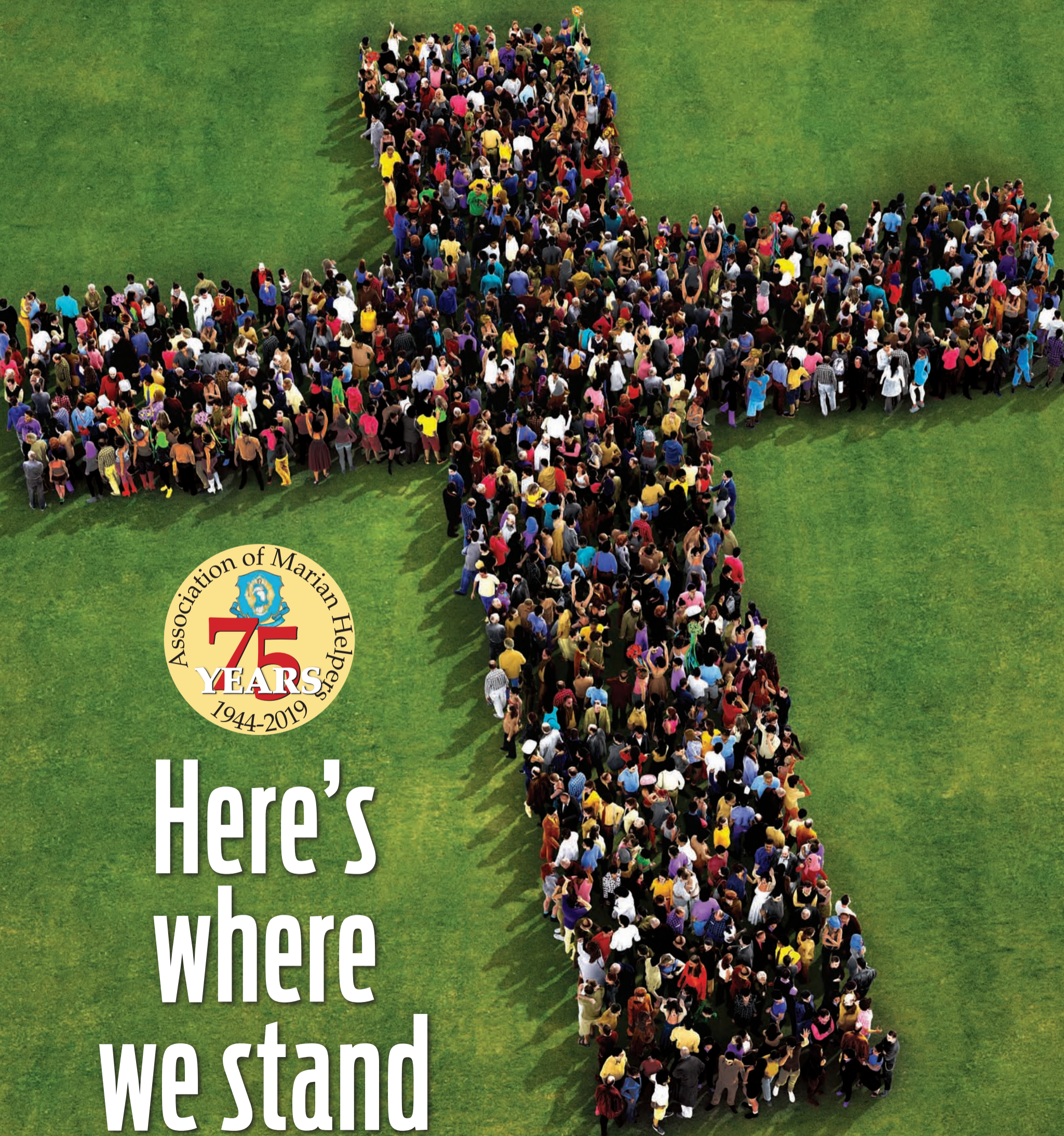


How about you save a soul? • Saint Joseph lends a hand  
Divine Mercy enters the March • Our duty to welcome the stranger

# Marian Helper

Spring 2019  
Inspiration and news from the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception [marian.org](http://marian.org)

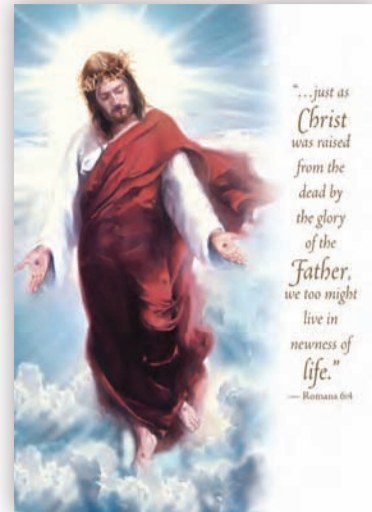


Here's  
where  
we stand

# SHARE THE GLORIOUS GIFT OF EASTER



**B41-EG191** (GOLD-FOILED)



**B41-EG192**



**B41-EG193** (DIE-CUT)

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

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

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



**B41-AE19**



**B41-AEC17**  
(CHILDREN'S CARD)



Fr. Joseph explains enrollments.

**Enroll a loved one today!**  
**1-800-462-7426 • [marian.org/b41/eg](http://marian.org/b41/eg)**

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

# 10 Go HELPERS!

Wow! It's been 75 years since the founding of the Association of Marian Helpers. How did the Association begin? What have we accomplished together? And in this anniversary year, how can we best use Lent as an opportunity to renew ourselves as Marian Helpers and as people of God?

## 18 You gotta hand it to St. Joseph

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph, one Marian Helper shares how the Patron of the Universal Church provided healing at a time when things seemed quite shattered.

## 20 Forward, March

At the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere, the Mother of Mercy Messengers and the Marian Fathers ensured Jesus and Mary were fully represented.

## 24 'What a grace of God'

Just after leaving the hospital with her newborn, Louise Fecteau had to turn around, walk back in, and identify the body of her eldest child. But God had graces in store.

## 26 Welcoming the stranger

Immigration is among the hottest of hot button issues. We Catholics and Marian Helpers must be guided by certain basic principles. Here's the first in our series on Catholic social teaching.

### DEPARTMENTS

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

#### AMH DIRECTOR/PUBLISHER

Fr. Chris Alar, MIC  
"Father Joseph, MIC"

#### EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Felix Carroll

#### DESIGNER

Andrew Leeco

#### WRITERS, ASSISTANT EDITORS

Chris Sparks, Melanie Williams,  
Marc Massery, and Terry Peloquin

#### AMH GENERAL PROMOTER

Br. Andrew R. Maczynski, MIC



COVER PHOTO BY SHUTTERSTOCK/ARTHIMEDES

#### MISSION STATEMENT

*MARIAN HELPER* is intended to serve members of the Association of Marian Helpers (AMH), a spiritual benefit society of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The magazine seeks to provide spiritual nourishment, education about the Catholic faith, and information about the mission and good works of the Marians. It also provides information about Association services and presents opportunities to support the mission and good works of the Congregation. *MARIAN HELPER* is published quarterly by the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. It is sent free of charge to active members of the Association. Printed in the USA with ecclesiastical approval. Copyright © 2019 Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. All rights reserved. Send all correspondence to: Association of Marian Helpers, Editorial Dept., Eden Hill, Stockbridge, MA 01263. email: [editorial@marian.org](mailto:editorial@marian.org) website: [marian.org](http://marian.org)

# WHO WE ARE



## Marian Helpers Center

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

## National Shrine of The Divine Mercy

(413) 298-3931  
For pilgrimages:  
(413) 298-1119  
[ShrineOfDivineMercy.org](http://ShrineOfDivineMercy.org)



## Mercy Apostolates

Learn about our  
lay ministries.  
[marian.org/ministries](http://marian.org/ministries)  
1-866-895-3236

## Evangelization Team

Invite the Marians  
to speak at your parish.  
(413) 298-1349  
[parishmissions@marian.org](mailto:parishmissions@marian.org)

## Hearts Afire: Parish-based Programs (HAPP®)

[AllHeartsAfire.org](http://AllHeartsAfire.org)  
1-844-551-3755

## Intercessory Prayerline

Send us your  
prayer intentions.  
1-800-804-3823  
[marian.org/prayerline](http://marian.org/prayerline)

## Websites

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



## Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception

The Marian Fathers are a Congregation of nearly 500 priests and brothers in 20 countries around the world.

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

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

## Association of Marian Helpers — Join us!

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

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

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



YouTube



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

## OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT US GOD'S MISSION THROUGH US

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

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

## Arrange a special gift:

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

- to support a particular ministry or need: [marian.org/give](http://marian.org/give)
- to create a memorial or tribute: [MemorialsOnEdenHill.org](http://MemorialsOnEdenHill.org)
- or call (413) 298-1382.

## When making your will ...

A sample form of bequest to the Marians is:

*I give and bequeath to the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M., Stockbridge, MA 01262, \_\_\_% of my adjusted gross estate (or \$\_\_\_\_\_, or a specific asset) to be used for its religious and educational purposes.*

# I'D LIKE YOU TO SAVE A SOUL

**A**s you'll read in our cover story, it's been 75 years since the founding of the Association of Marian Helpers. On this special occasion, I have a special request. This year I'd like you to help save a soul.

That is to say, I'd like you to help a single soul come to know God, come to know the faith, and seek to serve God through serving those among us in greatest spiritual and material need.

Does that sound like a tall order? Well, let me make it easier. Specifically what I'm suggesting is that every Marian Helper enroll one new individual or family into the Association. We here at the Marian Helpers Center will do the rest.

We'll provide them with spiritual nourishment, free of charge, to help them grow in their faith. We'll send them this magazine as long as they wish to receive it. We'll point them to our websites, where they'll find inspirational stories and videos. And, of course, we'll pray for them. Indeed, anyone you enroll receives all of the spiritual benefits available to Marian Helpers and, in turn, is better able to radiate God's mercy to others. By decree of the Holy See, the spiritual benefits available to those you enroll include that entire bulletpoint list you see on the opposing page.

Helping souls to grow in holiness and guiding souls to Heaven is what the Association of Marian Helpers is all about.

God wants to empower you and me to serve the Church and spread the Good News of the Gospel. He wants us to invite others to a better way of daily living that incor-

porates an interior life of prayer and intimate union with God. He wants us to help ensure that others come to know of the love Jesus has for even the greatest of sinners and to discover the intercessory role of Mary Immaculate, our spiritual Mother in Heaven.

We were created in

God's image and likeness because He wanted us to be His family. Jesus became like us in all things except sin so that, by accepting Him as our Savior, we might be given "the power to become children of God" (Jn 1:12) and thus have the right to "confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy" from our Father (Heb 4:16).

By enrolling someone into the Association, you invite them to become a member of a spiritual family. In this family, we surrender ourselves more fully to the supernatural life given to us in Baptism and the other Sacraments of the Church, so that we can take up in earnest our baptismal vocation to holiness. By enrolling someone into the Association, you provide them with the opportunity to take the path toward God. And, as you know, this path promises a more meaningful and fulfilling life here on earth.

How so?

Because it makes us better people, better siblings, better spouses, better neighbors, better citizens, and better problem solvers. And, indeed, the world is rife with problems. The problems of this world are various and urgent, much too urgent for us to sit idly by and wait on others to come up with solutions.

As a Marian Helper, you are a part of the solution. All of us must take up the mission to save souls, one at a time.

Please consider enrolling a friend or family in the Association of Marian Helpers. You can do so online at [marian.org/enrollments](http://marian.org/enrollments) or by calling 1-800-462-7426.

May God continue to bless you and bless our spiritual family.



*Fr. Joseph, MIC*



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

# 'A compass to point you to Heaven'

MARIAN  
HELPERS  
IN ACTION



Jennifer and Derek Nelson of Rockaway, New Jersey, and their friend, Steve Babula of Boonton, New Jersey, discovered the power of God's mercy as they teamed up to create an album inspired by the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska. Their music led to the creation of a program they call "A Divine Mercy Encounter," through which they spread the message of Divine Mercy. The Nelsons, true to their commitment to spreading mercy, donate half of their album sales to the Marian Missionaries of Divine Mercy.

## What is "A Divine Mercy Encounter?"

**Derek:** The whole goal of the program centers around an hour of Eucharistic Adoration and an invitation to go to Confession. Together with some periods of silence and readings from Scripture, I play and sing original songs (which I consider more like meditations). Four of my children sing with me, and Jenn does the readings. The hope is to have people hear the lyrics and meditate on the power of God's mercy and then receive the Sacrament of Confession.

**Jenn:** When we do this program at parishes, for the entire hour there is a line back to back of people waiting for Confession. Seeing the lines of souls that you know are going to experience God's great mercy in the Confessional, it's really moving to be part of that, knowing that people are coming

closer to the Lord. We've been doing this program for about three years and have gone to about 12 parishes.

## How did this get started?

**Derek:** About five years ago, the New Jersey Center of Divine Mercy in Newark, New Jersey, asked if I would play music at a healing service. The person in charge of it asked me to write a song using a specific passage from St.

Faustina's *Diary*. At that point, I didn't know much about Divine Mercy, but I wrote my first Divine Mercy song, "Suffering for Souls." The same person who asked me to write it suggested that I have the song recorded. I got together with Steve Babula, a friend of my wife who owns a recording studio. It was originally just going to be an album. But then Steve had a great idea to use the music to create "A Divine Mercy Encounter."



Steve Babula

## Steve, how did this project inspire your reversion?

**Steve:** As the music started coming together, my own devotion and my own faith life took a complete 180-degree turn into the direction God wanted me to go. Just seeing Derek and his devotion in the project — he was clearly not doing it for himself. That's what got me on board. It became a labor of love for me as well.

## What have been people's reactions to this program?

**Jenn:** Someone who lost their job came up to us afterward to thank us. One woman who lost a son in a tragic accident said that this helped to heal her. She told me, "I had been so angry at God." The whole family of a Knight of Columbus who had taken his own life came to the program, listened to this music, and the wife gave us hugs after and just said, "Thank you so much. This helped me so much."

A faith formation director gave us one of the best compliments, saying, "Jenn, Derek, and the kids are not front and center. Jesus is front and center." We set up in the back of the Church. Some people might not even know who's singing. It's about an individual, personal relationship with Jesus.

## Tell me more about the music.

**Steve:** The music isn't a trendy genre. It's timeless and appeals to all audiences. We're hoping that any chance we have to get the music out there, it will move people in some way, maybe to go to Confession and to feel God's mercy and have them change their lives in some way.

**Jenn:** The message of the music says that all your inconveniences in life and all your suffering is a compass to point you to Heaven, that there's a purpose behind suffering and you can help Jesus to save souls through your suffering. We want people to know that the whole point of Divine Mercy is that Jesus came to be Love and Mercy to others, and that's what we're called to do.

## Why did you decide to donate half of your album proceeds to the Marian Missionaries of Divine Mercy?

**Jenn:** We felt that since the words of many of the songs are from Jesus to Faustina, it's not ours to profit from. We want as much of the income as possible to go to continue to spread Jesus' love and mercy to a world desperately in need of both. We wanted to support Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, and the amazing work he's doing with the MMDM! MH

*To listen to the Nelsons' music, visit their YouTube channel, called "A Divine Mercy Encounter."*

— Marc Massery

## IN BRIEFS

### Farewell to two Marian Helpers

We here at the Marian Helpers Center dearly miss two joyful women who kept us smiling over the years. Following a brief illness, **Rosemarie Dolson**, 65, of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, died peacefully on Nov. 25, surrounded by her family. Following heart surgery, **Margaret "Margie" Parks**, 83, of Maywood, New Jersey, died on Nov. 4, also surrounded by family.

Rosemarie worked with her husband, Jim, in the Center's canvas print workshop, stretching artwork upon wooden frames — images of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the saints. Surely the graces of those images rubbed off on Rosemarie and Jim. They were a beautiful couple, still clearly enamored with each other after nearly 46 years of marriage. We pray for the repose of Rosemarie's soul as well as for the intentions of Jim, their two children, and their four grandchildren.

As for Margie, she had been a Stockbridge fixture for 74 years, ever since her father first purchased a weekend cabin down the road from the Shrine. Margie and her best friend, Bernadette Parodi, would often attend the 11 a.m. Mass at the Center before heading out into nature — to catch tadpoles or drift around on a lake in a precarious little blow-up raft that Margie referred to as her "yacht."

Easily provoked into joyful outbursts of practicality, Margie would often say matter-of-factly, "I'm not afraid to die. Whenever He's ready for me, I'm ready. Take me." Her family and friends definitely weren't ready for her to go. We pray for the repose of Margie's soul as well as for the intentions of those she left behind, including Bernadette; Margie's husband, Michael; their daughter, Elizabeth; and their grandson and great-grandson.

### What's new with EADM?

The Marian Fathers' apostolate **Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy** (EADM) continues to form more Divine Mercy prayer groups (cenacles) around the world and ship medical containers to the poor. Its last container arrived safely in the Philippines. EADM is preparing a container bound in early spring for Kenya. Also, **Dr. Bryan Thatcher**, EADM's founder and director, recently recorded four shows featuring his ministry for EWTN. Two have already aired, and the last two will air in Lent on the program "The Church Universal."



**Rosemarie Dolson**



**Margie Parks**

# FACES OF MERCY

## George Witwer

Bluffton, Indiana

I was attending Sunday Mass regularly with my wife, who is Catholic, but it didn't mean much to me. I did not understand anything about the Holy Eucharist. Mary had no meaning to me at all. I gradually thought that maybe I ought to join, mostly because of the pro-life issue. I felt like the Catholic Church was the only institution that understood the pro-life issue and had stood firmly for life. Because of that, I thought they must have something that the rest of society doesn't have. So I joined. I had never been baptized before. It cured me of a sin I had, and since then I have continued to grow rapidly. When I was Protestant, I felt like I was just getting scraps falling off the table. Now that I've joined the Catholic Church, I am eating the feast like you wouldn't believe. I really feel like I'm experiencing some of Heaven right here on earth.



Jesus tells us through St. Faustina that there is an outpouring of mercy like never before in human history. The gift of Divine Mercy Sunday is the pinnacle of that. If we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday as it's meant to be celebrated, the mercies that come from that are almost impossible to believe. Divine Mercy Sunday reminds us that God truly loves us and wants us to be part of His Kingdom right here on earth, and that He will extend the mercies for that to happen. I wish all would participate in Divine Mercy Sunday and fully realize these mercies. That would bring about an incredible spread of love across the planet.



## Elizabeth Collins

Manchester, Connecticut

I went to a parish mission given by Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC, in March 2018. It changed my life. That epiphany happened on Divine Mercy Sunday. There have been many tears over the past several months, but there have been plenty of smiles, too. Because of Divine Mercy, I am definitely more forgiving. I am really trying to be more open to other people, knowing that I can't change what they do. All I can do is pray for them. I am a physical therapist. Understanding Divine Mercy really helps me to see the patient as a person, as a child of God. I do work with a lot of patients who are at their end, maybe not at the total end, but I hope that I'm able to lead them toward peace.

## Deborah Slavin

Pawtucket, Rhode Island

I retired recently, but four days every week I take care of my two grandchildren. My son and my daughter-in-law don't go to Mass, but I try to be the merciful face of Jesus to my family. My grandson comes with me on Saturday evenings to Mass. Because of that, he's now asking to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. So he's in preparation to receive his First Holy Communion. Then my son and daughter-in-law asked me to arrange for their youngest to get baptized. They didn't have a dress for her, so I pulled out my baptismal dress that I wore 63 years ago, had it dry cleaned, and she wore that dress. The Lord's mercy keeps going and showing itself in many different ways. For me it's just riding those waves, letting the Lord take me where He will.



## Joan Lane

Stockbridge, Massachusetts

I was very prayerful as a child. When I was about 5, the Lord told me to become a Catholic, but I didn't really know what that meant. My mother had been Catholic, but she had changed her religion. She got very sick when I was about 8 years old, and she was taken to a Catholic hospital. There, I became even more convinced to become Catholic, but I had no one to talk to about it. I started out as a Presbyterian. Then I became a Baptist. Then I became a Lutheran. Finally, I became a Catholic. It was a long process. I believed [in the Real Presence] even as a Baptist, but it was all in the Lord's timing.

I have been a nurse since 1965. I've had patients that relayed to me that they had an abortion, and that it was the first time they revealed it. I direct them to the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy and Rachel's Vineyard.



## Debbie Harne

Warner, New Hampshire

My husband and I converted to Catholicism in 2006. It began when my husband would lie in bed reading the big green Catechism of the Catholic Church. As a faithful Protestant at the time, I was thinking, "What in the world is he doing?" Finally, when I realized he wasn't putting it away, I started to find things out for myself. My husband basically read his way into the Catholic Church. I'm not the scholar that he is, so for me it took a wonderful parish priest to come to our home regularly to catechize us. I struggled the most with understanding Marian devotion. Father told me, "You just have to ask God to teach you." And that is what the Lord has done. Since consecrating myself to the Blessed Virgin Mary, God has just opened my eyes to His mercy. MH



## A 'Surprise' phone call

We recently received a call here at the Marian Helpers Center from a woman who wanted us to know her birth name and how thankful she is for it.

"Helena Kowalska," she announced.

Sound familiar? She shares the same birth name as a certain famous saint. That particular Helena Kowalska, born on Aug. 25, 1905, in the tiny Polish village of Glogowiec, received the religious name Sr. Maria Faustina of the Most Blessed Sacrament on April 30, 1926. Turns out that 13 months after that name change, the world was blessed with another Helena Kowalska — the one on the other end of the phone — who came into the world in the small town of Linden, New Jersey.

This Helena Kowalska eventually had "Serden" appended to her birth name by means of marriage. She's now 91. She has a pacemaker. She's on oxygen "24/7." She has some aches and pains — "but what are you going to do? I'm 91!" She still does her own cooking.

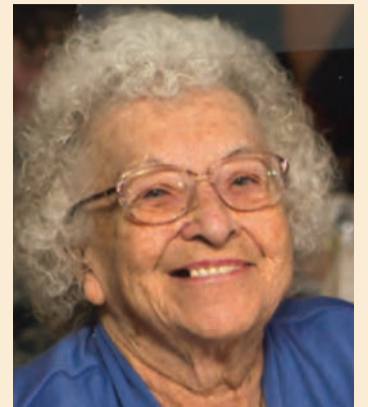
She and her husband, Burman, live in Surprise, Arizona, nearly 6,000 miles away from Leszno, Poland, birthplace of Francis Kowalski — her father — who would name his daughter "Helena" long before the world would know of that other Helena Kowalska.

By the way, her father's birthday, Oct. 22, is now St. John Paul II's feast day. "Some say he resembled our St. John Paul II," Francis Kowalski's daughter tells us.

So, is she related to St. Faustina or what? "I don't know, but I often wonder" she tells us. "I keep saying to St. Faustina: 'If there's any blood flowing between us, then you know it and I don't.'"

We asked her what advice she would give to the world? "Hmm," she says. It can be summed up thusly: Trust in God and His saints.

"Anyway," Helena Kowalska Serden tells us before hanging up, "I just wanted you to know that I feel very blessed that my birth name is the same as St. Faustina's, and every night I pray to her, thanking her for helping me to be who I am at the age of 91. I'm feeling pretty good for my age." MH

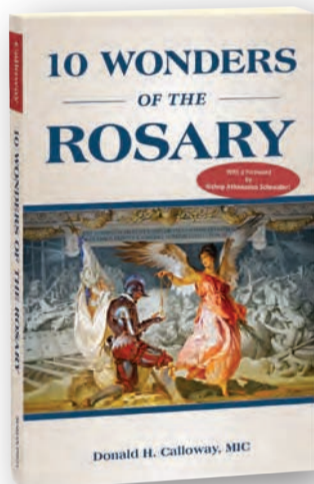
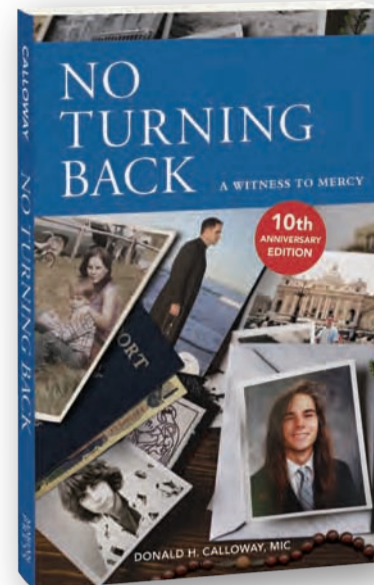


Lent is all about recommitting ourselves to love of God and neighbor. In that spirit, here's a range of items to help you spread the faith, grow in the faith, and pray for Christ's Church in a time of crisis.

## NO TURNING BACK: A WITNESS TO MERCY 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

BY FR. DONALD CALLOWAY, MIC

The story of Donald Calloway's journey from runaway teen to Marian priest has touched the hearts and changed the lives of thousands of people. Now, in this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *No Turning Back*, the Very Rev. Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, looks back on the past decade in a new introduction to this Christian classic. His witness proves that between Jesus, the Divine Mercy, and Mary, the Mother of Mercy, there's no reason to give up hope on anyone, no matter how far they are from God. \$14.95. [B41-ANTBK](#)



## 10 WONDERS OF THE ROSARY

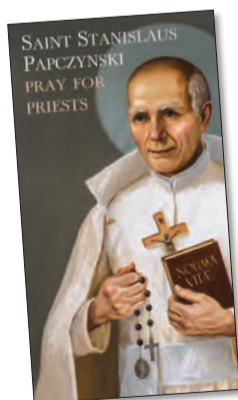
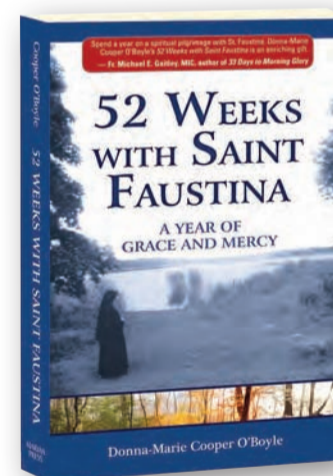
BY FR. DONALD CALLOWAY, MIC

The best-selling *Champions of the Rosary* was Fr. Calloway's big book on the Rosary. In *10 Wonders*, Fr. Calloway has skimmed off the cream of the crop from the history and heroes of the Rosary and put it in this much smaller book, sharing stories about some of the most amazing Rosary saints and the Rosary's power to save souls, situations, and civilizations. The perfect introduction to Our Lady's favorite devotion for friends, family, and the curious. \$9.95. [B41-WOND](#)

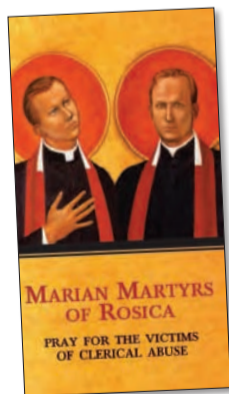
## 52 WEEKS WITH SAINT FAUSTINA

BY DONNA-MARIE COOPER O'BOYLE

Perfect to begin any time of the year, this collection of weekly meditations by EWTN TV host Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle shares the fruits of her own discipleship at the feet of the Secretary and Apostle of Divine Mercy, St. Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938). Rich, beautiful, inspiring, this book will help bring light into your life, and prepare you to share that light with others, as well! \$15.95. [B41-WEEKS](#)



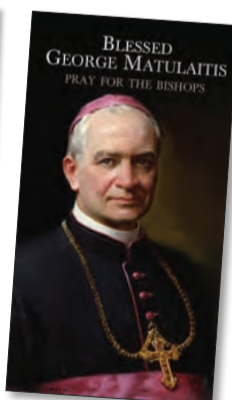
Saint Stanislaus Papczynski, Pray for Priests  
[B41-STNPR](#)



Marian Martyrs of Rosica, Pray for the Victims of Clerical Abuse  
[B41-MTYPC](#)



Saint Faustina Kowalska, Pray for the Consecrated Religious  
[B41-FSTPR](#)



Blessed George Matulaitis, Pray for the Bishops  
[B41-GRGB](#)

## PRAYER CARDS

We're all concerned about the abuse crisis in the Church — so let's call on the saints and martyrs to help heal and renew the Church! Can be used as novena prayers or simply as a way of interceding for all those affected by the present crisis.

**Prayer cards: 10 FOR \$1.20**  
• 100 FOR \$10.00  
• 1,000 FOR \$60.00



# UNITED IN BLESSED GEORGE

**O**ur superior general recently asked me to fly to Lithuania from Rome to serve as his delegate for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Sisters' founder was none other than Blessed George Matulaitis-Matulewicz (1871-1927), the Renovator of the Marian Fathers.

The Very Rev. Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC, the provincial superior of the Marian Fathers in the United States and Argentina, also attended the celebrations. On Saturday of the Jubilee weekend, Fr. Kaz and I addressed the Sisters by reflecting on the question, "What would the Holy Spirit and Blessed George say to you 100 years after your founding?"

We pondered the words of Blessed George on his deathbed, when he said, "Close ranks and sacrifice yourselves!" This is good advice, not only for the Sisters and for the Marian Fathers, but for the whole Church during these challenging times. We mustn't allow the evil one to outflank us. Rather, we must unite, help one another, make the difficult choices necessary to follow Christ, and offer the gift of ourselves as He did. We encouraged the Sisters to consider expanding their apostolic outreach. They currently work in Lithuania and in the United States (in Connecticut and Illinois).

We also speculated that perhaps the Holy Spirit is saying that now is the time for Blessed George's canonization, more than 30 years after his beatification. For that to happen, we need a Vatican-approved miracle through his intercession. So I say to you all: Pray for miracles through Blessed George. For instance, those who know of people in the hospital or who are suffering at home can pray for healing through his intercession. News about favors received can be emailed to [graces@marian.org](mailto:graces@marian.org) or sent to Br. Andrew Maczynski, MIC, Vice Postulator of the Marian Causes of Canonization, Stockbridge, MA 01263.

The Marians in Stockbridge can also send you a prayer card with an image of Blessed George. Just call 1-800-462-7426 and ask for product code B41-CBGP.

Brother Andrew recently published a new Blessed

George biography that provides a wonderful introduction to this great man. It briefly tells the story of his life, and it includes some of his writings. The book is available at [ShopMercy.org](http://ShopMercy.org) or by calling 1-800-462-7426 (Product code B41-BGLW).

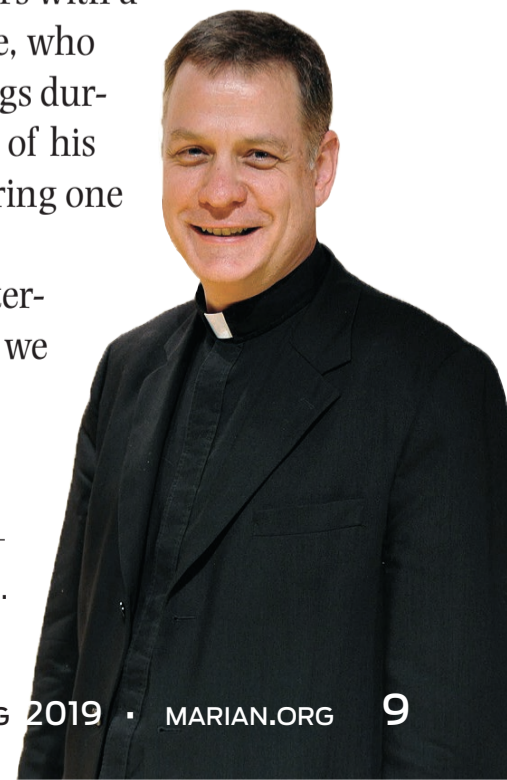
Wishing to re-acquaint myself with Blessed George's spirituality before speaking with the Sisters, I read the book. What an inspiring life! He was truly a Renaissance man. He not only rescued the Marian Fathers from the brink of extinction, but he also founded two communities of religious sisters. He was a seminary professor, an archbishop, and a gifted preacher.

He did much to improve the lot of downtrodden workers. At the end of his life, he helped form a concordat between his country and the Holy See. He loved the Church. I hope that more people come to know Blessed George.

A beautiful Jubilee Mass in the Marian Church in Mariampole — home to Blessed George's tomb — crowned the anniversary weekend. Eight bishops and archbishops concelebrated, along with a large number of priests. After the Mass, the Mariampole Cultural Center hosted a powerful celebration of his life and the history of the Sisters' community. A festive lunch followed.

Father Kaz presented the Sisters with a first-class relic of Blessed George, who endured many physical sufferings during his life. The relic was a piece of his shirt that had been bloodied during one of his struggles.

Let's ask Blessed George to intercede for our Church today, that we might find the unity that Christ so desires.




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



Marian Helpers have always flocked to Eden Hill in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. **Top:** Pilgrims attend a Polish Day event in 1962. **Bottom:** More than 20,000 pilgrims attend Divine Mercy Sunday in 2018.

# Go Helpers!

The Association celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

By Terry Peloquin

**L**earn about the Catholic faith, live it wholeheartedly, and be ambassadors of that message always and everywhere.

That has long been the mission for the Marian Fathers and their lay associates who, together, comprise the Association of Marian Helpers, which marks its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

This powerful team of nearly 1.5 million members grew from just a small group of friends — friends from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and interests. But all stood by the Marian Fathers. Why? Because of where *they* stand.

They stand with Christ.



## Pep talk

“What we do is more important than anything from Amazon or Google or any big company.” These words came from Fr. Chris Alar, MIC — the current “Fr. Joseph,” director of the Association of Marian Helpers — to the staff of the Marian Helpers Center here in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, this past December.

“We are in the business of helping souls to advance in holiness,” he continued. “We want to get souls to Heaven. This is what the Association of Marian Helpers is all about.

“I’d like to take this time to thank you, on behalf of all the Marian Fathers and myself, for your hard work, long hours, and your sacrifice. Our Marian Helpers make sacrifices, too. They choose to support the works of the Marians because it’s important.”

His well-timed pep talk ushered in the New Year 2019, marking 75 years since the Marian Fathers made it official — teaming up with the laity to establish a spiritual benevolent society to do great good for Christ and His Church.

The Association has since been the Church’s leading promoter of devotion to the Immaculate Conception and the souls in Purgatory. By the grace of God, the Association has also helped lead the greatest grassroots movement in the history of the Church: the spread of the Divine Mercy message and devotion, as revealed to the Polish mystic St. Maria Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938).

## Monday morning quarterback

Though Marian ministries span the globe today, in the years leading up to and since the founding of the Association, however, the Marian Fathers have faced difficult times and tough decisions. On some occasions, it seemed even their best efforts would be thwarted.

Take, for instance, the idea presented to Blessed George Matulaitis, the “Renovator” of the Marian Fathers, shortly before his death in 1927, to open a Marian house of studies in Washington, D.C. He agreed that the idea was a good one. It would place seminarians near The Catholic University of America, a major center for Catholic theological education. In the 1940s, to finance this small Washington community, the priests, brothers, and seminarians prepared missions, distributed prayer cards and leaflets, and published a magazine for the Polish clergy. When housing expenses and education costs grew beyond what they were taking in, they faced the possible closure of their house.

But God had other plans.

Indeed, in 1940, less than two years after the death of St. Faustina, a Marian priest from war-torn Poland, Fr.



**Top:** In the 1960s, the Shrine of The Divine Mercy welcomed pilgrims for daily Holy Mass with the Marian Fathers.

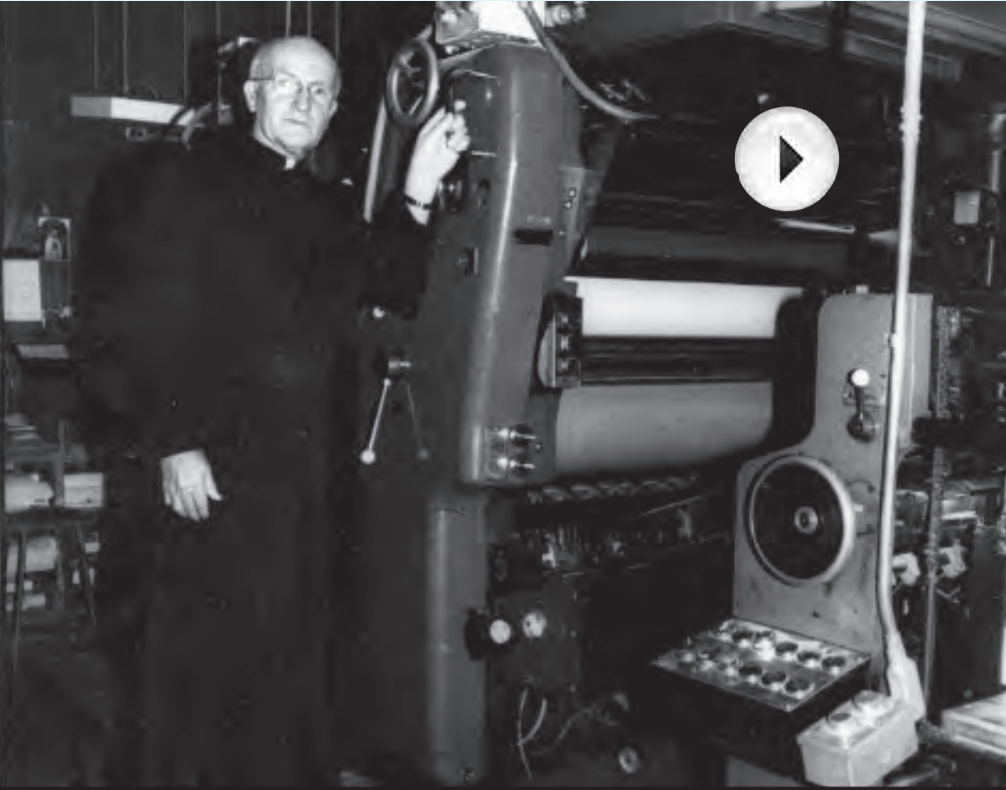
**Bottom:** The National Shrine now has a full calendar of events and ethnic days, such as Encuentro Latino (seen here in 2014).

Joseph Jarzebowski, succeeded in bringing Divine Mercy materials to the United States. He received the materials from none other than Blessed Michael Sopocko, the confessor and spiritual director of St. Faustina, the Secretary of Divine Mercy.

In gratitude to the mercy of God for his escape, Fr. Jarzebowski promised to spend the rest of his life spreading this message of Divine Mercy. He received help in fulfilling that promise from the Felician Sisters of Enfield, Connecticut, and his fellow Marian Fathers in Washington.

The Marians printed simple Divine Mercy prayer cards — first for their family and friends, and then for a growing number of benefactors. As World War II continued, many people found comfort in the message of Divine Mercy.

The devotion spread, the number of benefactors increased,



**Top:** The Association's first director, Fr. Walter Pelczynski, MIC, set the foundation for what would become Marian Press. **Bottom:** Current director Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, oversees the production of millions of pieces of literature each year.

and the Marian community gradually got back on its feet.

## Game changers

For more than a decade, things were looking up. In the 1940s, a young seminarian from Adams, Massachusetts, was impressing his religious brothers in Washington, D.C., with his religious zeal and personal touch. The future Fr. Walter Pelczynski, MIC, maintained correspondence with numerous people who believed in and supported the Marians' work.

It was Fr. Walter, during a visit home, who first discovered the Eden Hill estate in Stockbridge, in western Massachusetts. He convinced the Marians to purchase the property. In 1944, here in Stockbridge, he established the Mercy of God Apostolate — later known as the Association of Marian Helpers.

He suggested that the Marians start a publication with teachings about Our Lady and the Divine Mercy message. In June 1944, the Marians' first monthly magazine was

printed in Polish. Under Fr. Walter's direction, the editorial office, Divine Mercy materials, and files of benefactors and friends were transferred from Washington, D.C., to Eden Hill.

It was here, on Eden Hill, where the Marians officially established the Association of Marian Helpers as a spiritual benefit society of Marian co-workers among both the laity and the clergy. In 1947, the first quarterly issue of the English-language Marian Helpers *Bulletin* (now known as *Marian Helper* magazine) began publication.

The Association of Marian Helpers then made possible another sign of growth here on Eden Hill. The Marians were outgrowing the private chapel in their residence. In 1950, they hired Stockbridge architect Antonio Guerrieri to build a larger chapel, dedicated to the mercy of God. It would come to be known as the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, the spiritual home of the Association, featured daily in EWTN's airing of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

## Moving goal posts

By 1953, the Center had distributed some 25 million pieces of Divine Mercy literature around the world. As before, though, their best efforts would be disrupted. In 1959, a ban prevented the spreading of the Divine Mercy message as revealed through St. Faustina until the message could be further studied and verified by theologians.

The Marians feared another financial crisis. The apostolate was renamed the Marian Apostolate and focused more on spreading devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the message of God's mercy as revealed in Scripture.

Did benefactors leave? Did donations drop? To everyone's surprise, donations actually tripled! The ban would be lifted in 1978, but the Marians and their supporters had no way to foresee that 20 years earlier. With the ban lifted, the Association of Marian Helpers began to spread the Divine Mercy message and devotion with renewed enthusiasm.

How did the Marian Fathers and their Marian Helpers continue to rise above such setbacks? Noted speaker and author Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, who served as vice-postulator for St. Faustina's beatification and canonization causes, explains, "The Lord will continue to bless us insofar as we are faithful to our mission to spread devotion to Divine Mercy and Mary Immaculate."

## The game plan

Although the Association was officially established in 1944, the idea was explored and written about decades earlier by none other than Blessed George Matulaitis. He



**Top:** A narrow building was used as a break area for visitors. **Bottom:** The St. Faustina Center, completed in 2016, hosts special events, conferences, and talks by the Marian Fathers and their guest speakers.

knew the Marians alone could not bring the Gospel to every home. In his spiritual *Journal*, he speculated about a new association between clergy and the laity. He wrote:

Just as there are all kinds of charitable organizations with their rosters of numerous members, so too should there be similar organizations to preach, spread, and defend the faith. ... A priest cannot reach them all, even if he tries his best to do so. The laity must come to the aid of the clergy so that both could work together in this most important task of spreading true Catholic teaching.

His call to service for the laity has five main aspects: a desire to renew everything in Christ, cooperation with Church leaders, bringing the faith into the workplace, performing works of mercy, and enlivening one's service with a whole-hearted love and zeal for Christ and the Church.

These aspects remain the hallmark of the Association of Marian Helpers.

## A winning team

Here are just some of the things that you have made happen:

- Eden Hill today is a trusted world center for the spread of the Divine Mercy message.
- Marian Press publishes St. Faustina's *Diary* (the book that sparked the Divine Mercy movement), religious art-

work, pamphlets, magazines, prayer cards, books, and more, totaling more than 50 million pieces of literature and images a year.

- More than 30 Marian seminarians in the U.S. are preparing for a life of service to Christ and the Church.
- The National Shrine of The Divine Mercy attracts tens of thousands of people each year from around the globe to experience the healing power of God's merciful love. It also hosts the largest annual Divine Mercy Sunday celebration in North America, with an estimated 20,000 pilgrims. The celebration is televised worldwide on EWTN.

The Marian Founder, St. Stanislaus Papczynski (1631-1701), was canonized in 2016. And we pray for the canonization of Blessed George — the man who imagined powerful and positive consequences when clergy and the laity work together for the glory of God.

Thank you for being a Marian Helper.

Our work for Christ and His Church continues!

**The Marian Fathers have published a special Marian Helpers prayer card that you can carry with you. The prayer card can serve as a frequent reminder to prayerfully renew yourself as a Marian Helper, as a child of God who ever seeks to deepen your "yes" to the Lord. To order the Marian Helpers Prayer, visit ShopMercy.org or call 1-800-462-7426. Product code: MHSPG.**

MH



# Marian Helpers, let's head to higher ground

By Fr. Joseph, MIC

**M**y dear Marian Helpers, the world needs us. Specifically, the world needs us to become the people Christ calls us to be.

By virtue of our Baptism, each of us — clergy and laity — has a vocation to holiness. By virtue of being Marian Helpers, we have a specific calling to conversion, to model ourselves after the Blessed Virgin Mary, who said “yes” to the Lord.

As the Association of Marian Helpers marks its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, this Lent presents a fitting occasion to renew ourselves as Marian Helpers and as people of God.

I propose that this Lent, which begins March 6, we endeavor to deepen our “yes” to the Lord, thereby becoming His honed instruments to bring about a civilization of love, beginning in our homes and extending into our communities and beyond.

I make this proposal with a sense of urgency. Why? Because we stand at a critical moment in the history of



our Church and our world. In troubling times throughout history, God has raised up great saints. Today, I believe we Marian Fathers and Marian Helpers are called to be those great saints.

We are called to be saints like Stanislaus Papczynski (1631-1701), Founder of the Marian Fathers, who in the midst of a violent age said “yes” to the Lord. He declared, “Supreme honor shown to God is to worship and imitate Him. You imitate him if you are devout; you worship Him if you are merciful” (*The Mystical Temple of God*, page 136).



Saints like Maria Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), the Secretary of Divine Mercy, who at the dawn of our own age — a time of spiritual, social, and political collapse — said “yes” to the Lord and recorded His urgent message of mercy. Jesus told her, “In the Old Covenant I sent prophets wielding thunderbolts to My people. Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My merciful Heart” (*Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, 1588).

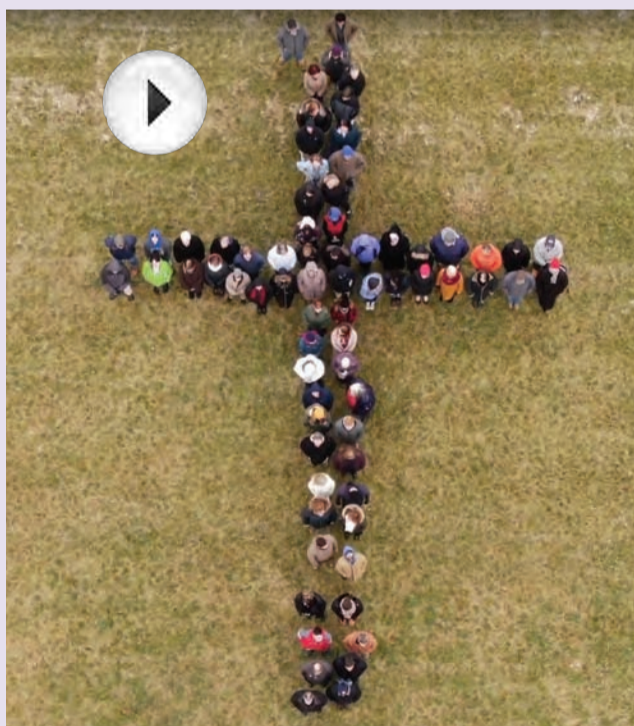
While the Holy Father and bishops around the world look to forge a path forward from the current Church crisis (see page 17), you and I can surmise what we have to do as members of the Body of Christ, and specifically as Marian Helpers.

The very core of our mission as Marian Helpers is to bring ourselves and others to eternal life with God in Heaven. We do so by committing ourselves to know, love, and serve God. By our lives — by our thoughts, words, and actions, motivated by love for God and love for His creation — we are to reveal Him to a world that either doesn’t know Him or that turns away out of fear, indifference, unbelief, or grave misunderstanding.

We are a people dedicated to Christ and devoted to the mystery of the Immaculate Conception and the souls in

Purgatory. By deed, by word, and by prayer, we follow St. John Paul II’s specific call to the Marian Fathers to be “apostles of Divine Mercy under the maternal and loving guidance of Mary.” Our spirituality forms us as a people, a citizenry, and a family: humble, joyful, practical, and merciful. The world hungers for such qualities. We must satisfy that hunger.

But how?



## The way forward

In her brilliance and beauty, the Church spells out for us the Lenten call. Specifically, the Ash Wednesday Scriptural readings that usher us into Lent speak of return to the merciful Lord. They speak of gathering and assembling, of humbling our hearts, turning from sin, and being faithful to the Gospel (see Joel 2:12-18).

They speak of our role as righteous ambassadors of Christ, working together through the grace of God to save souls (see 2 Cor 5:20-6:2).

They speak of the proper way to pray, fast, and give alms so as to call attention to the Merciful Father rather than to ourselves (see Mt 6:1-6, 16-18).

With Ash Wednesday, we Marian Helpers — several hundred thousand strong — embark upon a 40-day journey, a retreat, knowing there’s strength in numbers, that

# Lent's big three

During Lent, the Church's primary penitential season, we are called to three forms of penance: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Let's take a look at each.

## Prayer

Sometimes feeling like we need to find more time for prayer can overwhelm us. But this Lent, perhaps we could use this pressure to focus on transforming the *quality* rather than the *quantity* of our prayers.

The essence of prayer involves cultivating an intimate relationship with the Father, as a child would with a parent. A child longs for the attention of his father, waits up at night for him to come home, and rushes to him when he enters the room. God wants us to come to Him with the same mentality. Are we rushing to Him every day like a child? Do we turn to Him in all our difficulties? Do we tell Him about our victories? About our sins? Our hopes and dreams? When we allow the love of God to lead us to prayer, we might find ourselves wanting to spend more time with Him every day. Then we'll inevitably try to find more creative ways throughout our day to speak to Him in our hearts.

## Fasting

Fasting means abstaining from food and drink in imitation of the fast of Jesus for 40 days in the desert. To foster self-discipline and "mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2043), the Church asks everyone 14 to 60 years old to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday during Lent. This means one meal with two small meals to maintain strength. The Church also asks us to abstain from meat on all Fridays during Lent. In fact, the Church asks us to treat all Fridays throughout the year, unless a solemnity falls on a Friday, as days of penance. If we don't abstain from meat on Fridays throughout the year, we ought to substitute some other penance or work of mercy. But during Lent, abstinence from eating meat on Fridays is obligatory.

Of course, any time we deny ourselves some satisfaction, we practice abstinence. We can abstain from anything — from listening to music to checking our phone to watching television. When we embrace mortification, when we add other things to abstain from rather than fulfilling merely the minimum requirement, we might find ourselves looking forward to the satisfaction of denying ourselves.

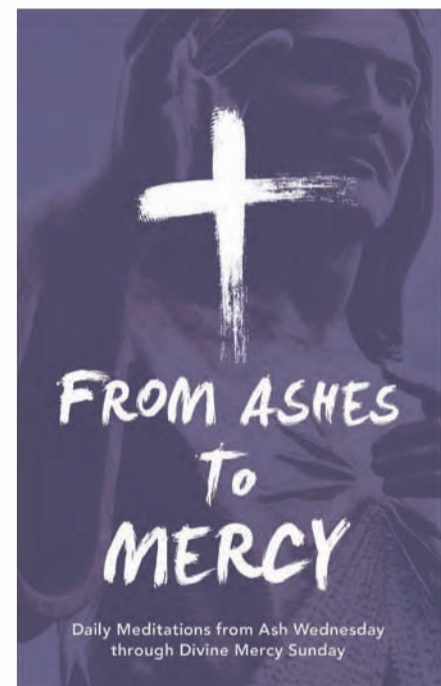
## Almsgiving

Christ's command to give alms tests our faith. When we generously give to God, especially amidst financial doubt, we tell the Lord how much we trust Him to provide. But instead of just cutting a check and giving our money away to any charity, we ought to take time to pray about to whom we give our alms. We should learn about the person, charity, or non-profit that we support. Though many feel called to give alms through financial donations, some might feel called to give alms through supplying other material needs, such as food, clothing, volunteer time, or other gifts. However we choose to give alms, we would do well to remember that, by growing in charity, we recognize in the poor Christ Himself, thus deepening our relationship with our Savior. MH

we have the power through our prayers and sacrifices to bring down an abundance of God's graces upon ourselves and upon the world.

In Lenten retreat, we step back to unite our divided selves to God so that we may step forth again into the world having reaffirmed in our own hearts that which Mary stated at the Annunciation: "May it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38).

Retreat is the optimal word. In this moment — with so much suffering and sinfulness, so much division and indirection — we shouldn't rush to cleave the word "retreat" from its military connotations. Indeed, much like an



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## Daily devotional for Lent

In minutes a day, *From Ashes to Mercy* will help you get ready to receive graces this Easter and Divine Mercy Sunday!

Based on each day's liturgical readings, each page includes:

- A thought-provoking meditation with modern, everyday examples.
- References to St. Faustina's *Diary*.
- A short related prayer.

**Order online at [ShopMercy.org](http://ShopMercy.org)  
or call 1-800-462-7426.**

army regrouping, we must briefly withdraw to the higher ground of Lent to regroup and recommit ourselves to who we are and what we need to do.

Our retreat should begin with pointed questions and then proceed to Christian service employing the armaments of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (see sidebar, left).

The pointed questions should be self-directed: Who or what sits on the throne of my heart? Material things? Personal ambition? Or God?

When the priest marks your forehead with ashes, he recites the words “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Or he says, “Repent, and believe in the Gospel.”

The ash harkens back to the Book of Genesis (3:19), to God’s words to Adam and Eve when they sinned, having sought fulfillment outside of God. Without God, we are dust. Without God, we lapse into the sorts of behavior that put this world into its current fix. We gossip. We wound each other. We lust after false idols: power, money, and sex. We destroy the spiritual life, the moral life, the physical life, the beautiful life.

## A fresh perspective

From this higher ground of Lent, we cry out to the Father because we can see clearly the path of self-destruction — the effects of humanity’s envy, gluttony, greed, lust, pride, sloth, and wrath. We can hear the demanding and sometimes discomfiting words of Scripture, how “If [one] part [of the church] suffers, all the parts suffer with it” (1 Cor 12:26).

From this higher ground of Lent, we can confidently orient ourselves back to the road of salvation, a path prepared by Christ who came to the earth and died for us because He knows we cannot do any of this on our own. We take our Lord at His word when He says to St. Faustina that “no soul that has called upon My mercy has been disappointed or brought to shame” (*Diary*, 1541).

From this higher ground of Lent, we relearn how to pattern our lives on His commandments and prepare to inspire others to do so as well. We are a missionary Church, after all, engaged with society and called to play an active role in the redemption of the world. We have the Blessed Mother and the saints in our corner, allies to whom we can prayerfully turn for coaching and courage.

From this higher ground of Lent, we can see clearly how the world needs Marian Helpers.

Come Easter and Divine Mercy Sunday, may we fully claim our birthright as Christians, tasked to do great good in a world that needs us to be Christlike, to be true *Marian Helpers*. MH

## The Church in crisis

As the Church enters 2019, she grapples with the aftermath of a year of scandals like few in her history. Key moments included the Chilean investigation that led to all the bishops of that country offering their resignations to the Holy Father; the swift fall from grace of the former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick as a lifetime of accusations of abuse of power and seminarians was revealed; the release of the explosive Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report; the resignation of Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington, D.C.; the police search of the chancery offices of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Texas, episcopal see of Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB); and more. Attorneys general in more than 12 states and the District of Columbia have opened investigations into the Church’s handling of accusations of abuse, and the Justice Department has opened at least one federal investigation.

Meanwhile, the Church responds both spiritually and organizationally. At the behest of Pope Francis, the U.S. bishops gathered at Mundelein Seminary in Chicago for a weeklong retreat Jan. 2-8, preached by Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap, preacher to the papal household. Pope Francis sent a letter to the bishops, indicating that logistical issues had prevented him from attending in person. He offered the American bishops spiritual reflections and challenges throughout the letter.

This came ahead of the Feb. 21-24 meeting in Rome of the heads of the bishops’ conferences and religious congregations with the Holy Father to address the crisis in the Church. Interestingly, Feb. 21 is the optional liturgical Memorial of St. Peter Damian, Doctor of the Church, a reformer famous for writing vehemently against homosexuality and sexual sins in the clergy. The USCCB is expected to meet in Baltimore in June, there to act in light of the February global meeting.

This also comes ahead of the November-December 2019 *ad limina* visits of all the U.S. bishops to the Holy Father in Rome, the regularly scheduled visits of the bishops from the different regions of the world to visit the tombs of the Apostles and update the Holy See on the state of the Church in their dioceses.

As we pass through this storm, keep your eyes fixed on Christ. Pray the Rosary daily. Spread the Divine Mercy message and devotion. MH



DAWN TEMPLE

# You gotta hand it to St. Joseph

By Marc Massery

**D**ivine Providence has tasked Marian Helper Judy Studer of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, with a role not unlike St. Joseph's: protecting the Blessed Virgin Mary. She guards the Blessed Virgin Mary in the form of a more than 70-year-old, wood-carved statue no taller than three feet, known famously as the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima.

Eighteen years ago, before Judy became Our Lady of Fatima's keeper, she went to her local cathedral, where Mary happened to be visiting, with a desperate plea. She knelt before the statue and prayed, promising that if she were

healed of her terminal cancer, she would promote devotion to the Rosary for the rest of her life.

**Bring your family's intentions to faithful St. Joseph during the novena before his feast day March 19 at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. ([Visit marian.org/b41](http://marian.org/b41))**

**As he does for countless Marian Helpers, St. Joseph can help you and your family through hard times.**

Sure enough, within a couple weeks, doctors determined that she was suddenly, miraculously healed of cancer. "Our Lady did it," Judy said. "Our Blessed Mother — the power of Mary's intercession. And I've been cancer-free all these years."

A couple years later, the World Apostolate of Fatima got word of Judy's healing. They called and asked if she would take the statue for one month and speak about her miracle. They said they'd get

in touch with her when they wanted the statue back. “It’s been 16 years, and they haven’t called to say they want it back,” Judy said.

## Safeguarding Our Lady

For the past 16 years, Judy has been traveling around the country with the Pilgrim Virgin Statue, going as far as India and the Philippines, promoting devotion to the Rosary and Our Lady of Fatima, as well as testifying to her miraculous healing. Judy said, “It’s an honor to travel with [Mary]. It’s not a job; it’s a joy.”

Judy, of course, cherishes this statue, going so far in her effort to revere and protect Mary that she never stows her away when she flies. “I keep her on the seat next to me,” she said.

So about four years ago, when this antique statue suffered a minor fall through no fault of her own, Judy was more than distressed. She brought Mary home. She went to her husband of 54 years, Dave, and lamented, “What am I going to do? I have to leave in three days to travel to another state.”

Dave asked to take a look at the damage. Mary’s hands were in splinters. As a former mechanic, naturally good with his hands, he believed he could fix it. Unfortunately, ever since being diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease, his hands constantly tremor, making it hard to hold anything stable.

But Dave knew the power of prayer. He said to his wife, “We’re going to have to both pray to St. Joseph that he helps me control my tremors so I can fix the hands. He’s helped me before.”

After all, St. Joseph, patron of the Universal Church, and whose feast we celebrate on March 19, was a carpenter. He even appeared in Fatima during the Miracle of the Sun on Oct. 13, 1917, holding the Child Jesus, blessing the world. And as the one to whom God entrusted care of the Blessed Virgin Mary on earth, who better to turn to for prayer?

Furthermore, St. Joseph had interceded for Dave numerous times throughout his life. Once, he was driving in a snowstorm, worried he wouldn’t make it home in time

to take his Parkinson’s medication. “If he didn’t have it soon, it wouldn’t have been a good thing. Complications happen if you don’t take the meds,” Judy said. But St. Joseph protected him. “I was able to drive safely in the horrible snow storm. Saint Joseph drove the car, not me,” Dave said.



**The Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima has been traveling the world with Judy Studer for more than 16 years.**

Saint Joseph, patron saint of families, also came through to help Judy and Dave’s grandson Matthew, who suffers from autism. “He has had problems which we call meltdowns,” Judy said. “Dave would always call on St. Joseph [for Matthew. He would say], ‘St. Joseph, help our Matthew that things won’t get worse for him, that he’s on the right medication.’ And Matthew is doing well.” Matthew’s conduct improved. He now attends junior college.

Both Studers have also called on St. Joseph to protect Dave when Judy leaves him alone to travel with Our Lady. “When I leave, I say to St. Joseph, ‘You take care of him every moment of every day,’” Judy said. “Dave doesn’t want to stay with my daughter when I’m away. Instead, he just says, ‘St. Joseph will be good to me.’ Dave loves St. Joseph. He just treasures him.”

## Unshakeable Devotion

So after praying to St. Joseph to help steady his hands, for three days, Dave worked relentlessly on putting the Pilgrim Virgin Statue’s hands back together.

And St. Joseph, patron saint of workers, came through. “The time he was fixing the statue, he had no tremors,” Judy said. “I don’t know if you know this, but anyone with Parkinson’s disease, their tremors can be pretty bad at times. How he ever put her hands together. ... They’re beautiful.”

Not only did he reattach the fractured fingers, but he also repainted them, mixing just the right colors to make it look seamless. “He had the patience of a saint that he did that,” Judy said.

Judy was able to take her next trip with the Blessed Mother, and she continues to travel with her today. Her husband, Dave, and his hope in St. Joseph’s protection and intercession, came to Our Lady’s aid.

MH



DAVE MARONEY

In all, 7,500 posters were distributed at the March for Life rallies across the nation, including in Washington, D.C.

# Forward, March!

The Divine Mercy Image makes a grand appearance

Looking through old photos from the annual March for Life — the joyful faces packed in the streets of Washington, D.C., to mark the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision and to call for its repeal — Dave and Joan Maroney had a revealing insight.

Something was missing in those photos. More accurately, *Someone* was missing: Jesus Christ, the Divine Mercy.

This year, they decided to correct that.

If you attended the 46<sup>th</sup> annual March for Life on Jan. 18, or if you saw television and online coverage, you likely saw the results of their efforts. Divine Mercy Images were everywhere.

Relying on the promises Jesus made to St. Faustina, Dave and Joan, the husband and wife team known as Mother of Mercy Messengers (MOMM), launched the “March with Christ for Life” initiative to empower marchers with posters emblazoned with images of the Divine Mercy and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

With financial support from the Marian Helpers Center and other benefactors, MOMM had 7,500 poster-sized images printed. With the help of Marian priests, brothers, and seminarians, MOMM, an apostolate of the Marian Fathers, distributed 5,500 posters at the D.C. March. They distributed by mail another 2,000 for rallies held elsewhere across the country.

“We believe this initiative has the potential to dramatically impact our nation,” said Joan, who encourages everyone to “trust in the power of Jesus, and ask Him for big things.” The *biggest* of things, she said, is for an end to abortion.

To that end, MOMM and the Marians know the Divine Mercy revelations given to St. Faustina have a large role to play.

## A vehicle of God’s grace

In 1931, Jesus appeared to the Polish mystic St. Faustina and requested that an image of Him be painted and venerated around the world. In the image, two rays emanate from His pierced Heart representing the sanctifying graces He extends to us through Baptism and the Eucharist.

“By means of this Image,” Jesus told Faustina, “I shall be granting many graces to souls; so, let every soul have access to it” (*Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, 570).

We know that many miracles have been attributed to the image when it’s revered with trust in Christ’s mercy. The original Divine Mercy Image was completed in May 1934, in Vilnius (then Poland, now Lithuania), under the direction of St. Faustina and her spiritual director Blessed Fr. Michael Sopocko. The miracles began almost immediately. Saint Faustina herself reported the first one. In 1935, the image was publicly displayed for the first time, for the

solemn closing of the celebrations of the Holy Year of the Redemption in Vilnius. Saint Faustina wrote that “the image came alive and the rays pierced the hearts of the people gathered there, but not all to the same degree” (*Diary*, 417).

MOMM knows the image has similar effects today. They chose to place the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on the posters as well since her appearance in 1531 in present-day Mexico is credited for ending the practice of human sacrifice there. “Human sacrifice continues once again, only now we call it abortion,” said Joan. “I just know if we get Jesus and Mary out there in front of people, Jesus will change hearts and minds.”

## ‘Pro-Life is Pro-Science’

Christ’s presence at the March served as spiritual counterweight to the day’s theme, “Unique from Day One: Pro-Life is Pro-Science.” Through talks and presentations, the pre-March rally on the National Mall emphasized the settled biological fact that the pre-born are living, complete, and distinct human beings.

Back in 1973, when the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision legalized abortion nationwide, scientists knew precious little about fetal development — that at the moment of fertilization, a child’s genetic make-up is complete; that at week three a child’s nervous system is forming; and that a child’s eyes, legs, and heart are forming by week 5.

“Our highest priority has to be to defend life from the first moment because everyone is unique from day one. ...

We know this through science,” U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski of Illinois told the crowd.

“We built a country for our children,” the political commentator Ben Shapiro said, referring to the days before *Roe v. Wade*. “And then something happened. We decided the present was more important than the future. We decided convenience was more important than basic decency. We dehumanized the most human, the most innocent among us. We lied to ourselves.”

But if recent public polls are correct, the tide is turning. Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, told the crowd that “science is on our side, and so is the American public.” He said, “Three out of four Americans want substantial restrictions on abortions. ... Best of all, when the Supreme Court reconsiders *Roe V. Wade*, which inevitably it will do, almost two-thirds of Americans want the Supreme Court to either ban abortions or allow the states to once again restrict abortion.”

But even if laws change, Joan cautioned that hearts still need to change.

“There’s still so much division about this,” she said. “So many people still think being pro-choice is a good thing. We’ve known the science for years now and the terrible effects abortion has on people who have taken part in it. Even so, people defend abortion. So what’s it going to take?

“To me,” she said, “it’s going to take more than any one of us can do. It’s going to take divine intervention. It’s going to take Jesus.”

At this year’s March for Life, He couldn’t be missed. MH

## The Divine Mercy connection

What’s the connection between the pro-life movement and Divine Mercy? Let’s start with St. Faustina recording in her *Diary* how she offered prayers and sufferings for her native Poland to appease the Father’s anger.

Why was God so angry with Poland? As Dave and Joan Maroney point out, in the 1930s, Warsaw, Poland, was the abortion capital of Eastern Europe. Interestingly, the Divine Mercy revelations from Jesus to St. Faustina began just before Poland legalized abortion.

“It was as if He were coming to offset the evil of abortion by offering His mercy, even to the greatest of sinners,” says Joan. “Despite how angry God was with Poland and how it suffered during World War II, the Divine Mercy message and devotion nonetheless rose out of the ashes.”

And so did Poland. In 1989, Poland became the first Warsaw Pact state to break free from the Soviet Union — in no small way due to the Polish Pope, St. John Paul II (1920-2005), who made the spread of Divine Mercy the central mission of his pontificate. It’s no coincidence the



Polish people passed a referendum banning abortion in 1993, the year of Faustina’s beatification.

MOMM urges the United States to imitate Poland by uniting our prayers with Jesus on the Cross, as St. Faustina did. When we do so, He promises to “pour out a whole ocean of graces” (*Diary*, 699).

Let’s pray for an end to abortion.

Visit [DivineMercyForAmerica.org](http://DivineMercyForAmerica.org) to learn more.

# ‘THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY’ ‘WE NEED HER’



By Melanie Williams

She is the masterpiece of creation. God the Father’s daughter, God the Son’s mother, and God the Holy Spirit’s bride. The Blessed Virgin Mary is a mystery, and she has captivated millions of disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the centuries.

Father Donald Calloway, MIC, would say devotion to Our Blessed Mother stands as a hallmark of Jesus Christ’s most faithful disciples. In fact, he did say as much to thousands of college students, campus ministers, priests, seminarians, and religious at SEEK2019: Encounter Something More. The annual conference, held Jan. 3-7, in Indianapolis, Indiana, was hosted by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) and drew more than 17,000 people.

Mostly college students from 626 campuses and several international locations, they gathered to be built up and encouraged in their faith, hoping to “encounter something more,” as was the theme for the conference.

Father Calloway, a bestselling author of books about Divine Mercy and Mary, earned a standing ovation for his talk, titled “The Virgin Mary: Masterpiece of Creation.”

“I want to give you God’s perspective on Our Lady,” Fr. Calloway said. “He made a masterpiece, and He made it a living masterpiece. And you know what He did? He took up residency in the body of His masterpiece. ... That’s how much He loves her. He makes her smell like roses.”

He said that when people encounter Mary, they “fall on their knees and cry. ... Demons jump out windows when she comes on the scene.”

Mary is the key to sanctity. But why?

“Because you’re not going to be fully conformed to Jesus Christ unless you have a relationship with her,” Fr. Calloway said. “She’s the one perfect blueprint, model, prototype of

what it means to be a disciple of Christ.”

She is the Bride; and we, the Church, the Bride of Christ, are to be conformed to her, the pattern of the bride.

“That is the core of Christianity,” said Fr. Calloway, whose latest Marian Press book, *10 Wonders of the Rosary*, was released in January.

Thousands of millennials — clearly longing for beauty, truth, and God — soaked in this message from Fr. Calloway, captivated by the virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the call to holiness.

Much like St. John Paul II, Fr. Calloway said, “Fight for beauty! ... That’s what we all, as Catholics, are supposed to be doing. Our Lady will bring that dimension into your life. Jesus is not a phantasm. He’s not a robot. He didn’t just appear. He chose to come to us through that woman. He could have done it in a million other ways. No doubt about that. But He didn’t. ... We need her. She’s not an option.”

He continued, “Jesus gave us His Flesh and Blood to eat. And where did He get that Flesh and Blood? From the flesh and blood of Mary. Without Mary, you wouldn’t have Jesus. Without Mary, you wouldn’t have the Eucharistic Body of Christ. Without Mary, you wouldn’t have the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. You wouldn’t have the Sacraments, Confession, the priesthood.”

So how can you foster this relationship with Mary? Father Calloway’s answer: the Rosary.

“Keep praying those Rosaries,” he said. “Don’t you think you can walk away from Mary to do this. You can’t. If you struggle with Mary, pray about it. If you struggle with the Rosary, pray a decade of it. Don’t walk away from this masterpiece of eternity, because God made her for you.”

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# New healthcare series launching Divine Mercy Sunday

Fires, falls, explosions, car accidents. Most of the patients Marie Romagnano, RN, has seen in her line of work have sustained catastrophic injuries in some of the most terrifying ways.

“You name it, I’ve seen it,” said Marie, the founder and director of the Marian Fathers’ apostolate Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy.

Many of her patients have overcome their life-threatening injuries through more than just good medical care. They have healed through prayer and the power of Divine Mercy.

“Total patient care,” is how Marie puts it.

“The Divine Mercy message and devotion is a tool that the Lord gives us, not only to help our patients, but to help ourselves and our personal lives to grow in grace,” said

Marie, of Charlton, Massachusetts, the co-author of the book *Nursing with the Hands of Jesus: A Guide to Nurses for Divine Mercy* (Marian Press) with Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, and the Very Rev. Fr. Kaz Chwalek, MIC. “As a Healthcare Professional for Divine Mercy you are always aware that you are the spiritual link to Christ, you are His merciful presence at the bedside of the patient.”

Unfortunately, many Catholic healthcare professionals in the United States don’t know how to integrate a healthy spirituality into their medical practices. Spiritual care of patients, according to Marie, should involve more than merely calling for a priest. “You really need to pray for your patients and talk to the family members. You’re a patient advocate in giving the spiritual care that not only the patient needs, but the family needs,” she said.

In light of this need, for the past 14 years, Marie has helped educate healthcare professionals through annual conferences that feature top experts in the fields of medicine, bioethics, and Divine Mercy.

“Basically, many of us were healthcare professionals that wanted to follow the guidelines of our Catholic faith, but we were so busy that we didn’t know where to go to find the information and how to use it,” she said.

The success of the conferences has now led to a new initiative: compiling the best of those conference talks into a free online video series titled “Healthcare & Divine Mercy Matters.” Set to launch on Divine Mercy Sunday, the video series will be available through the website [DivineMercyMatters.org](http://DivineMercyMatters.org)



In 2005, when the first conference sold out 30 days in advance, Marie knew she was onto something. Throughout the years, prominent Divine Mercy experts, doctors, and nurses have spoken on topics including abortion, contraception, and end-of-life issues, as well as spiritual care of patients.

“For those who have been unable to attend any of those conferences, we’re pleased to now bring them to you,” said Marie.

Meanwhile, the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Divine Mercy Medicine, Bioethics, and Spirituality Conference will be held on May 7-8 at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. The Most Rev. Robert McManus, bishop of the Diocese of Worcester, will give a talk entitled “Transgenderism: The Multifaceted Challenges to the Moral Teachings of the Church” and direct a panel discussion.

Gosia Brykczynska, author of *Blessed Hanna Chrzanowska, A Caring Nurse* (Marian Press), will speak on the life and mission of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Polish nurse Blessed Hanna Chrzanowska (1902-1973), who saved thousands from starvation during the Second World War and was beatified last April at the International Divine Mercy Shrine in Lagiewniki-Krakow, Poland. She’s the first lay registered nurse to be beatified, letting the light of faith illuminate the nursing and medical practice.

Visit [TheDivineMercy.org/worcester](http://TheDivineMercy.org/worcester) for more information about the conference.

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— Marc Massery



Nicholas Fecteau of Mechanic Falls, Maine, died unexpectedly of a heart condition in 2010. **Bottom left:** Blake Fecteau is pictured with Nicholas as a child. **Bottom center:** Nicholas celebrates his ninth birthday. **Bottom right:** Nicholas poses with friends at college.

# ‘What a grace of God’

## MOTHER GETS ‘PROOF’ ENOUGH OF PURGATORY

By Marc Massery

**W**hen Marian Helper Louise Fecteau of Lewiston, Maine, gave birth to her first child, Nicholas, doctors discovered he had a rare heart condition needing immediate surgery.

“There was only one other person who had survived this procedure,” Louise said. “Nicholas was the second one.” Louise believes Nicholas survived thanks to the intercession of St. Padre Pio. Doctors, however, said that the surgery’s success only had a 10-year window.

Nicholas had a second open heart surgery at the age of 17 and was given high expectations to live another 20

years. He was attending community college and dating a lovely young lady.

Despite bringing his girlfriend into the Catholic faith, he moved in with her, much to his mother’s dismay.

Around this time, Louise gave birth to her 13<sup>th</sup> child, Anna Grace. The next day, Nick came to the hospital to visit. When he arrived, Louise said that her “mama bear” instinct kicked in. She looked at her son and said, “Nick, have you been going to church?”

He said “no,” using as an excuse his 12-hour shift on Sundays at his new job.

“You’re a practicing Catholic,” Louise told him. “You get your butt back to Confession and start going back to church.”

She added, “You never know when you’re going die.”

Nick told his mother “yes,” that he would go to Confession and Mass.

The next day, Nov. 7, 2010, Louise returned to a home full of family and friends with her newborn daughter. But as soon as she arrived, she received a disturbing call. “We got a phone call from the hospital identifying me as Nicholas’ mother and to come in immediately,” Louise said.

Just after coming out the door of the hospital with her newborn child, she had to turn around, walk back in, and identify the body of her eldest. “He had passed away,” she said. “He dropped dead at work.”

Louise, her husband Blake, and all her children were devastated. “It felt like an iron fist had just grabbed ahold of my heart and wouldn’t let go,” she said.

At his funeral, in lieu of flowers, the family asked for Mass cards. “He received more than 300 Masses,” she said. “He had a massive amount of people praying for his soul.”

Though Nicholas didn’t make it back to Confession before his death, he told his mother “yes,” that he planned to. “To me, that was a consolation from God. Looking back, you sit and you reflect. He gave God his *fiat*,” she said. “I think God took that ‘yes.’”

Still, she wondered about his salvation. “This is where Divine Mercy started kicking in hard,” she said. She began praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for Nicholas every morning and afternoon at 3 o’clock. “Early in the morning, my guardian angel must have woken me up every time,” Louise said. “I did that for a few years.”

One day shortly after Nick’s death, praying through her grief, Louise heard a soft voice in her heart say, “That pain that you are now experiencing is but a pin drop of the pain that the Holy Souls feel in Purgatory.”

“And it made sense,” Louise said. “We know we’re going to see each other someday, but we just don’t know when. These Holy Souls are in a similar state. They love God. They know they’ll see Him at some point, but they don’t know when. Grief is a similar sharing of pain in that way.”

Despite their grief, Louise and her family decided to celebrate Thanksgiving as best they could. “We just wanted to try to offer up the pain and not be just immersed in

misery,” Louise said. “It was difficult, but we did it.”

Then, of course, came Christmas. “For gifts, we can’t do a lot. We have Masses said for the children,” she said.

A few days after Christmas, Louise was grieving privately, wondering about her son’s salvation, when her 11-year-old, John Paul, came in. He excitedly told her about a dream he had the night before in which his guardian angel took him to Purgatory and Heaven.

He told his mother that in his dream, his angel took him to a huge, white room. “He said it was glowing white, and there were thousands of people there of all different colors, all wearing white robes,” Louise said. In his



**A recent photo of the Fecteau family. Louise stands in the very back row, second from the left. John Paul, the son who had the dream about his brother making it to Heaven, is in a light blue shirt directly in front of his mother.**

dream, he said that he asked a guard at a nearby door if he had seen his brother, Nick. The guard told him with a smile, “Nicholas went through that door at the Christmas Mass.”

The dream continued. John Paul said he went through the door with his angel. “He said the colors were out of this world,” Louise said. “They were bright, unlike anything he had ever seen. There was a bridge made of different stones, and on the other side of the bridge there was Nicholas talking to Jesus. They both looked at John Paul, and he walked toward them, and Nicholas reached out to ruffle his hair. Then he woke up.”

This dream brought Louise much consolation. “This is from an 11-year-old,” Louise said. “We never told him what Purgatory looks like. I have no idea. Or Heaven, we’ve never talked about that.”

She came to believe that all the Masses being said, all her prayers to St. Padre Pio, and all her Chaplets of Divine Mercy for Nick had an eternal impact.

“The pain of the possible loss [of a soul] from God’s grace — that’s the most devastating feeling in the world,” she said. “Knowing that there is a Purgatory, what a grace of God. What an immense grace.”

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‘[N]o one would exchange his country for a foreign land if his own afforded him the means of living a decent and happy life.’

— Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (Of New Things), 47



# WELCOMING THE STRANGER

## CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING ON IMMIGRATION

*Catholic social teaching is one of the great treasures of the Church, and yet all too often, it's neglected or overlooked entirely. For the next seven issues of Marian Helper, we'll explore what the Church's social teaching has to say about some of the major issues we confront today.*

*Fair warning: The Church's social teaching isn't liberal. Nor is it conservative.*

*It's Catholic.*

By Chris Sparks

**I**mmigration. It's one of the hottest of hot button issues. Yet, as Catholics and Marian Helpers — as those committed to serving the Church where the need is greatest — certain basic principles should guide our approach to this issue.

### The essentials

The Magisterium's teaching on immigration is presented succinctly and powerfully in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2241):

The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the

security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him.

Political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible, may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical

conditions, especially with regard to the immigrants' duties toward their country of adoption. Immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens.

Let's break that down:

- People who are in danger or who simply seek to pursue a better life for themselves and their loved ones have a right to emigrate (leave their home country) and a right to immigrate (move to another country).
- Governments of prosperous nations have a responsibility to people from poorer nations who seek a better life — to offer them a realistic path to legally and safely enter their country. Moreover, those governments have a responsibility to welcome with generosity those who flee their homelands in fear of their lives.
- The governments of nations also have a responsibility to secure their borders and to protect the common good of their individual nations by imposing the “juridical conditions” on immigration that prudence and careful discernment may indicate are necessary. The common good of the nation must be taken into account, as well as the international common good.
- Immigrants have a responsibility to serve the common good of the country that welcomes them. That includes obeying the laws, paying their taxes, respecting the culture, and properly becoming a part of the community they've entered.

## The Catholic balancing act

So the Church, drawing on the natural law tradition of inherent human rights endowed by God, says both sides of the equation bear heavy responsibilities.

On one hand, political authorities bear a responsibility to the common good. To that end, what factors might they consider when setting immigration policy? Dr.

Robert Stackpole, STD, director of the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy, says those factors could include chronic high unemployment in the host country; large numbers of undocumented immigrants already present in the host country overburdening the system; the inability of the host country to properly vet large numbers of mostly undocumented immigrants for connections to organized crime or terrorism; the effect the size of future waves of

immigration could have if the door is opened relatively wide in the present; and the right of a country to preserve its cultural heritage without being swamped by those who do not share it and will not embrace it.

All of these, says Dr. Stackpole, are simply common sense, national security, or common good considerations that may or may not apply in any particular case.

On the other hand, he adds, it is wrong for a wealthy host to turn away migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees from their borders just because it doesn't wish to deal with them.

Church teaching instructs us to be generous, compassionate, and open-handed — that we feed the beggar at the gate, that we provide shelter to those on our doorstep who are in need.

In his 1999 post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in America (The Church in America)*, St. John Paul II wrote, “[T]he

Church in America must be a vigilant advocate, defending against any unjust restriction the natural right of individual persons to move freely within their own nation and from one nation to another. Attention must be called to the rights of migrants and their families and to respect for their human dignity, even in cases of non-legal immigration” (65).

That is a crucial point: The Church says illegal immigrants have fundamental, inviolable human rights that are not forfeited by their act of entering another nation illegally. Saint John Paul II expanded on this point earlier in his pontificate, in his 1996 message for World Migration Day, writing:

His irregular legal status cannot allow the migrant to



**‘[T]he Church in America must be a vigilant advocate, defending against any unjust restriction the natural right of individual persons to move freely within their own nation and from one nation to another.’**

— St. John Paul II

lose his dignity, since he is endowed with inalienable rights, which can neither be violated nor ignored.

Illegal immigration should be prevented, but it is also essential to combat vigorously the criminal activities which exploit illegal immigrants (2).

Illegal immigration isn't good. It doesn't serve the rule of law, nor does it truly protect the rights and dignity of immigrants. But the right of a nation to regulate its borders is not absolute.

The primordial human rights of individuals (see *Catechism*, 1930, 1935, 2254, 2402-2403, 2408) and families (see the Holy See's 1983 Charter of the Rights of the Family) are based on divine and natural law, which are deeper sources than the laws of earthly communities — indeed, divine and natural law are the basis for just, earthly laws. And so prosperous nations must take seriously the rights of immigrants and refugees to pursue a better life for themselves and their families.

## Model immigrants

In his 1952 apostolic constitution *Exsul Familia*, Pope Pius XII wrote, “The family of Nazareth in exile, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, emigrants and taking refuge in Egypt to escape the fury of an evil king, are the model, the example and the support of all emigrants and pilgrims of every age and every country, of all refugees of any condition who, compelled by persecution and need, are forced to abandon their homeland, their beloved relatives, their neighbors, their dear friends, and move to a foreign land.”

When we are confronted with the stranger, we are confronted with Christ. See the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats for more (Mt 25).

Now, it's certainly true that sometimes, authentically, there's no room at the inn. Sometimes, there's no more

food to be shared. Sometimes, there's only enough for the family, or for the citizenry, or for those already being sheltered in a country. But often, with prayer, trust, and generosity, everything can stretch a little bit farther. An unknown innkeeper whose inn was full still extended the hospitality of his property, offering the Holy Family shelter in the stable with the animals. He did what he could

with what he had, and one of the great miracles, a great mystery, the Birth of Jesus, took place.

It changes the way you hear some of the parables of Jesus when you realize that, as He was growing up, He would probably have heard the family stories about the flight into Egypt, and may well have had childhood memories of living there, far from family, from the Jerusalem Temple, from the land governed by the laws of His Father in Heaven. He would have known that His earthly father and His mother had faced the prospect of welcoming Him into the world without shelter, that in the city of David, the greatest of all the sons of David was born in a stable, cradled in a manger, and recognized only by pagan philosophers and shepherds.

When Jesus talked about the poor man, Lazarus, lying at the rich man's door (see Lk 16:19-31), He may well have been remembering His earthly parents. When Jesus said, “I was a stranger, and you welcomed me” (Mt 25:35), He had life experience of be-

ing a stranger and sojourner on this earth and in Egypt, far from home. He, Mary Immaculate, and saintly Joseph were all migrants, all refugees, all displaced persons in need of shelter, far from home.

So the Church calls us to a balancing act. On the one hand: Nations must have a due regard for the common good of their citizenry, national security, and the rule of law. On the other hand: Prosperous nations should offer mercy, hospitality, and openness to the people trying to enter their country in pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.

MH



**‘The family of Nazareth in exile, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, emigrants and taking refuge in Egypt to escape the fury of an evil king, are the model ...’**

— Pope Pius XII

## To come

In future issues of *Marian Helper*, our Catholic social teaching series will discuss the life issues, environmentalism, just war theory, poverty, religious liberty, marriage and the family, and more.

# Shrine prepares for Divine Mercy Sunday

On April 28-29, 19 years after Pope St. John Paul II canonized St. Faustina and established the first Sunday after Easter as a universal feast day of the Church, the Marian Fathers will host more than 20,000 people at their annual Divine Mercy Sunday Weekend celebration at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger of the Diocese of Albany, New York, will preside at the Solemn Liturgy at 1 p.m. on Divine Mercy Sunday.

“Bishop Scharfenberger is a close friend of the Marian Fathers and has done so much throughout the years to evangelize his diocese,” said Fr. Anthony Gramlich, MIC, rector of the Shrine.



**Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger**

For years, Bishop Scharfenberger has worked alongside the Marian Fathers in spreading the message of Divine Mercy and Marian consecration. In 2016, the extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, he encouraged parishes throughout his diocese to consecrate themselves to Divine Mercy through Marian Fr. Michael Gaitley’s best-selling book 33 Days to Merciful Love. The year before that, Bishop Scharfenberger encouraged diocesan-wide consecration to Jesus through Mary through Fr. Gaitley’s 33 Days to Morning Glory.

“It was like a grace bomb was dropped on our diocese,” Bishop Scharfenberger said afterward.

Both the Sunday Liturgy and the Vigil Mass at 4 p.m. on Saturday 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. Speakers will include Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, and Teresa Tomeo, author, speaker, and talk-show host. Teresa spent 20 years as a reporter in secular media before she found her way into Catholic broadcasting. Her weekly morning radio program, “Catholic Connection,” reaches more than 500 Catholic radio stations worldwide. She cohosts the television series “The Catholic View for Women” on EWTN Global Catholic Television Network. “Expect a great conference,” said Fr. Chris, the director of the Association of Marian Helpers.

Check-in for the conference on Saturday begins at 9 a.m.



The conference will run from 10 a.m. to noon. General admission is \$15 (bag lunch included). Admission is free for members of the Thirteenth of the Month Club, Friends of Mercy, and the Holy Souls Sodality. Visit [TheDivineMercy.org/mwc](http://TheDivineMercy.org/mwc) or call 1-800-462-7426 to register.

Throughout the weekend, tents will be set up on Eden Hill for Confessions, Adoration, and the Divine Mercy Gift Shop. Due to the unpredictable spring weather in the Berkshires, pilgrims are advised to dress in layers and wear comfortable shoes with traction. If you can’t travel to the Shrine for Divine Mercy Sunday, you can view the celebration live on EWTN. The show begins at noon (Eastern), followed by the Solemn Liturgy at 1 p.m.

The Marians need volunteers to help make Divine Mercy Sunday weekend a success.

“If it weren’t for volunteers, we’d never be able to host this wonderful weekend,” Fr. Anthony said.

This year, the Shrine has a particular need for parking lot attendants and crowd control volunteers, among other positions.

Father Anthony said, “I think the passage from St. Faustina’s *Diary* that says, ‘Souls who spread the honor of My mercy I shield through their entire life as a tender mother her infant’ (1075) applies to anyone who volunteers for Divine Mercy Sunday. The more you give to the Lord, the more He will give to you!”

To volunteer, please contact Peter Markavage at [volunteers@marian.org](mailto:volunteers@marian.org) or call 413-298-1114.

Visit [TheDivineMercy.org/celebrate](http://TheDivineMercy.org/celebrate) for more information.



# Join us for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual **DIVINE MERCY CONFERENCE**

**April 6, 2019**  
9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
Cardinal Spellman High School  
Bronx, N.Y.

Holy Mass • Confessions • Adoration • Bookstore

**SPEAKERS**



**Msgr. James Lisante**  
Pastor, Author,  
Television  
commentator



**Abby Johnson**  
Former Planned  
Parenthood  
Director



**Sister Donata Farbaniec**  
Congregation of  
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## **HONOR YOUR FAMILY**

“I believe the Divine Mercy Mural is a wonderful way to honor family members who have passed and those who are still living.

“I inscribed the names of all my deceased relatives and all my children and grandchildren on the mural. I felt that this is the best gift I could give them because it’s a gift that will keep on giving through the daily Masses and prayers of the Marian Fathers.

“They are also remembered in a special Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday so they will receive graces throughout their lifetimes and after. There is no better gift than that.”

— Lela Guerrette, Marian Helper

Visit **[MemorialsOnEdenHill.org](http://MemorialsOnEdenHill.org)**  
or call (800) 671-2020 to create a memorial  
for your family.



From left: John Schmidt, Eileen Neuberger, Marguerite Schmidt, and Dennis Neuberger. John, Eileen's father, married Dennis' mother, Marguerite, six weeks after Dennis and Eileen married.

## A HEAVENLY MATCHMAKER

**W**hen you lose an item, who do you call upon to help find it? Saint Anthony of Padua, perhaps?

Have you ever turned to St. Anthony to find a *person*? Saint Anthony, that 13<sup>th</sup> century friar of the Franciscan Order, is known the world over as the patron saint for the recovery of lost items, but he is also credited with many miracles involving lost people and even spiritual goods.

You don't have to convince Dennis Neuberger. Dennis credits St. Anthony for helping him find the love of his life.

Dennis grew up in Queens, New York. When his father died suddenly, Dennis became the head of the household. He was only 15 years old at the time. To help support his mother and younger brother, he worked during the day as a messenger. At night, he worked on his high school studies so he could graduate.

At 20, he was offered a job at IBM. His career was taking off. Fast forward seven years: Life was good, but something was missing. Some *one* was missing — someone to share his life with. Dennis turned to the one person he thought could best help with this special search.

He began a novena to St. Anthony that would conclude on his feast day, June 13. Several days into the novena, Dennis got up late and had to hurry to get to work on time. As he waited for a train he normally wouldn't take, he ran into an old friend named Rita. As they began catching up, Rita suggested that he meet one of her co-workers, Eileen. Rita told Dennis, "I think you two would be a great match." After a lunch date, Dennis agreed. He knew Eileen was "the one." Way to go, St. Anthony!

One weekend, the pair traveled to Stockbridge, Massachusetts. It was Eileen's first trip to the Berkshires, and she loved it. At the time (this was the 1970s), there was

a circular glass church on top of a hill. Seeing it, Eileen commented, "Can you imagine having a wedding here?" Dennis took advantage of the lead-in, promptly produced a ring, and proposed!

But wait! Saint Anthony wasn't finished yet. A few days after Dennis and Eileen were engaged, they planned a dinner so their parents could meet. Dennis' mother had never remarried, and Eileen's father had recently become a widower. The two parents hit it off, began dating, and also became engaged! They were married six weeks after Dennis and Eileen walked down the aisle.

"It was wonderfully confusing," Dennis recalls with amusement. "My mother was now also my mother-in-law! I had 40 great years with Eileen. Saint Anthony could not have blessed me in a better way."

After Eileen's death from cancer in 2015, Dennis began searching for the glass church where he proposed. Turns out it was gone, but Dennis discovered instead the Marian Fathers and the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. Now the love that Dennis found and shared with Eileen lives on through a living tribute on Eden Hill. Dennis was one of the first to secure a granite stone at the base of one of the sugar maples that line the drive. It reads "Eileen and Dennis Neuberger — Love and Peace."

If you would like to honor someone you love, living or deceased, please consider sponsoring a tree, a unique and beautiful tribute that will grow and change with the Berkshire seasons.



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



Gosia Brykczynska, RN (right), chats about Blessed Hanna with (from left) Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC; Marie Romagnano, RN; and the Very Rev. Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC.

## 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Divine Mercy Medicine, Bioethics, and Spirituality Conference

**MAY 7-8:** Gosia Brykczynska, RN, PhD, from London, the biographer of Blessed Hanna Chrzanowska, RN, will be the keynote speaker at the conference hosted by Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. The Very Rev. Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC; Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC; Iris Mamier, PhD, MSN, RN; and Marie Romagnano, RN, along with several other notables, will also give talks.

Visit [TheDivineMercy.org/worcester](http://TheDivineMercy.org/worcester) or call (413) 298-1303 for details.

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## GRACES RECEIVED

### Several graces for grandson

I came across “Graces Received” in *Marian Helper*, which told of graces received from Fr. Casimir.

Daily, I started requesting his intercession on behalf of my grandson, as I had a number of concerns laying on my heart.

One of which was, if it be God’s will, that he would end his engagement with his fiancée, given the many red flags surrounding their relationship.

Another, that hospital bills, incurred following my grandson’s accidental injuries, be waived. He had no insurance, was in no way responsible, and was laid off from his job at the time.

I am happy to share that the engagement has ended and one of the two hospitals waived the cost.

I am grateful, as I believe Fr. Casimir’s intercession were instrumental in these answered prayers. I continue to ask for Fr. Casimir’s intercession on behalf of other aspects of my grandson’s life.

— KP, St. Maries, Idaho

### Family misunderstanding settled

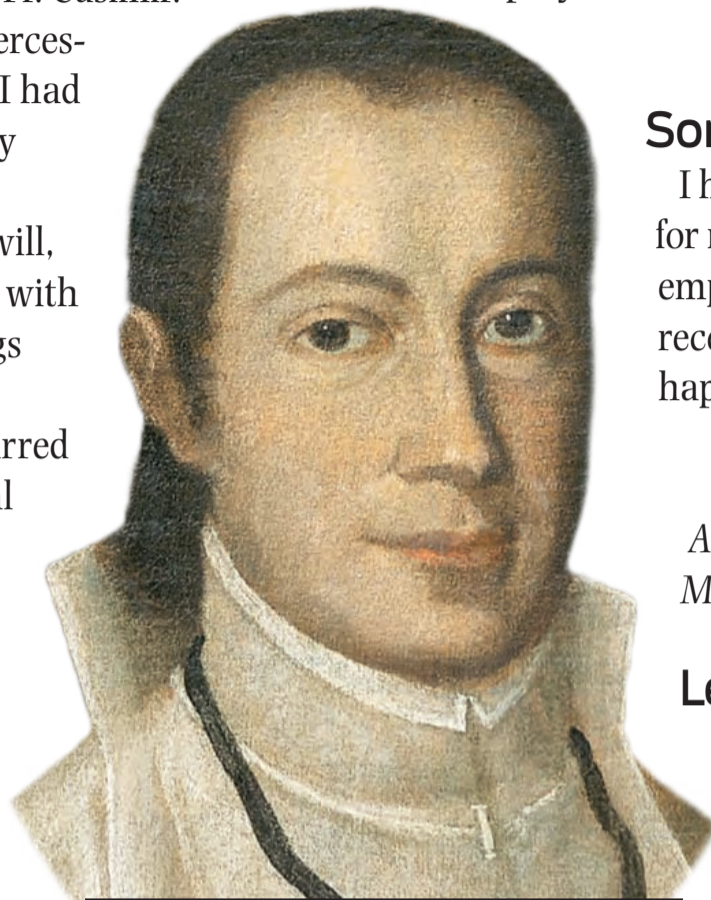
I am writing to thank Venerable Fr. Casimir for interceding for our family.

I prayed to him, asking him to help with my daughter, Ina Agnes. She was upset with my other two daughters and myself over a misunderstanding. There was much tension and anger between us.

Shortly after my prayers, Ina Agnes made amends with her sisters, and then two days later, she contacted me to

work things out. This was a great surprise, and I know Fr. Casimir interceded for my family. I also continue to pray that everything will be OK between us.

— LR, Hayward, California.



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

### Son finds a good job

I have been praying to Venerable Casimir for my son to be happily and gainfully employed. I am happy to say he has recently found a job. He seems to be happy about his position.

— CW, email

*A testimony collected and reported by the Marian priests and brothers from Portugal:*

### Leg pain disappears

A woman came to give thanks for being healed from epilepsy, of which she experienced frequent attacks during a four-year period. Some days she had as many as four to five attacks. Twice she fell into the bonfire and burned her face and hands. She took various medications and prayed to many saints, all to no avail. Having learned that the Lord was granting graces through

the intercession of the Venerable Fr. Casimir Wyszynski, this woman offered a Holy Mass and pledged to visit his tomb. From that moment on, no more attacks occurred.

---

For a Venerable Casimir prayercard (B41-BCWP), call toll free 1-800-462-7426. If you have received graces through his intercession, please write: Br. Andrew Maczynski, MIC, Vice Postulator of the Marian Causes of Canonization, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Email: [graces@marian.org](mailto:graces@marian.org)

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

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

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

# Prepare for Divine Mercy Sunday



## 33 Days to Merciful Love A Do-It-Yourself Retreat in Preparation for Consecration to Divine Mercy

The stirring sequel to the international sensation *33 Days to Morning Glory*. Using the same format, *33 Days to Merciful Love* journeys with one of the most beloved saints of modern times, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and concludes with a consecration to Divine Mercy. So whether you want to deepen your love of Divine Mercy or have a devotion to St. Thérèse, this is the book for you. **B41-33DML \$14.95**



## Divine Mercy 101 DVD

This popular presentation by Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, is better than ever: all the basics of Divine Mercy in a clear, one-hour presentation.

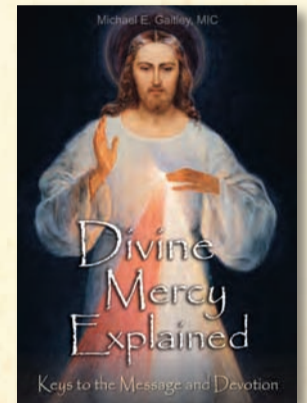
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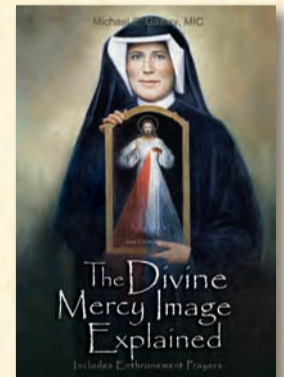
## Divine Mercy Explained

This booklet from Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, gives you a brief and easy-to-understand introduction to the Divine Mercy message and devotion. Read about the essential elements of the devotion and how you can live the message. Includes the Divine Mercy Novena, St. Faustina's Litany to Divine Mercy, and two bonus appendices. **B41-DMX \$3.99**



## The Divine Mercy Image Explained

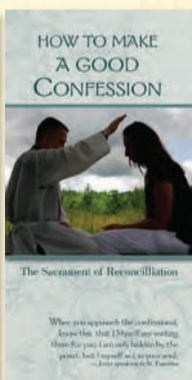
This booklet by Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, reveals hidden gems and highlights inspiring truths about the Divine Mercy Image. Also includes instructions on how to enthrone the Image in your home, an enthronement prayer, and two bonus appendices. Helpful for experts as well as beginners. **B41-DMIX \$3.99**



## Divine Mercy Pamphlets



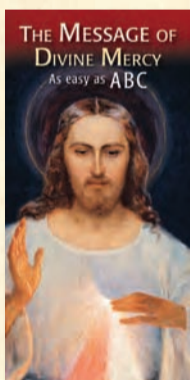
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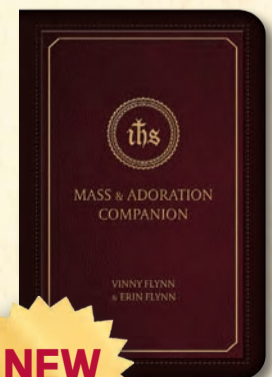
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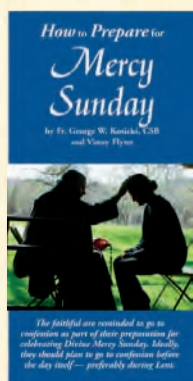
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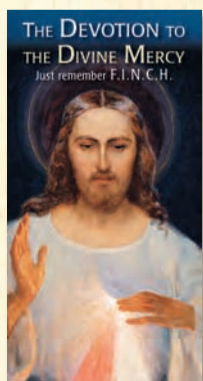
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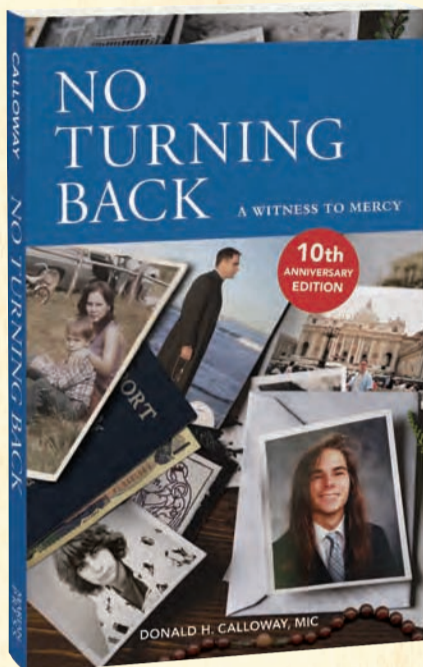
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# New from Marian Press

## No Turning Back

A Witness to Mercy, 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition

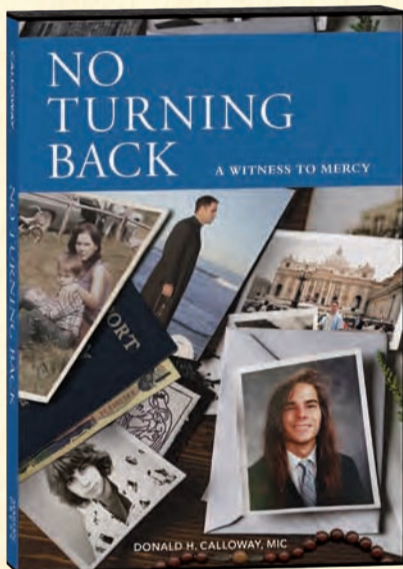
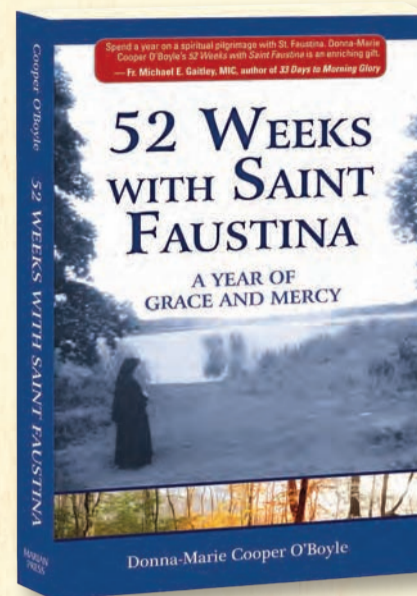
By Donald H. Calloway, MIC  
In this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *No Turning Back*, the Very Rev. Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, looks back on the past decade in a new introduction to this Christian classic, a perennially powerful witness to the transforming grace of God and the Blessed Mother's love for her children.  
**B41-ANTBK \$14.95**



## 52 Weeks with Saint Faustina: A Year of Grace and Mercy

Come spend 52 weeks with St. Faustina! Perfect for any time of the year, this collection of weekly meditations and activities by EWTN host Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle guides readers on a 52-week spiritual pilgrimage through the life and teachings of the Secretary and Apostle of Divine Mercy, St. Faustina Kowalska. Foreword by Fr. Chris Alar, MIC.

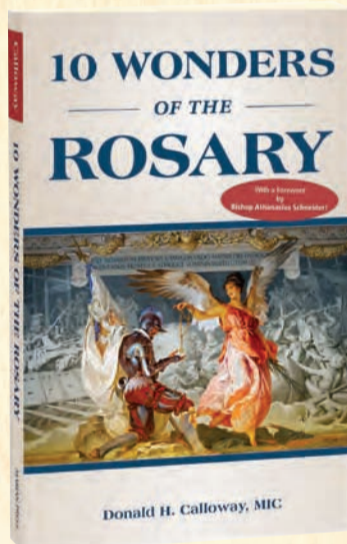
Rich, beautiful, inspiring, this book will help bring light into your life and prepare you to share that light with others, as well! **B41-WEEKS \$15.95**



## No Turning Back DVD

A Witness to Mercy,  
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By Donald H. Calloway, MIC  
Here it is: the classic video version of the impossible, unbelievable, yet true story of Donald Calloway's journey from runaway teen to Marian priest. 91 minutes.  
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Called "the New Testament on a string of beads," the Rosary is presented by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, in all its wonder: leading armies into battle; defeating the enemies of Christ and His Church; and transforming hearts and minds in order to save societies and entire civilizations.  
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## What is it?

### **What is the significance of this set of Rosary beads, and how did they find a home here at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts?**

Let's go back to May 13, 1982. Saint John Paul II was in Fatima, Portugal, giving thanks to the Mother of God for his survival despite the attempt on his life made in St. Peter's Square on the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima one year prior. He said in his homily in Fatima, "I seemed to recognize in the coincidence of the dates a special call to come to this place. And so, today I am here. I have come in order to thank Divine Providence in this place which the Mother of God seems to have chosen in a particular way. ..."

The Holy Father offered the bullet that nearly missed every vital organ in his body to be placed in the crown of Our Lady of Fatima. He prayed before her statue, and he took the Rosary from her hands, replacing it with a new Rosary.

The Holy Father decided to give this Rosary from Fatima to one of his closest friends — the future Cardinal Andrew Deskur, whom he had known since his seminary years. They had studied together in secret during the Nazi occupation of Poland in World War II. It was Deskur who had introduced the young Karol Wojtyła (the future St. John Paul II) to the burial site of Sr. Faustina Kowalska at a nearby convent in Kraków-Łagiewniki. Karol would often visit Faustina's grave and pray there on his way to work in the quarry.

Years later, while St. John Paul II was convalescing from the assassination attempt, Fr. Deskur read him the manuscript of St. Faustina's Diary, which our very own Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, had provided. The first edition of the *Diary* was printed here in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, because the Communist occupation of Poland at the time prevented the *Diary* from being printed there. In gratitude to Fr. Deskur, Pope John Paul II gave the Rosary from the statue of Our Lady of Fatima to Fr. Deskur and told him to give it to his mother.

Soon after this exchange, Fr. Seraphim was visiting Fr. Deskur again. Father Deskur proceeded to pull out a Rosary and said to Fr. Seraphim, "The Holy Father gave this to me to give to my mother. But she has dementia and will not be able to appreciate it. So, you please take it, and give it to your mother."

In humble gratitude, Fr. Seraphim accepted this gift. After his mother's passing, the Rosary was put in the care of his older sister, Sr. Sophia Michalenko, CMGT, who also worked on the first edition of the *Diary* given to Fr. Deskur and St. John Paul II. Since Sr. Sophia's death in 2017, the Rosary has rested in the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. It sits in a glass case between the relics of St. Faustina Kowalska and St. John Paul II, in the side chapel opposite the Shrine's very own statue of Our Lady of Fatima. In a spiritual sense, the Rosary has come full circle.

MH

— Melanie Williams

# Live the call!



## **Marian Helpers Paul and Paulette:**

For almost 25 years, we have shared a close relationship with the Marians through our love for the Blessed Mother, Divine Mercy, St. Faustina, and St. John Paul II. We saw firsthand how devoted the seminarians were to prayer, studies, and living in community. Their witness inspired us to support their vocations so there would be holy priests and brothers to continue the Marians' mission in the Church.

## **Brother Matthew, MIC:**

When I visited the Marians, I saw that they acknowledged the gravity of the situation of the Church today, yet exuded an authentic Christian joy in striving for holiness. I felt attracted to the Marian spirituality — a deepening of what is already natural to Catholics — and how its mission can be carried out in a variety of ministries. I finally felt at home in serving Christ and the Church under the banner of Mary Immaculate.

## **Attend a retreat**

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

The next retreat will be:  
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