *Loved, Lost, Found: 17 Divine Mercy Conversions* (preview). Moreover, before joining the Marians’ Evangelization Department a year ago and helping to spearhead the *33 Days* initiative, Eric Mahl was also featured in the book.

Eric and Pornchai met for the first time in November when Eric presented to the inmates during one of the six weekly meetings for the group retreat.

“I felt like I met my brother, someone I’ve known my whole life,” Eric said afterwards.

As *Loved, Lost, Found* reveals, Pornchai, 40, is serving a 45-year prison sentence for a murder he committed when he was 19. He

experienced a dramatic conversion several years ago in no small part due to a friendship he formed with fellow inmate — and now cellmate — Fr. Gordon MacRae, convicted in 1994 on charges of sexual assault that have since been called into question. Father Gordon — who chronicles his life in his celebrated website, *TheseStoneWalls.com* — has gained widespread public support for his cause, including from the late Cardinal Avery Dulles.

Now in his 20th year of incarceration, he joined Pornchai in the consecration and called it a “great spiritual gift” that opened “a door to the rebirth of trust” at a particularly



Eric Mahl (left), a Marian lay aggregate, has helped spearhead the Marians’ evangelization efforts. Standing in front of New Hampshire State Prison for Men, he is joined by prison ministry volunteers Jean Fafard, Nate Chapman, David Kemmis, and Fr. Wilfred Deschamps.

dark time for both men. He and Pornchai signed up for the program reluctantly, but Mr. Chapman’s introduction “instantly awakened us to our very purpose for being there. It could be summarized in one sentence: ‘Great suffering requires great trust.’”

‘Mary has a special love for you’

Eric returned to the prison on the day of the consecration and spoke to the inmates about Mary’s desire to enter the prison. He likened it to the scene in *The Passion of The Christ* when Mary lay on a floor in the Temple complex to get close to her Son who was suffering, imprisoned in a cell below her.

“That’s Mary right now,” Eric told the inmates. “By doing this consecration, you’re opening the door for her. You may be that Christ — shackled and bloody and so full of pain. All she wants to do is take care of us and bring us to Christ. Mary has a special love for you, but now it’s your job to pray for other inmates. Where Mary is, the Holy Spirit is, and where the Holy Spirit is, there is conversion and sanctification.”

For more information about the *33 Days* retreat, visit allheartsafire.org.

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WACOM set for Aug. 15-19 in Bogota

The third World Apostolic Congress on Mercy (WACOM) will be celebrated on Aug. 15-19 in Bogota, Colombia. The Congress will include testimonies, lectures, street celebrations, Holy Masses, and missions. It is expected to draw thousands of people, including many cardinals.

“Once again, we will gather together people from around the world to deepen our faith in, and awareness of, the Merciful Jesus and to bring the Divine Mercy message into the daily life of the Church and the world,” said Fr. Patrice Chocholski of Lyon, France, general secretary of the Congress.

The structure of WACOM will be similar to that of the first two World Congresses: five days with talks and testimonies in the morning, workshops and missions in parishes in the afternoon, and festivals in the evening. Speakers will include Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, president of the Mercy Congress, discussing “Divine Mercy, Our Mission”; Cardinal Rubén Salazar, Archbishop of Bogota, addressing “Mercy at the Service of Reconciliation and Peace in Colombia”; and Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, Archbishop of Krakow, Poland.

As with the two previous Congresses, the Marian Fathers are deeply involved in the planning, and will be organizing a pilgrimage for Marian Helpers and all who wish to attend the Congress.

“The Congress will help people come to know God as a God of mercy who can cure us from our brokenness, our sinfulness, and our fears,” said Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC, WACOM’s continental vice-coordinator.

Leading up to WACOM in August, the Marians will host the Northeast Regional gathering for the second North American Congress on Mercy (NACOM) on June 7 in Stockbridge, Mass. The first NACOM was held Nov. 14-15, 2009, in Washington, D.C. Such Continental Congresses were encouraged by Cardinal Schönborn and Mercy Congress organizers at the conclusion of the first WACOM in 2008.

For more information on NACOM and WACOM, please visit mercycongress.org.



Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Austria (left), president of the Mercy Congress, is joined by the Very Rev. Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC, the Marians’ provincial, during a planning meeting for WACOM in Bogota, Colombia, this past summer.

U.S. centennial celebrations planned

As readers will remember from our summer 2013 cover story, the Marians of the Mother of Mercy Province in the United States and Argentina are celebrating 100 years since Blessed George Matulaitis and two young Lithuanian Marians, on Aug. 18, 1913, established the first Marian house in America. The Marians were then given a parish in the Chicago area on Nov. 13, 1913, and soon afterwards, they launched other ministries.

“To celebrate 100 years since our establishment in America gives us extraordinary joy and gratitude to God for this incredible gift,” said Provincial Superior the Very Rev. Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC. “We were brought to the United States through the inspiration of our Renovator.”

Celebrations will be held by the Marians throughout the province, but the main celebration will be a Mass of thanksgiving on Sept. 7 at 2 p.m. in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. It will be followed by a reception. All Marian Helpers are invited to attend.

Marian Helpers are also invited to attend a Divine Mercy conference as well as a Mass of thanksgiving at 2 p.m. on June 6 at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Mass.

For the latest news about the centennial celebrations, please visit marian.org/centennial.

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Bring the message of Divine Mercy to your parish



Invite the Marians to speak about Divine Mercy. For information, call 1-866-895-3236 or e-mail parishmissions@marian.org.

Bioethics controversy addressed

The 10th Annual "Medicine, Bioethics, and Spirituality Conference," sponsored by Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy, an apostolate of the Marian Fathers, will take place Wednesday, May 7, and Thursday, May 8, on the campus of the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Mass.

A highlight of the conference will be Dr. Scot Bateman addressing end-of-life care in "Turning Off the Vent: Preparing the Family, Patient, and Staff." Drawing on his many years of experience as division chief of Pediatric Critical Care at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, he will apply bioethical principles to discern the highest standards of care for critically ill patients near death.

"Our annual conference has become well known as a forum for discussing and examining the most urgent bioethical concerns facing healthcare professionals today," says Marie Romagnano, RN, founder and director of Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy. "We integrate the best of medical science with bio-medical ethics, pastoral care, Judeo-Christian revelation, and Divine Mercy spirituality in addressing these concerns. This integrated approach gives our healthcare professionals a unique educational and spiritual formation that can, and is, transforming the way many of them care for their patients."

The Most Rev. Robert McManus, Bishop of Worcester, will again chair the panel discussion. This year, the panel will discuss "Faith and Reason in Service to the Sick and Dying."



The Most Rev.
Robert McManus



Dr. Scot Bateman



Sr. Nazareta
Maleta, OLM

Speakers include Fr. Mark Yavarone, OMV, PhD, professor of bioethics at the Blessed John XXIII National Seminary; Dr. John Howland; Dr. Ron Sobechs, hematologist/oncologist at the Cleveland Clinic and author; Bryan Thatcher, MD, director of Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy; Sr. Nazareta Maleta, OLM, member of St. Faustina's order, the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy; Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, theologian and author; the Very Rev. Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC, Marian provincial; and Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, noted author.

Continuing education credits are available for a variety of healthcare professionals. To register, call 1-800-462-7426, or visit thedivinemercy.org/worcester.

Invite Dr. Thatcher to your parish

Do you want to live the message of Divine Mercy on a deeper level? Would you also like to grow in your understanding of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, Our Lady's role, and the value of every human life?

Bryan Thatcher, MD, director of Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy (EADM), says, "I would love to come to your parish and speak on Divine Mercy, the Eucharist, Our Blessed Mother, and pro-life issues." He speaks on these topics in parishes at one-day conferences called "A Day of Reflection."

"I'm seeing a deeper thirst for Divine Mercy at conferences and days of reflection," says Dr. Thatcher. "People want to know more about the Real Presence [in the Eucharist], how to trust in God, and how to be merciful to others."

Doctor Thatcher will be speaking in Mesquite, Texas, on March 7-9; in Houston, Texas, on March 22; and in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on April 30-May 2.

For more information on any of these speaking engagements or to inquire about Dr. Thatcher's availability to give "A Day of Reflection" in your parish, please call the EADM office at 1-877-380-0727 or visit thedivinemercy.org/EADM.

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DIVINE MERCY APOSTOLATES WANT TO COME TO YOUR PARISH!



The Divine Mercy Apostolates represent four unique lay apostolates of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. They bring the message of Divine Mercy to churches and communities throughout the world.

For more information, call 1-800-895-3236
or visit thedivinemercy.org/ministries.



Here, the Second Vatican Council opens on Oct. 11, 1962. In his opening address, Pope John XXIII stressed the Church's need for mercy. While other Councils were apologetic in character — the Church defending her doctrines against attacks of heresy — Vatican II was the first pastoral Council, a kind of “mercy council.”

‘Trifecta of mercy’

Three Mercy Popes will come together
in the ‘winner’s circle of grace’ this Mercy Sunday.

by Fr. Joseph, MIC

I grew up just down the street from a huge horse-racing track in Southern California. While I myself never attended the races to gamble, I did pick up some of the lingo.

One of my favorite horse-racing terms is “trifecta,” which is when a person selects the first three horses to win a race in exact order. And to win a trifecta, I’ve heard, can be quite a joyful (and profitable) event. More generally speaking, though, a trifecta can also mean any three things coming together in an awe-some way. Using this more general meaning, I’d say the upcoming canonization of Popes John XXIII and John Paul II is a kind of “tri-

fecta of mercy.”

“Wait a minute,” you may be saying, “I count only two Popes, not three.” True. The third is Pope Francis, who will be leading the canonization ceremony. And this is a trifecta of *mercy* because all three Popes — John, John Paul, and Francis — are all about mercy. Also, the event itself will be taking place on the great day of mercy, Divine Mercy Sunday.

John Paul II’s own trifecta of mercy

The canonization ceremony is a trifecta of mercy for yet another reason — a “double trifecta,” if you will. This reason has to do solely

with Pope John Paul II and the date of the canonization, Divine Mercy Sunday. Did you know that this Divine Mercy Sunday represents the *third* time this day of grace has featured prominently in John Paul's legacy since his death? Actually, the first time happened on the very day of his death, which was the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday (2005). Next, he was beatified on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2011. And now, he'll be canonized on Divine Mercy Sunday — *trifecta!*

Alright, but now let's turn our attention to the first trifecta of mercy I mentioned: the fact that *three* Mercy Popes will come together in the "winner's circle of grace" this Divine Mercy Sunday.

Three Mercy Popes? Really? In the case of John Paul II, it's obvious. He's the original "Mercy Pope." Pope Francis also clearly deserves the title of "Mercy Pope," since almost every one of his homilies has been about mercy. In fact, he's been speaking about mercy even more frequently than John Paul II did! What's not so obvious is the idea that Pope John XXIII is also a mercy pope. Let's start right there as we assess the upcoming day of grace, Divine Mercy Sunday 2014, as a trifecta of mercy.

While it may not be completely obvious that Pope John XXIII deserves the title "Mercy Pope," it certainly fits him. After all, he's popularly known as "Good Pope John," who won so many hearts by his informal style and grandfatherly mien. Nevertheless, his mercy legacy particularly comes down to the Council he convened, Vatican II, which was a kind of "mercy council."

John XXIII: 'The medicine of mercy'

How was Vatican II a "mercy council"? Well, it's like this: The Second Vatican Council was unique in the history of the Catholic Church. While other ecumenical Councils were apologetic in character — in other words, they had to do with the

Church defending her doctrines against attacks of heresy — Vatican II was different. It was the first *pastoral* Council.

That Vatican II was a pastoral council does not mean it wasn't responding to a problem. In fact, it was responding to a huge problem, but it was pastoral, not doctrinal. Specifically, it was responding to the pastoral problem of hypocrisy, the scandalous split between what people profess and how they live.

Of course, the pastoral problem of hypocrisy is as old as the Old Testament. After all, the prophets railed against it, and even Jesus didn't mince words with the scribes and Pharisees, saying, "You hypocrites!" But there is something about our modern age that makes hypocrisy even more prevalent than ever. Indeed, there's something about our contemporary way of life that makes it so easy to

profess Christian faith even while living like a pagan.

To solve this modern pastoral problem, taking its lead from Pope John XXIII, the Church decided to enlist the power of mercy. In other words, the "mercy Council" did not set out to condemn the likes of us modern Catholics. Rather, it aimed to help us. Specifically, it aimed to help us overcome the



John Paul II's beatification on May 1, 2011, was part of his own trifecta of mercy. "Today is the Second Sunday of Easter, which Blessed John Paul II entitled Divine Mercy Sunday. The date was chosen for today's celebration because ... my predecessor died on the vigil of this feast," Pope Benedict XVI said in his homily on the occasion.

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scandalous split between faith and life. And so, the Council struck a much different tone than the other Councils, which were often loaded with condemnations. As Pope John XXIII put it when he opened the Council, “Nowadays ... [the Church] prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than that of severity.”

And how did the Council go about helping us? What was its merciful approach? Well, for one, it used a whole new tone and language. The documents were written in such a way that one does not have to be a theologian to understand them. In fact, they were written in layman’s terms (literally), so everyone could grasp their meaning. For instance, the Council taught that the call to holiness applies to all Christians, not only priests and religious: “... all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love” (*Lumen Gentium*, 40). In other words, every Christian is called to be a saint.

The logic of the Council Fathers was that you cannot live what you do not love, and you cannot love what you do not understand. In short, the aim of the Council Fathers was to help the faithful bring the faith from their heads to their hearts and into their lives.

John Paul II: God is mercy

Inspired by Pope John XXIII’s Council, Pope John Paul II wholeheartedly took up its pastoral strategy of mercy. In fact, he even took this strategy a step further.

Pope John Paul II believed that of all the truths that modern Catholics need to bring from their heads to their hearts to their lives, the truth that God is mercy is the most important. It’s this truth, John Paul believed, that helps us come to truly understand our Father in heaven and the Heart of our Savior.

And so, as Pope John Paul II emphasized the theme of mercy. He powerfully proclaimed mercy in one of his first encyclical letters, *Rich in Mercy (Dives in Misericordia)*. He pushed for the canonization of Sr. Faustina and promoted the modern message of Divine Mercy as a concrete way to help people appreciate the truth of God’s merciful love. For instance, in the year 2000, he officially

declared the Second Sunday of Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday. Finally, he consistently announced that there is nothing the world needs more than mercy. Indeed, in his last Divine Mercy Sunday message, he emphasized, “How much the world needs to understand and accept Divine Mercy!”

Francis: Everything is mercy

It’s not surprising to learn that John

Paul’s successor, Pope Benedict XVI, continued to emphasize this theme of mercy. Nor is it surprising to learn that Pope Francis, since becoming Pope, has also continued the same proclamation. What is surprising, however, is just how frequently and strongly Pope Francis has been preaching this message. Indeed, he hasn’t ceased to proclaim the mercy of God. From his first public homily to his countless gestures of mercy, Pope Francis is showing that everything is mercy. And for this reason, the Church and the world have fallen in love with him. Why? Because as Jesus told St. Faustina, “To priests who proclaim and extol My mercy, I will give wondrous power; I will anoint their words and touch the hearts of those to whom they will speak” (*Diary of St. Faustina*, 1521).

Truly, Pope Francis is touching hearts, including those of Catholics, Protestants,

agnostics, and atheists. He’s helping everyone to discover and rediscover the beauty of mercy, the beauty of the Church, and the heart of the Gospel. In fact, his efforts have led to “the Francis effect,” as many in the media have called it, meaning that people throughout the world are flocking to the Church.

Thanks to Pope Francis, they understand the Church to be a field hospital for the wounded who are in need of healing, rather than as a moralistic scold. But despite reports in the media, this apostolic fruit isn’t all Francis’s. As I’ve argued in this article, the foundation was laid by several of his predecessors — the previous Mercy Popes — and now Francis is reaping the harvest. It’s been a team effort of the Church, and soon the whole Church will celebrate this effort, making this Divine Mercy Sunday a great “trifecta of mercy.”



“Nowadays ... [the Church] prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than that of severity,” Pope John XXIII said when he opened the Second Vatican Council.



Through tragedy, loss, and even betrayal, Ann Marie and Gerald Johnston continue to hold St. Joseph near. This statue serves as a reminder to them of the saint who faced uncertainties as he sought to do God's will.

A saint who struggled like us

How St. Joseph can help us through the hard times.

by Felix Carroll

Gerald and Ann Marie Johnston know what it means to suffer tragic loss and shocking betrayal. Within a three-month span in 2001, their 22-year-old son, Matthew, died unexpectedly from a heart condition and their 16-year-old daughter, Faith, revealed a priest had raped her.

Twelve years later, sharing these painful experiences in their home in Haverhill, Mass., Gerald and Ann Marie explain how, in no small way, St. Joseph has served as their comforter, friend, and role model. It was his example, born of trust in God, that helped build the Johnstons' resolve to serve Christ and His Church at a time when others might have become embittered and left the faith.

"Saint Joseph was helping us through the grief of dealing with Matthew's death and then the ordeal of a criminal trial," Ann Marie says. "At the time, we didn't really know what was going on around us."

What we know of St. Joseph

At times over-sentimentalized, at times overlooked, St. Joseph stands as an elusive figure in Scripture.

"We don't know a *lot* about him, but what little we know is profound," says Gerald, a convert to Catholicism who chose Joseph as his Confirmation name.

A carpenter by trade, a man of modest means, St. Joseph was chosen by God to be head of the household for the Holy Family and, eventually, Patron of the universal Church.

We also know that St. Joseph, whose feast day we celebrate March 19, lives up to his reputation as "comforter of the afflicted," "protector of families," and "patron of a happy death" — three roles to which the Johnstons can attest.

"I've been in situations in my life," says Gerald, "where I have asked myself, 'Well, what would St. Joseph have done?'"

So what *would* St. Joseph have done in the case of a son's untimely death? What *would* he have done after a daughter fell prey to a sexual predator posing as a shepherd of souls?

He would do everything he could to love and safeguard them, first and foremost. Then,

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FELIX CARROLL

Eric Mahl (right) applies holy oil to the injured knee of a homeless man. “My prayer,” says Eric, “is, ‘Lord, allow me to hear Your own thirst when I am with the poor, and allow me to hear their longing for You.’”

THE POOR, OUR PRIORITY

A new Marian ministry brings mercy to the neediest.

by Felix Carroll

Paper wrappers, plastic bags, empty cigarette packages — all manner of rubbish blown aimlessly from dumpsters and overturned trash bins — smack against the legs of a homeless man in Boston, Mass.

It’s January. The thermometer on Centre Street registers a single, sinister digit: 6 degrees Fahrenheit. Factoring in wind chill, meteorologists say it feels more like negative 12.

On a stone bench outside a Back Bay subway station, the homeless man, who identifies himself with a name that sounds like *E-loy*, breathes into his gloveless hands creating vapors that promptly vanish like ghosts. What does the name Eloy mean?

“Nothing,” he says. “My mom made it up.”

One of the members of the Marians’ newly formed ministry for the poor sits down beside him, presents him with a pair of thick wool gloves, and explains to him that Eloy — the man — is *far* from meaningless in the eyes of Jesus Christ. The gloves are appreciated. The need for warm clothing requires no discernment. But to believe that a Merciful Lord knows him by name will require more than warm hands.

Indeed, fixing the gloves upon his fingers,

Eloy gets distracted when a woman, upwind, lights up a marijuana cigarette. He sniffs at the air. At this moment, if a choice were to be made, temporal temptations probably would win out over notions of eternal salvation.

The cold, hard truth of 6 degrees Fahrenheit can do that to you.

Such can be the challenge of street ministry.

A plight in plain sight

Add up the factors — unemployment, rising housing costs, broken families, and substance abuse — and the results are staggering. Despite signs of an economic recovery from the 2008-2009 recession, an estimated 47 million Americans still live in poverty, 600,000 of whom are homeless at any given time.

Responding to those needs, last summer the Marian Fathers expanded upon their many apostolic undertakings to include bringing consolation to the poor through the message of Divine Mercy.

The efforts are twofold. Joined with a network of charities and religious communities that serve the poorest of the poor, the Marians have so far distributed free of charge more than

1.5 million top-quality Divine Mercy images, prayercards, pamphlets, and books. This ministry of mercy for the poor relies 100 percent on donations. (To learn more, visit giftofmercy.org.) Congregations that help distribute the materials have reported conversions through these Divine Mercy images.

The second part of the new initiative includes street ministry led by Eric Mahl, a Marian lay aggregate who lived with and ministered to the homeless in Cleveland, Ohio, before joining the Marians last spring. The ministry's task, says Eric, is to take the light of faith found at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy and introduce it into the lives of those in greatest spiritual and material need.

"Our Lord is speaking to our hearts, telling us not to be simply a light in a room that's already lit," says Eric. "We want to be a light in someone's darkness. We want to be a light in the darkness not so that we are seen, but so that people can see *Christ*."

Inspired by St. Faustina

The ministry includes a number of young men, some of whom live and work with the Marians in Stockbridge. All of them, including Eric, have been called to service through the Divine Mercy revelations of St. Faustina, for whom glorifying Christ's mercy became the exclusive task of her life. From a tender age, Faustina saw Jesus in the poor. For her — and for the Marian street ministers — those in greatest misery have first priority to God's mercy.

It's Tuesday, Jan. 7, 4 a.m., outside the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. The ministry van is warming up, the window defrosters blowing full blast. Eric and a young man named Lewis Brooks, who is discerning a religious vocation and living with the Marians in Stockbridge, have packed the vehicle with religious articles, coats, hats, socks, and gloves, and now they're Boston bound.

After a two-hour drive, the mission begins at the convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in the Dorchester section of Boston, where the two join the sisters of St. Faustina's order for Holy Mass.

"The sisters have taught us so much about the power of prayer," says Eric. "There are so many needs in the world, and the sisters know they cannot physically address every need, but they always bring up how we need to pray, pray, and pray for God's mercy."

Indeed, prayer.

Taking mercy to the streets

Even in Boston, one of America's most well-to-do, well-kept cities, it takes little time to find

a homeless person: a woman with scratches on her face, panhandling on Newbury Street; a Puerto Rican immigrant with a rosary around his neck, in ankle-high socks, waiting for a bus at the Boston Common and in search of a computer job. Most of the city's homeless bounce from shelter to shelter.

The Marian street ministers know that tidy, dramatic deliverances seldom present themselves, as evidenced with the case of Eloy and the many other men and women they'll encounter this day. Some will thank them,



They're rolling now. Father Michael Gaitley, MIC, stands by a 15-passenger van donated to the Marians' ministry for the poor last December by his sister's family. Above, Fr. Michael is joined by his brother-in-law Mike and his nephews.

even hug them, for the warm clothing and prayers. But rejection, such as Christ Himself experienced, is a hazard of the job.

A man named David will yell at them as they minister to homeless who have taken shelter in a subway station. He'll put his face up to theirs and say awful things about Jesus. Their choice is to either learn to love and pray and then leave things to God or to recoil and retreat to more comfortable climes.

Their coat collars pulled up against the stiff wind, members of the Marians' street ministry decidedly eschew comfort.

In the frost-bitten flats and canyons of Boston's streets, powdery sheets of snow glide like giant air-hockey pucks. Even a font of holy water has frozen over in the vestibule of the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, where they stop for a quick prayer.

At noon, they meet with a young man named Patrick who joins them for the afternoon. In many unexpected ways, God has been providing the ministry with men who seek to serve. By dusk, their supply of coats, socks, hats, gloves, and prayercards is nearly depleted.

Back at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, they'll bring the intentions of those they met before the Blessed Sacrament. They'll pray for David especially. They'll fill their hearts with the Holy Spirit. They'll once again refill their van with hats, gloves, coats, and prayercards.

It'll be a long winter.

Pray, pray, and pray.

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ST. JOSEPH

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he would tender his fears, frustrations, and struggles to God, trusting He has a plan.

Entrusting their son

Matthew, the eldest of their four children, collapsed in the Johnstons' dining room on July 1, 2001. While emergency personnel labored to save his life, the Johnstons sought to save his soul.

Ann Marie fled to the front yard, knelt down, and prayed the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. The Johnstons then contacted a priest who offered a Mass for Matthew within an hour of him losing consciousness.

They made sure he received the Anointing of the Sick before he died at the hospital hours later. They were comforted that he had received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion the day prior.

They also trusted God was giving them a sign simply by the location where Matthew collapsed. Their son — who loved to laugh, enjoyed sports, was a good student, gentle and kind — collapsed in front of the family's cherished statue of St. Joseph.

"We're not superstitious," says Gerald. "We don't believe that if you collapse in front of a statue of St. Joseph, you are assured a place in heaven. But perhaps it was God's way of giving us some reassurance that everything would be OK."

'Lord, to whom shall we go?'

As Gerald and Ann Marie reeled from the death of Matthew, Faith broke down before them and confided about a series of sexual attacks she had endured in 2000 while she worked part-time in the parish rectory.

They walked every step of the way with their daughter through a grueling trial that led to the conviction and imprisonment of the Rev. Kelvin Iguabita in 2003.

Faith was not alone in feeling betrayed by a Church she had held in high regard. Gerald and Ann Marie, too, felt they were being tested nearly to the breaking point. Yet, looking back, the Johnstons equate these struggles to the episode related in the Gospel of St. John (see 6:66-71) when many of Jesus' disciples

began to abandon Him.

"Jesus said to His apostles, 'Are you going to leave Me, too?'" and St. Peter said, 'Lord, to whom shall we go?' That's where we're at," says Gerald. "As much as our faith has been tested, and as much as we're confused and hurt and at times angry about some things that have happened, what's the alternative?"

They can't walk away. Saint Joseph wouldn't have walked away.

Faith, now 28, went public with her identity following the trial in 2003. She was then chosen as one of five victims of clergy sexual abuse to have a personal meeting with Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to Washington, D.C., in 2008. That meeting played a major role in her healing process. She is now married, has two children, and has never left the Church.

"Saint Joseph was helping us through the grief of dealing with Matthew's death and then the ordeal of a criminal trial," Ann Marie Johnston says. "At the time, we didn't really know what was going on around us."

A saint, too, faces uncertainties

Married 37 years, Gerald and Ann Marie continue to draw their strength from the Sacraments. They teach religious education. Every month, they have a Mass offered for the intention of Fr. Kelvin's repentance and conversion. And every evening before going to bed, Ann Marie kisses a statue of Our Lady, a Divine Mercy image, and their beloved statue of St. Joseph.

"There is an awful lot that we will never understand in this life," Gerald says, "but we have to have the faith that, as St. Paul said, 'God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God'" (Rom 8:28).

He adds, "Remember: St. Joseph, too, had his doubts."

Indeed, when Joseph learned Mary was pregnant, he resolved to divorce her quietly. But when an angel explained that Mary had conceived the Child through the Holy Spirit and that this Child would save His people from their sins (see Mt 1:18-25), Joseph was quick to take her as his wife.

"Saint Joseph was going to walk away," Gerald says.

"Yes," says Ann Marie, "but he didn't."

So, bring your intentions to faithful St. Joseph during the novena before his feast day at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. (Visit marian.org/mh/b21 for details.) He can help us through the hard times because he is a saint who struggled like us with uncertainties.

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PREPARE FOR DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY: GROW IN MERCY TOGETHER

Form a group this Lent at your parish or in your family for a 10-week retreat on loving and consoling the merciful Heart of Jesus.

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VATICAN II: MERCY FOR THE MODERN AGE

An expert on the Council gives an overview for all of us.

Pope Francis will canonize two participants in the Second Vatican Council, Popes John XXIII and John Paul II, on Divine Mercy Sunday 2014, midway through the 50th anniversary of Vatican II. Doctor Alan Schreck, a theology professor at Franciscan University of Steubenville and popular author, has studied the Second Vatican Council for decades. We asked him to share some insights into the Council and these two Popes.

Interview by Chris Sparks

What word sums up the Council for you?

Renewal. It was a Council of renewal.

What are the essential teachings of Vatican II that every Catholic needs to know?

Well, we're all called to holiness. Everyone (baptized and confirmed) in the Church is equally and fully a member of the Church, of the People of God. We have a common vocation, which is to follow Christ fully, to be holy. That's really essential.

Also, we are to live our faith and witness in word and deed — the seed of the new evangelization. Every Catholic is called to be an apostle and has a mission to live their faith in the world. The Council Fathers called the document on the laity the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (Apostolicam Actuositatem)*.

Another essential teaching is the call to be a worshipping people. The liturgy is the worship of the people of God. It's not a spectator sport. We're not observing it. We're offering the liturgy, obviously with the necessary presence of the ordained ministers who act *in persona Christi*, but we all are worshipping together.

Also, every Catholic should be reading his Bible and making use of all the wonderful



COURTESY OF FRANCISCAN UNIVERSITY OF STEUBENVILLE

Doctor Alan Schreck, a theology professor at Franciscan University of Steubenville and popular author, has taught a number of classes on the Second Vatican Council. He has also written books on it.

Catholic Bible study aids available, so that the Word of God is not solely the domain of the specialists. We should all be more familiar with the Word of God in Scripture and Tradition.

Catholics are to take the initiative to reach out to other Christians, to build bridges of understanding. We are not to be closed in on ourselves, but really seek to bring our faith into the world — trying to find common ground with other Christians and even with non-Christians for the sake of the welfare of the world. Our faith is not just to be an isolated, private matter. *Gaudium et Spes, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, says it is a faith that is to be lived in the world. Part of that is reaching out to other Christians and non-Christians, to appreciate that we're

not going to be able to proclaim Christ if we're not willing to listen and to understand what others believe. Not that we're compromising or watering down the faith in any way, but we really have to live this faith in the world in a way that is open to dialogue with others.

There are so many different areas of the Council, but those are some that come to mind.

Why is Pope Francis canonizing John XXIII and John Paul II together on Divine Mercy Sunday?

If you look at their personal sanctity and their personalities, these were men who were very attractive to the world because of their deep Christian humanness. Their pontificates were a reflection of what God wanted to do.

John XXIII saw that mercy was a particular need of the age, and that insight led him to call the Council. He shared God's mercy through the Council, his teachings, and his person. If you went to Rome and into the restaurants, there was always a picture of John XXIII and the current Pope because John XXIII was a beloved pope who really reflected the warmth and love of Christ.

It's clear that John Paul II is the same — the Pope who really embodied that fatherly face of God, the message of the Council and of the Church for this age. So much of John Paul

II's more than 26 years of papal ministry was unpacking and implementing this Council, which was the result of an inspiration given to John XXIII. John Paul II saw the theme of mercy as a true unfolding of the Council's teaching because it was God's attitude toward the world with its struggles. The Church was to be an instrument of Christ, to bring His merciful love into the world.

“John Paul II saw the theme of mercy as a true unfolding of the Council’s teaching because it was God’s attitude toward the world with its struggles,” says Dr. Alan Schreck.

If a lay Catholic wants to start learning about the Council, what's the best place to start?

It would be beneficial for lay Catholics if they would get some sort of resource to help them understand the documents. That's why I wrote *Vatican II: The Crisis and the Promise*. It unpacks the documents in layman's terms.

If you asked me where to start reading the documents, start with a careful and prayerful reading of *Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)*, *Apostolicam Actuositatem (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity)*, and then read in *Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) Part I and Part II, Chapter 1.*



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The rest of the Dr. Schreck interview:

▶ Part I

▶ Part II

Get the Divine Mercy image for your home or parish!



The image of Jesus, the Divine Mercy, is to be venerated on Divine Mercy Sunday. It is to be given a place of honor in our churches and homes on this Sunday.

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Grounds crew prepares Hill for Mercy Sunday Weekend

by Chris Sparks

“Let’s just say if we didn’t all show up on Divine Mercy Sunday, they’d notice,” laughed Mike Slattery, grounds maintenance supervisor on Eden Hill in Stockbridge, Mass.

Mike and the entire grounds crew are among the hundreds of unsung heroes who quietly handle a myriad of tasks to help make the entire Divine Mercy Sunday Weekend on Eden Hill a safe, clean, and blessed time for the thousands of pilgrims who attend. The grounds crew faces such challenges as repairing the ravages of winter through extensive landscaping and beautification; helping put up tents for Adoration, confession, various Marian ministries, the Gift Shop, and food vendors; handling trash pickup during the weekend; and much more. The planning for such a major event starts early.

“The process was started at our first meeting during the early part of December,” said Jason Mayhew, assistant facilities manager. A lot of advance planning happens to ensure that equipment such as the many tents and the portable toilets for the crowds on Eden Hill will be in place for the weekend. “All those phone calls get made ahead of time,” said Jason.

Two to three weeks before the weekend itself, the grounds crew begins preparations in earnest: tents are set up, trash cans put out, and the crew braces for the onslaught of crowds.

“This is probably the biggest crew we’ve had — 10 maintenance guys,” Mike said.

And much of the weekend rests in the hands of the volunteers who help the Marians and their staff every Mercy Sunday and at other events throughout the year at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. Many of the Marians’ staff and hundreds of others from the region and beyond volunteer.

“I’d like to get about 600 to 650 volunteers for Mercy Sunday. I particularly need volunteers to help park everybody,” said Peter James Markavage, volunteer coordi-



Under the direction of the Marian Fathers, the grounds crew puts a fresh face on Eden Hill in time for Divine Mercy Sunday every year.

nator for the Shrine and one of Fr. Joseph’s assistants at the Marian Helpers Center.

“We’re really appreciative of those who come to volunteer their time,” said Jason. “We have so many volunteers who put their hearts into it, serving with conviction and a real purpose. We’re blessed that we have so many.”

One of the main organizers of the weekend is Valerie Laurizio, who’s about to tackle her first Divine Mercy Sunday on Eden Hill as pilgrimage coordinator. Formerly a production assistant on the annual EWTN live broadcast of the Divine Mercy Sunday Mass and other coverage, she’s ready to step up to a new and bigger challenge, in large part because she’s certainly not alone.

In her new role, she’s already opened registration for bus coordinators who bring pilgrimage groups. (Coordinators can register online at thedivinemercy.org/buses.) She reports that last Mercy Sunday the Shrine drew 270 buses, with most groups coming from the Northeast region and Canada.

“Sometimes with something this large, you can get bogged down in all the details,” she said. “The bottom line is, you want it to be a safe, welcoming experience for all the pilgrims.”

“Just get ready for a spiritual experience,” said Jason to pilgrims who plan to come.

To volunteer, contact Peter at thedivinemercy.org/volunteers, by calling (413) 298-1114, or e-mailing volunteers@marian.org.

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Conference, banner to celebrate Mercy Popes

Plans call for Msgr. James Lisante, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Massapequa Park, N.Y., and a regular presenter at the Marian Fathers' Divine Mercy Conference in the Bronx, to be the principal celebrant at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Mass., for the Solemn Liturgy at 1 p.m. on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 27, announced Shrine Rector Fr. Ken Dos Santos, MIC.

Long active in the popular media, Msgr. Lisante has hosted several national television programs, including *Personally Speaking* and *Christopher Close-Up*.

Both the Sunday liturgy and the Vigil Mass at 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 26, will be celebrated on Eden Hill at the Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine.

On Saturday morning, the Marian Fathers will host their annual Mercy Weekend Conference. The theme is "Saints John XXIII and John Paul II: Celebrating the Mercy Popes." Speakers include Msgr. James P. Moroney, rector of St. John's Seminary in the Archdiocese of Boston, and Fr. Jim McCormack, MIC, prefect of formation and novice master for the Marian Fathers.

The conference will run from 10 a.m. to noon at First Congregational Church in



Plans call for Msgr. James Lisante, a regular presenter at the Marian Fathers' Divine Mercy Conference in the Bronx, to be the principal celebrant at the 1 p.m. Solemn Liturgy on Divine Mercy Sunday.

Stockbridge. General admission is \$20 (bag lunch included). Admission is free for members of the 13th of the Month Club, Friends of Mercy, and the Holy Souls Sodality. To register, please call 1-800-671-2020 or visit thedivinemercy.org/mwc.

On Saturday and Sunday, tents will be set up on Eden Hill for confessions, Adoration, the Divine Mercy Gift Shop, and for various groups associated with the Marians.

One highlight of the weekend will be the prayer banner composed of thousands of pieces of cloth. Each one will bear a Marian Helper's prayer intention for Divine Mercy Sunday. Please visit marian.org/prayerbanner to submit intentions. The theme of this year's banner is "Mercy United, 2014." It will feature photos of John Paul II and John XXIII with the Divine Mercy image in the background.

Due to the unpredictable spring weather in the Berkshires, pilgrims are advised to dress in layers. Wear comfortable shoes that have traction, and don't forget rain gear.

If you can't make it to the National Shrine for Divine Mercy Sunday on April 27, you can view the Marian Fathers' celebration live on EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network). The show begins at noon EST, followed by the Solemn Liturgy at 1 p.m.

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DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

weekend

Saturday, April 26

- 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. — Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Adoration Tent. At 2:45, there will be a procession to the Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine.
- 10 a.m. to noon — Divine Mercy Conference: "Saints John XXIII and John Paul II: Celebrating the Mercy Popes." Speakers will include Msgr. James P. Moroney, rector of St. John's Seminary in the Archdiocese of Boston, and Fr. Jim McCormack, MIC, prefect of formation and novice master for the Marian Fathers.
- 3 p.m. — Divine Mercy Novena and Chaplet, Exposition of and Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, Mother of Mercy Shrine.
- 4 p.m. — Vigil Mass, Mother of Mercy Shrine.

Sunday, April 27

- 9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. — Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Adoration Tent.
- 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. — Music and spiritual presentations, recitation of the Rosary, Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine.
- 1 p.m. — Plans call for the Solemn Liturgy to be celebrated by Msgr. James Lisante, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Massapequa Park, N.Y., Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine.
- 3 p.m. — Divine Mercy Novena and Chaplet; Exposition of and Benediction with the Most Blessed Sacrament; blessing of religious articles and water, Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine.

On Saturday and Sunday, confessions will be heard from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., tents for enrollments and Masses will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the food court will start to serve at 8 a.m. The votive candle tent will be open all day on both Saturday and Sunday, starting at 9 a.m. The Gift Shop tents will be open on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday. (Please note that the Gift Shop will be closed on Monday, April 28.)

For up-to-date information, visit thedivinemercy.org/shrine, call (413) 298-1118, or e-mail pilgrims@marian.org.



In his first meeting with retreatants exploring a Marian vocation, Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, (far left) brought a replica sword to the table. “A priest is a warrior, a knight, and a soldier,” he said during the retreat.

RALLYING CRY FOR A 'BATTLE BREED'

Vocation director challenges retreatants with his vision of the Marian call.

by Chris Sparks

You may suspect you're in for a heck of a ride when Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, walks into the first conference of your vocation retreat (said conference called “Battle Breed: The New Generation of Priests”) carrying a life-sized replica of *Lord of the Rings* character Aragorn's sword Andúril and says, “All right. Now we separate the men from the boys.”

A group of five men attended a retreat led by Fr. Donald, the Marian Fathers' vocation director, the weekend of Dec. 6-8 at the Marian House of Studies in Steubenville, Ohio. Hailing from Oregon, California, Illinois, and Pennsylvania, they represented a wide range of life experience and education. They also had diverse faith journeys to share, including that of young Damon of St. Mary's Parish in Plano, Ill., who converted to Catholicism two years ago; those of the reverts Mike from Pennsylvania, Dustin from Oregon, and Jim from Downers Grove, Ill.; and the lifelong Catholicism of Michael from California. But all the retreatants came with certain things in common, according to Fr. Donald.

“Each has grown up in a culture that has been classified by recent Popes as a culture of death,” said Fr. Donald. “There are wolves out there, demons that want your soul. The last 100 years or so in the history of the Church and the world have been unlike any other.

“I've been a vocation director for years now, and almost every single guy I talk to who's discerning a vocation is orthodox,” Fr. Donald said. He's also encountering a lot of guys who, like him, had a past before they became committed to the Catholic faith. “They used to be a friend of the darkness, but they've been given a grace to see the right from the wrong. Something's happening. They're the Battle Breed. This is a generation that knows right from wrong, but has compassion, because it has fallen.”

Through a weekend of regular, frequent prayer, conversations with Marian priests, brothers (including seminarians), and postulants living at the House of Studies, and conferences with Fr. Donald, the men were given a taste of the essential elements of the Marians' spirituality and community life.

And they liked what they found. Time and again, they cited the same reasons for contacting Fr. Donald to the Marian Fathers: devotion to Mary; a positive encounter with a Marian, either in person, through their writings, or the recommendations of others who knew Marians; the sense of community offered by a religious order; the Marians' staunch orthodoxy and love of the Holy Father; and the retreatants' experiences as altar servers, which let them be close to the priesthood and the Eucharist.

The Marians, in turn, were delighted to share their home and routine with the retreatants. "It's your house," said Fr. Donald, welcoming the group of young men in the front foyer of the Marian House in Steubenville. "This weekend, take advantage of being out of the ordinary."

A picture of the Marians' Founder, Blessed Stanislaus Papczynski, greets everyone who enters through the front door. Less notice-



Under the watchful eye of the Marian Martyrs of Rosica, Blessed George Kaszyra and Blessed Anthony Leszczewicz, the Marians and retreatants join in prayer before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

able are the two reliquaries beneath the image, one containing a relic of St. Maria Goretti. The other: a relic of Blessed Stanislaus himself.

Father Donald talked to the retreatants about a variety of topics throughout the weekend, including the history of the order; the Steubenville area and Franciscan University of Steubenville, where Marian seminarians do their philosophy and, if necessary, undergraduate work; impediments to ordination; and their prayer time during the weekend retreat.

Leading the retreat is only one aspect of how Fr. Donald serves as the gatekeeper for the community. "As the vocation director, it is my role to help men discern. I absolutely love fulfilling this position and hope to do it for many more years," he said.

In the role, Fr. Donald welcomes new vocations to the Marians and also makes sure he's only recommending for admission men

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Graces Received

Two beautiful babies later

After four miscarriages, we asked for a healthy baby

In October 2011, after four miscarriages, my husband and I started asking Blessed Stanislaus for his intercession for a healthy baby. We not only welcomed an adopted daughter in August 2012, but I also gave birth to a son in October 2012. Now here we are ... two beautiful babies later!

— AB, Mississippi

My husband passed away peacefully

I am writing about a grace received from God through the intercession of Blessed Stanislaus. My husband was very ill and suffered very much from his illness. As he wasn't going to recover from his illness, I asked Blessed Stanislaus to intercede for us that God would give him the grace of a happy death. He passed away peacefully with no complaints or suffering.

— JO, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

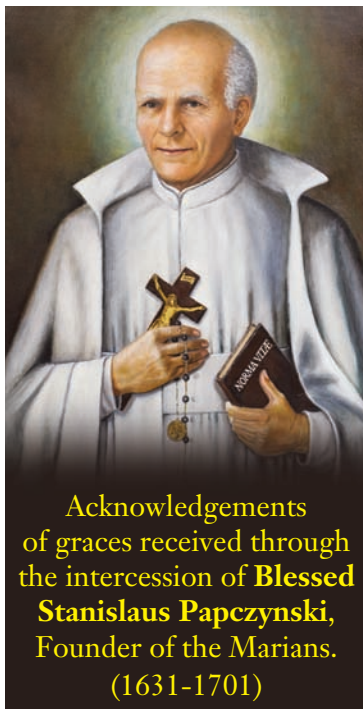
Daughter is no longer addicted

I'm writing to thank Blessed Stanislaus for his intercession. My daughter is no longer addicted to a prescription drug that was very difficult for her to get off of. I'm very grateful to Blessed Stanislaus.

— JM, Massachusetts

Son-in-law is cancer-free

My son-in-law, Fred, was diagnosed with rectal cancer and had to undergo radiation and chemotherapy before surgery and more chemotherapy after surgery. After a long, brutal year of treatments, he has received clear results: no sign of cancer.



Acknowledgements
of graces received through
the intercession of **Blessed
Stanislaus Papczynski,**
Founder of the Marians.
(1631-1701)

I write this letter of thanksgiving on behalf of my daughter, my two grandchildren, and the many people who prayed for his cure. The letters in *Marian Helper* of graces received through the intercession of Blessed Stanislaus inspired me to invoke his help.

— IS, Huntington Beach, Calif.

Family is reunited

On behalf of my family, I am writing to express our heartfelt gratitude for the graces received from God through the intercession of Blessed Stanislaus. For many years, we had been waiting to be reunited with our brother and his son.

We recently asked Blessed Stanislaus for his help in this matter, and the application for them to migrate to Canada was approved.

—JGN, Guelph, Ontario, Canada

House is sold

In the Fall 2012 issue of *Marian Helper* magazine, I read about how a mother prayed that her son would sell his house and Blessed Stanislaus came through. My son-in-law needed to sell his mother's house, so I called the Marian Helpers Center for a Blessed Stanislaus prayercard. I received the card on Aug. 29 and began asking for his intercession. On Oct. 19, the papers were signed. Thanks to Blessed Stanislaus.

— TD, Fitchburg, Mass.

For a Blessed Stanislaus prayercard (B21-CPPC), call toll free 1-800-462-7426. If you have received graces through his intercession, please write: Br. Andrew Mączyński, MIC, Vice Postulator of the Marian Causes of Canonization, Stockbridge, MA 01263. E-mail: graces@marian.org.

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Children, holy innocents, have gone to heaven

They are remembered on glass tiles that adorn the walls of the

*Shrine of the
Holy Innocents*

To memorialize a child, visit MemorialsOnEdenHill.org/sohi
or call 1-800-671-2020.

To Our TWO ANGELS
Never Forgotten
Forever LOVED



Remembered on Eden Hill

by Andrew Leeco

Agnes Haverty's husband, Joseph, had always stressed the importance of having someone to pray for them after they passed away. So when Agnes received a flyer about memorials in the Blessed John Paul II Plaza at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy on Eden Hill in Stockbridge, Mass., she knew this was the perfect spot for a memorial for her late husband and a tribute for herself.

"As soon as I read about the John Paul II Plaza, I loved the idea," Agnes says. "I have such a devotion to both John Paul II and to Divine Mercy. I knew that I wanted to be a part of the plaza. I wanted my whole family to be part of it because they all have had such a devotion to Divine Mercy.

"I first engraved paving stones for my late husband and myself," Agnes says. "And then I made the gift of three pavers for my two brothers and my sister. Recently, I have engraved paving stones for my father and mother, too.

"The reason why I have so many pavers at the Blessed John Paul II Plaza is because the people who are memorialized in the bricks [and the person who made the memorial gift] will be remembered every day in Holy Mass and in the 3 o'clock prayers. They will also be remembered once a year in a special Mass on Oct. 22, Blessed John Paul II's feast day."

Agnes says that it is very important to her that the Marians at the National Shrine will pray for her and her family.

"I wanted to ensure that when I'm dead, my loved ones and I will be remembered. It

was always important to my husband and it is important to me that someone will pray for us after we have passed on."

She says the fact that the plaza is dedicated to Blessed John Paul II makes it even more special because of her ancestry.

"I pray to John Paul II every day," Agnes

says. "I am Polish, my parents were born in Poland, so I have a strong connection to Blessed John Paul II. I saw him at least five times, both when he visited the United States and when I made trips to Rome. He was the Great Mercy Pope, and I have had a strong devotion to Divine Mercy for a number of years, as has my family. I pray the

Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 o'clock every day."

Agnes has been coming regularly to the National Shrine since learning of the Divine Mercy message and devotion.

"My husband and I started coming to the Shrine in 1987," she says. "I still go visit the Shrine all the time. I go with my sister now."

She says she loves to visit Eden Hill.

"I think the John Paul II Plaza is just beautiful," Agnes says. "I love that it is near the Shrine. And it will be even more lovely when Blessed John Paul II is canonized."

Like Agnes, benefactors can have a name engraved in a paving stone that will be installed in the Blessed John Paul II Plaza.

To learn more about these and other opportunities, please call Father Joseph's Assistants for Special Gifts at 1-800-671-2020 or visit MemorialsOnEdenHill.org.

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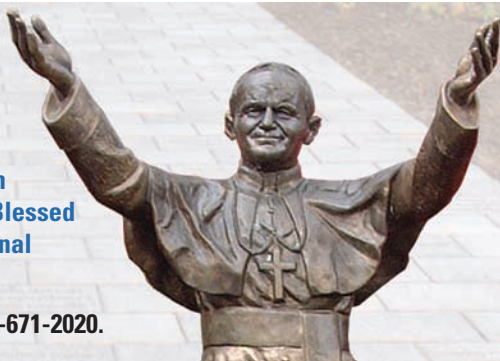


Through these memorial pavers, Agnes Haverty has made sure that her family will be remembered by the Marian Fathers daily during Mass and at the 3 o'clock hour.

HELP PAVE THE WAY FOR GOD'S MERCY



Create a lasting tribute with an engraved paving stone in the Blessed John Paul II Plaza at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy.



Go to MemorialsOnEdenHill.org/JPIIPlaza or call 1-800-671-2020.

RETREAT

Continued from page 25

serve in the Marian community as either priests or perpetually professed brothers. (All the retreatants this weekend feel called to pursue the priesthood.)

“Brothers, if you’re called to be a part of the Battle Breed, there are three things you absolutely must have,” he said during the first conference. “If you don’t have these three things, don’t come near the Marians, let alone the priesthood. First, you must love, support, and be willing to defend every teaching of the Church. You’ve got to be so in love with the Church that you’ll never speak against her. Never. This is your Bride. Secondly, you’ve got to be a man of the Eucharist. This is the Source and Summit of everything. And thirdly, Mary. You have got to give your life entirely to the Blessed Virgin Mary [through total consecration to Jesus through Mary]. A priest who doesn’t have Mary in his life doesn’t have head-crushing power,” a share in the ability of Jesus and Mary to crush the head of the devil (see Gen 3:15; Rev 12). “[As a priest,] you’ve got to have the Woman in your life.

“A priest is a warrior, a knight, and a sol-

dier,” said Fr. Donald. “This is the wisdom of the God-Man. ‘Take up your cross and follow Me’ (Mt 16:24). That’s your weapon. There are two sides of the Cross — one for Jesus, and the other for you. You’re a victim for souls [as a priest]. All men are called to defend their bride.

“Jesus and Mary are up to something right now. That’s what you are here to discern. Are you called? Are Jesus and Mary calling you?” he asked.

No matter whether he discerns a vocation with the Marians or not, said Jim, one of the retreatants, he’s received something important from the weekend. “With this group [the Marians] — and this isn’t to ingratiate myself — I can feel confident that there’s a group of men who are oriented correctly, and they’re going about God’s work,” said Jim. “It’s satisfying to know that it exists.”

“Jesus and Mary are up to something right now. That’s what you are here to discern. Are you called? Are Jesus and Mary calling you?” Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, asked.

If you’re interested in exploring a religious vocation as either a priest or brother with the Marians, please call 1-877-261-8806 or e-mail Fr. Donald at vocations@marian.org. To support our nearly 30 men in formation, please visit marian.org/mh/b21.

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► How retreatants are discerning their vocation.

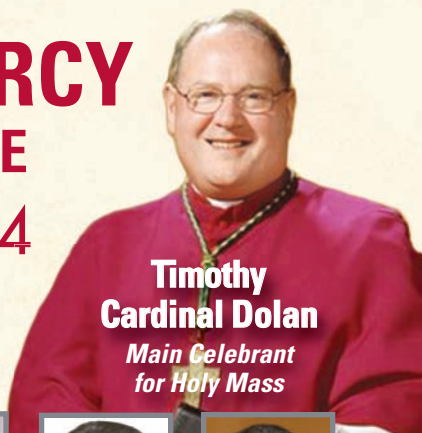


9th Annual DIVINE MERCY CONFERENCE

April 5, 2014

9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Cardinal Spellman High School – Bronx, N.Y.



Timothy Cardinal Dolan
Main Celebrant for Holy Mass

FEATURED SPEAKERS



Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC



Dr. Scott Hahn



Fr. Andrew Apostoli, CFR



Fr. Frank Pavone, MEV



Msgr. James Lisante



George Weigel

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Outstanding Helpers

by Mary Kathryn Volpone

'Never leave home without prayercards'

For about 25 years, Therese has been sharing the Divine Mercy message and devotion with her family, friends, and anyone who will listen, especially by passing out Divine Mercy prayercards.

Even though Therese's Polish mother tried to teach her about Divine Mercy in the 1950s, insisting it was part of their heritage, Therese didn't become interested herself until she was attending a healing Mass in the late 1980s. The priest

suggested that everyone pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and ask for the intercession of then-Servant of God Sr. Faustina Kowalska. Therese then heard the chaplet for the first time. "As the priest began singing it, tears started to flow down my cheeks. By the end, I was crying," she said.

After the Mass, Therese bought her first Divine Mercy prayercard. "I learned later that the Divine Mercy image [on the card] was the same one that was above St. Faustina's tomb," she said. The cards were printed by the Marian Fathers in Stockbridge, Mass. "The Marian Fathers were the promoters of the authentic Divine Mercy message and devotion, so I began ordering all my supplies from Stockbridge. My motto is: 'Never leave home without a supply of Divine Mercy prayercards.'"

Therese never misses an opportunity to share Divine Mercy. Wearing her necklace with the St. Faustina medallion that she got while attending the saint's canonization in 2000 and armed with a supply of Divine Mercy prayercards, she is prepared to respond to anyone who will listen. "I will tell them how much they need to trust in God's mercy."

In fact, when Therese was only four days away from departing for Rome to attend St. Faustina's canonization, her doctor discovered a tumor on her arm. Though the need for surgery was urgent, her doctor let her go on the trip. When she returned, the tumor was gone!



Therese is a full-time caregiver to her husband, Mike, but she says, "God sends people to me." She never misses an opportunity to share the message of Divine Mercy with others.

to a café owner suffering from cancer are some of the ways that Therese spends her spare time.

In July 2012, Marian seminarians Br. Michael and Br. Joseph joined me in visiting Therese and her family to personally thank her for supporting Marian vocations. It was delightful watching her two oldest grandsons, John Paul and Tim, each lead a decade of the chaplet. They were only 7 and 5 years old respectively. "We are four generations of Divine Mercy — my mother, me, my children, and my grandchildren," Therese said. "Even 2-and-a-half-year-old Nick knows that 3 p.m. is the Hour of Great Mercy."

Ever since that first prayercard, Therese has supported the Marian Fathers and their vocations. "I feel we are all part of the same family and mission," she said. "There are many good causes, but the Marians also spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and pray for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. I said to myself, 'Yes, that's me! I have to support them.'"

If you would also like to support Marian vocations, please contact me.

Therese said, "It gave me another opportunity to share the depths of God's mercy with my Jewish doctor."

For the past nine years, Therese has been a full-time caregiver to her husband, Mike, who suffers from a progressive form of dementia due to an auto accident. "Now that I don't get out much, God sends people to me," she said. Praying the chaplet for a dying friend's husband, sharing her faith with a former student (who is an atheist), and giving hope

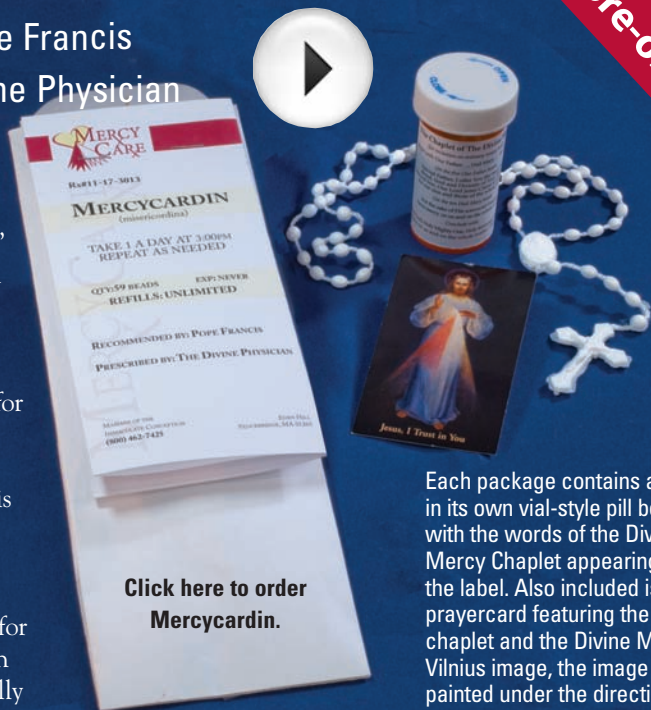


Mary Kathryn Volpone works in Fr. Joseph's Office for Special Gifts. You can contact her at: Association of Marian Helpers, Stockbridge, MA 01263, or call her toll free at 1-800-671-2020. E-mail: helpers@marian.org.

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After praying the *Angelus* in St. Peter's Square on Nov. 17, 2013, the Pope recommended to pilgrims a "spiritual medicine" called Misericordina. "There is a rosary, with which you can pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy," said the Holy Father, offering "spiritual help for our souls and for spreading love, forgiveness, and brotherhood everywhere." The Marian Fathers have brought this spiritual prescription to the U.S. as Mercycardin. "Do not forget to take it," the Pope said of the prescription, "because it is good for the heart, the soul, and for life in general!" Never expires. Especially recommended every day at 3 p.m.



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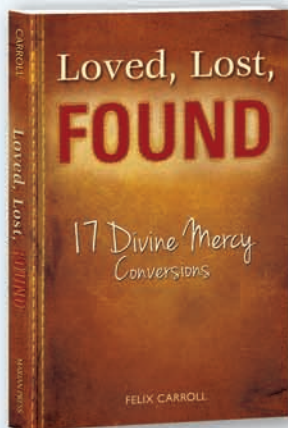
Each package contains a rosary in its own vial-style pill bottle, with the words of the Divine Mercy Chaplet appearing on the label. Also included is a prayercard featuring the chaplet and the Divine Mercy Vilnius image, the image painted under the direction of St. Faustina.

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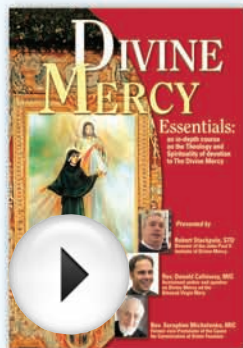
Written by Felix Carroll, *Loved, Lost, Found* profiles 17 everyday people who discover God's mercy. They include a former abortionist, an atheist turned Catholic, a rape victim, and a murderer, among others. This book illustrates how Jesus shows mercy to prodigals.



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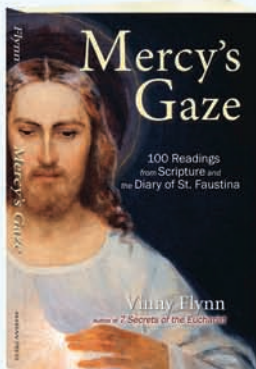
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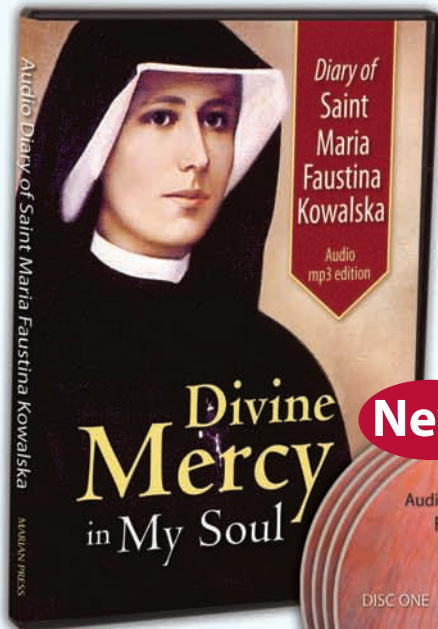


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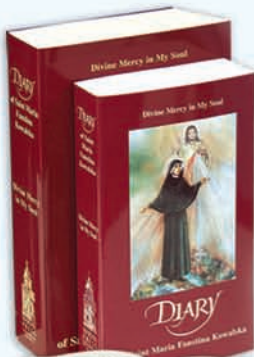
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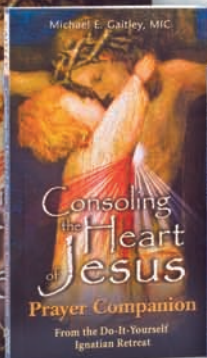
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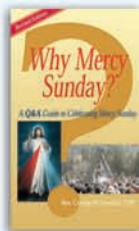
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Between Us

by a Marian and a Helper

Teaming up for mercy

Fr. Anthony: Over the past several years, I have traveled a lot of miles to bring the message of Divine Mercy to parishes around the world. I will go to a parish and spend up to five days helping people experience God's mercy through the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Mass, and confession. But I find it's the one-on-one interactions that really ignite Divine Mercy in their hearts. It is very rewarding because I get to reach out to so many people from so many different walks of life, all of whom are seeking God's mercy.

I recently visited with Dawn Wyrick, our assistant in the Evangelization and Development Office at the Marian Helpers Center. She is the liaison between the Marian priests and the parishes looking to host a Divine Mercy mission.

I said to Dawn that it's always fascinating to watch Divine Mercy in action during a parish mission. Usually when I go to a parish, some of the people know nothing about Divine Mercy, there are others who know something about it, and then there are still others who know a lot about the message. I tailor my talks to appeal to all three groups so that everyone leaves enriched. The parishioners are always so energized after the mission. Many want to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet every day. Some are interested in doing our Hearts Afire program or in starting an EADM cenacle. They are also eager to get more involved in doing works of mercy. Dawn, you must see some of that excitement when you get a call asking about parish missions.

Dawn: People might know they want to bring a mission to their parish, but they don't know how to do it. I try to help them with that. We can do anything from just a weekend mission to a full five-day program. I provide them with a suggested schedule and also recommend a topic. I think the key is that you,



Dawn and Fr. Anthony team up to help parishes embrace Divine Mercy as a way of life.

Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC, and the seminarians who help are all very personable, which makes that one-on-one time at the end of the mission so valuable to those wanting to embrace the message of Divine Mercy.

Fr. Anthony: You're right, Dawn,

that one-on-one time is so valuable. They ask me questions about Divine Mercy. Often, people will ask me to pray for them, and I'm able to pray for them right then and there. We also bring Divine Mercy materials. Then, when people hear the message, they are able to take a book, a booklet, or a CD that actually helps to bring it into their lives. They learn even more about it and then start spreading it to others.

Dawn: They also embrace the message because you are able explain Divine Mercy in a way they can understand. It helps bring them closer to the Lord.

Fr. Anthony: It does make a difference. Once they understand how much God loves us and wants to shower us with His mercy, people respond. People tell me, "Divine Mercy has changed my entire life."

Dawn: It certainly has changed my life. I was battling depression when the Lord asked me to start a Divine Mercy ministry in my parish many years ago. Through that ministry, I discovered a prison ministry that led me to learn even more about God's mercy for those who are battling addictions. God helped me to understand that if you show unconditional love to people, it can transform them.

Fr. Anthony: I see God's love transforming people all the time through the healing Masses I do. I reach out to those attending, lay hands on them like Jesus did, and pray for healing. Physical healings do happen, but what's greater are the spiritual healings that people receive by opening up to God's love, mercy, and grace. And that's the heart of everything we do — to help people receive God's mercy.

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Fr. Anthony Gramlich, MIC, travels worldwide to spread the message of Divine Mercy to parishes. He was ordained a priest in the summer of 2002.

Dawn Wyrick works at the Marian Helpers Center in Stockbridge, Mass., as the assistant in the Evangelization and Development Office.

'How we heard the call'



Marian Helper Chris:

Prayer, devotion, and service to the Divine Mercy and to Our Lady are manifested beautifully by the Marians of the Immaculate Conception. Their example is why I continue to be inspired and thankful for their service. It's why I feel called to be a Marian Helper in support of Marian seminarians.

Father Angelo Casimiro, MIC:

After serving for more than two years as a Marian priest, I am often asked how I received my call to the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. It comes down to two words — Mercy and Mary. I thank God for bringing me to the Marians where I continually live by the words, "Jesus, I trust in You."

Want to know more about a religious vocation as a Marian?



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

The next retreats will be:
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Write: **Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC**
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