

A Pittsburgh Pirate's 'terrifying' prayer • A heart for good and holy priests

Marian Helper

Summer 2019

Inspiration and news from the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception

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Life matters

Our duty as Marian Helpers



Fr. Joseph explains enrollments.

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Page **13** **LIFE MATTERS**

Our nation's long battle over abortion has reached a critical point. In a series of stories, we underscore our responsibilities as Marian Helpers to be advocates for the unborn.

- **The first of rights** — What does the Church teach about abortion and why?
- **Where to begin** — How do we become the best pro-lifers we can be?
- **'A special plan'** — Here's what happened when one young woman chose adoption.
- **What God has done for me** — A Marian Helper shares the tragic story of her abortion and what happened when she was introduced to the Divine Mercy message.

10 Faith, hope, and glove

Pittsburgh Pirates starting pitcher Trevor Williams tells us about the “terrifying” prayer he prays before each start and why he prays it.

24 Into the world of wonder

Fathers Andy Davy, MIC, and Jim McCormack, MIC, take a trip to New York City to check in on the world of hobbits, elves, and Middle Earth.

26 A heart for the priesthood

What was the incorrupt heart of the patron saint of parish priests, St. John Vianney, doing at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy?

DEPARTMENTS

3 Father Joseph Writes 4 Marian Helpers in Action 6 Faces of Mercy 8 Father Joseph's Picks
9 Notes from Rome 26 At the National Shrine 28 Graces Received 31 Outstanding Helpers 36 From the Vaults

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MISSION STATEMENT

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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.



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- Thirteenth of the Month Club: marian.org/13th
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Arrange a special gift:

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THE UNBORN NEED US

Take a look at what’s going on in the fight to protect the lives of the unborn. This spring, Alabama, Ohio, and Georgia joined a list of states seeking major restrictions on abortions. Meanwhile, the United States Supreme Court now may well have the votes needed to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, should the opportunity arise. And a pro-life film, “Unplanned,” became a box-office hit, with ticket sales approaching \$20 million by May.

We seem to be at a pivotal point in the pro-life movement here in the U.S. For the first time in my life, I’m optimistic that we’re making major inroads to bring about a culture of life.

But what would such a culture look like? And how can we help to achieve it?

With this special issue of *Marian Helper* — including nearly a dozen pages dedicated to pro-life stories — we seek to answer those questions. We give you the tools to defend the Church’s teachings on abortion. We give you tips on how to be active and effective pro-life advocates. We show you what happens when one young woman, unprepared for motherhood, chooses to carry her child to term and put him up for adoption. We also show what happens when another young pregnant woman believes the lie that a fetus is merely a “clump of tissue.” Her powerful testimony points to a way forward for pro-life advocates in our mission to change hearts and minds.

Indeed, through the private revelations received by St. Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), Christ is calling us in this place and this time. He’s calling us to the cause of life, armed with the joy of the Risen Christ and His words to St. Faustina that “Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to My Mercy” (*Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, 300).

Against a backdrop of anxious times, He continues to reveal Himself today — through people like those featured in this issue, as well as people like Abby Johnson, a former Planned Parenthood clinic supervisor turned pro-life Catholic whose story is the subject of the film, “Unplanned.” Please be sure to see the

film, and encourage others to see it as well, particularly young people.

I’m optimistic, yes. Still, so much work must be done. Though the number of abortions annually in the U.S. has dropped from a peak of 1.6 million in 1990 to about 900,000, the death toll remains inconceivable and unconscionable. Each and every procured abortion wounds the Heart of Christ. Each and every procured abortion “is gravely contrary to the moral law” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2271).

And as you well know, even if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned, states would have the right to pass their own laws permitting or prohibiting abortion. Some states, including New York, have already passed strong legal protections for abortion rights.

With this issue of *Marian Helper*, we hope to underscore that our efforts must extend beyond civil laws. A culture of life requires nothing less than a radical change of hearts and minds.

To that end, Christ needs us to be people of prayer and people of action.

In addition to the stories in this issue, I point you to the top of page 23, where you’ll find information about three new pamphlets of ours, which were inspired by this issue. I encourage you to order these pamphlets and to strategically and prayerfully place them where they will be found by those who need to hear the truth — at public kiosks, coffee shops, healthcare waiting rooms, etc.

In the cause of life, let’s advance to the front lines together, confident that as we grow in mercy and mature as disciples of the Risen Lord, we break the evil grip of abortion.

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.



Maria Kuliga Saeli (right) with her friend Robin Hersma during a prison visit.

After I asked **JESUS PUT ME TO WORK**

My name is Maria Kuliga Saeli. I was born in Poland to a very poor family. When I was a girl in the 1960s, I heard my mother pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. This was at a time when few people knew this prayer, given by Jesus to the world through St. Faustina.

In the 1970s, when my husband died tragically, my mother was at his grave and prayed the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for his soul, and this meant a lot to me.

Indeed, events in my life made me keenly aware of God's Divine Mercy. But this took time. I had gone through a period in which I had turned my back on God, believing that He didn't know me or love me, a time in which I was hurt by others and struggled to forgive them and myself. Then, one day, in despair, I asked Jesus to take my hand and guide me. My life started to change. I

experienced God's Divine Mercy.

God slowly healed my soul, which was torn into pieces, and then He healed my body from depression, spinal problems, cardioneurosis, high blood pressure, heart failure, and insomnia. He also took care of my financial problems. After my life changed, I felt the urge to share with others the beauty of God's Divine Mercy.

It didn't take long for God to put me to good use. He clearly wanted me to help those who suffer, including those in hospice. I worked for six years as a certified

FACES OF MERCY



Linda Apole
Jersey City, New Jersey

I try in little ways to bring people closer to God, to help people to see Jesus' love. When I worked in the nursing home, there was a woman who would sometimes say inappropriate things. One day I told her, "Go down to the chapel before work and say good morning to Jesus. And after work, go to the chapel and say thank You to Jesus and ask Him to bring you home safely." One morning, I walked past the chapel and saw the woman in there. She later came to me and said, "It's true. You told me, and I didn't want to listen, but God is here." She discovered there's peace in prayer, in talking to Him. I tell people, "If you are happy, say, 'Thank You' to God, and if you are sad, say, 'What can I do? Tell me.'" I was so glad that I could help change that woman. Later, she asked me how to pray the Rosary.

Matthew Mawson
Stoughton, Massachusetts

I found St. Faustina's Diary in 2015. I prayed to God, saying, "God, I have to finish this book. Please help me finish this book." It was so good, I stayed up late into the evening, reading and reading. What I encountered in the *Diary* was a lot of suffering, a lot of hard challenges that she faced. For me, it took away the fear I was going through at the time. She is so full of love. She wanted to be the most loving saint that there has ever been. I started to pray to her, and she has made it known that she hears and answers my prayers. I've spoken to some of the sisters of her religious congregation, and we've concluded that St. Faustina is the sweetest, funniest saint there is, and she teaches us that God is Love. When you see Jesus on the Cross, you are witnessing His love. Once you know what His love is and what the cost is, it should melt your heart like it melted St. Faustina's heart.



Alfredo Calvis
Clifton, New Jersey

I am a witness of Jesus' power to bring healing. Three years ago, I had a stroke. I came very close to dying. Jesus threw me a curveball, but for my own good: to remind me that He is really with us, that He is real. If I could tell the world anything, I would tell the world to pray — to pray when you are in great need and to pray when you *aren't* in great need. He listens to our prayers. By praying, we strengthen our relationship with our Savior. He can bring us to the right path in life. He's the best doctor for whatever illness you have — spiritual, mental, and, when He chooses, physical.



Karen Hanover
Lancaster, New York

God has been amazing in my life. It was in 2005, I was down on my knees begging the Blessed Mother to bring me closer to her Son. I was going through a lot of issues and problems in my life. Our Lady led me to a pilgrimage here to the National Shrine

of The Divine Mercy. That was the beginning of my transformation. I had never realized before that time how powerful her intercession is. I knew she was going to help me, and she did. She started introducing me to the beauty of the Catholic Church. I learned about her apparitions. I started joining organizations within the Catholic faith. I trained to be a sacristan. This is all God's will for my life. All these doors are opening for me, and I know it's through Our Lady's intercession. If I could tell the world anything, it would be: "Learn about Divine Mercy. Learn about St. Faustina. Learn about the mercy and love that Jesus has for mankind. He's right there, and He loves us so much, and we should never, ever, ever be afraid to approach Jesus."

E.J. Louis
Pittsfield,
Massachusetts



I pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and the Rosary in the morning for the souls in Purgatory. I work in the healthcare field, and so I see the needs of people who are dying. No matter what, that's my routine. Some people need

to have their coffee. I need to pray. That's my coffee. Someone needs to pray for the souls who have died. No matter what, no matter their faith, I feel we should do what we can through prayer to help all souls get closer to Heaven. We may not know what kind of life they led, and I always tell myself that it's none of my business, but that no matter what, to pray for them.

MH



IN BRIEF

We ask for your prayers for the repose of the soul of a great and gentle Marian Helper, **William Bernard Roesch**, who died on March 8, at the age of 94. Mr. Roesch was the father of the Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Roesch, MIC, the Marian Fathers' vicar general. A faithful and active Marian Helper, William, along with his wife, Kay, participated in the filming of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for EWTN here at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. They donated a statue of St. Joseph, which remains in the Our Lady of Mercy Oratory here at the Marian Helpers Center. He was a fixture at nearly every major Marian event, including ordinations and other celebrations.

Born in Manhattan in 1924, Mr. Roesch was a high school teacher for many years and a member of the Secular Franciscan Order. He is survived by his wife and five children, Ann Marie; Fr. Joe; Clare (Joseph) Pampalone; William F. (Maria Vega) Roesch; and John (Tracey) Roesch, as well as 10 grandchildren.



After 14 years as production manager and guiding force for EWTN's broadcast of the Divine Mercy Sunday celebration here at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, our friend **John Kuklinski** is retiring. And



while we certainly can't blame him for wanting to travel with his wife of 40 years and indulge his passion for baseball, we will greatly miss him. He once likened the scale of the Divine Mercy Sunday production to the EWTN coverage of the March for Life in Washington, D.C., and he handled it all with grace. Thanks very much for everything, John! Enjoy your retirement, and may God abundantly bless you.

MH

We're experiencing a lot of hope and facing a lot of challenges on the pro-life front right now, hope for an end to Roe v. Wade from the Supreme Court and challenges on the state level as radical pro-choice legislation is passed and signed into law. Here are some great resources to help you promote the culture of life.

UNPLANNED: THE DRAMATIC TRUE STORY OF A FORMER PLANNED PARENTHOOD LEADER'S EYE-OPENING JOURNEY ACROSS THE LIFE LINE

BY ABBY JOHNSON

Recently made into a movie, former Planned Parenthood clinic director Abby Johnson's powerful testimony makes clear the difference the pro-life movement can make, even in the lives of the most committed pro-choice people. Her journey from having two abortions herself and working for the country's single largest abortion provider to becoming an outspoken pro-life advocate — even in the face of legal challenges from Planned Parenthood — will let you see inside the minds and hearts of pro-choice people, as well as discover what can help bring them to the side of life. An indispensable pro-life resource. \$16.95. **B42-PLBK**



A JOURNEY TO HEALING THROUGH DIVINE MERCY: MERCY AFTER ABORTION

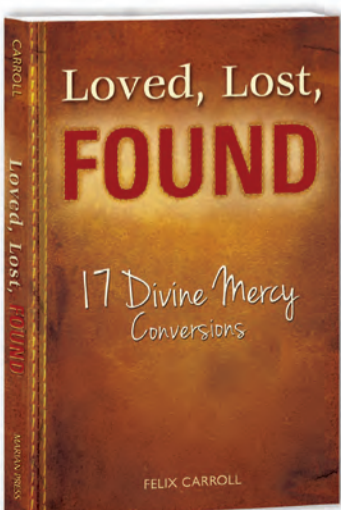
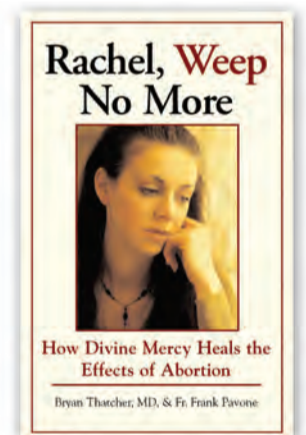
BY THERESA BONOPARTIS

Sharing the fruits of her own long and often painful process of healing from having had an abortion, Theresa Bonopartis offers a series of meditations for post-abortive mothers and fathers aimed at assisting their own reconciliation with God, their families and friends, and themselves. Written gently and with deep love, this book is perfect for everyone who is struggling, not just with past abortions, but with the aftermath of any serious sin. \$9.95. **B42-MERBK**

RACHEL, WEEP NO MORE

BY DR. BRYAN THATCHER AND FR. FRANK PAVONE

Succinct yet powerful, this booklet offers great hope for anyone who has been involved with abortion. Forgiveness is possible, even for the most grievous of sins; Jesus has come to save us all, no matter our past. Share that vital message with friends, family, and those involved in the abortion industry by giving them copies of this little booklet. \$3.99. **B42-RWNM**



LOVED, LOST, FOUND: 17 DIVINE MERCY CONVERSIONS

BY FELIX CARROLL

Felix Carroll has collected an inspiring batch of conversion stories, including the testimonies of a former abortionist and a woman who eventually came to repent of her abortion. Bearing witness to the power of the Divine Mercy message and devotion, these stories will inspire you to share your own testimony to God's love and forgiveness, to grow in trust in His mercy, and to never give up hope for even the most hardened of sinners. A great gift for Divine Mercy devotees. \$14.95. **B42-LLF16**



SUMMIT SPARKS HOPE

All eyes focused on the Vatican from Feb. 21-24, for a summit Pope Francis called to discuss the protection of minors in the Church. In all, 190 people participated, including the presidents of Episcopal Conferences, leaders from the Eastern Catholic churches, men and women religious superiors, and the heads of some Vatican dicasteries. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday were each devoted to a particular aspect of the abuse crisis, namely responsibility, accountability, and transparency.

The Holy Father had asked bishops to meet with survivors of abuse in preparation for coming to Rome. They also heard from and met with survivors during the meeting itself. The bishops and participants listened to conferences and discussed their experiences. Many said the meeting with survivors was a transformative experience, like being on holy ground, and that their hearts would never be the same.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge from Australia spoke of coming to see abuse first as a sin, then as a crime, and finally as a culture. He said that since abuse and its cover up were aggravated by and probably caused by cultural elements in the Catholic Church, there is a need for cultural changes in the Church so as to get at the roots of the crisis and not just the symptoms.

Archbishop Charles Scicluna from Malta, who also works at the Vatican on these issues, spoke of moving from a culture of secrecy to a culture of disclosure.

Pope Francis, in his opening address, called for concrete solutions. For discussion, he gave out a list of 21 best practices gathered from Bishops Conferences around the world. In his closing remarks on Sunday, Pope Francis forcefully stated that the abuse of minors is a present-day manifestation of the spirit of evil in the world. He cited the example of the slaughter of the innocents by Herod and said that the devil was behind this atrocity. As guidelines to help the Church in her ongoing reflections on these matters, he drew from the World Health Organization seven strategies for ending violence against children.

Following the summit, Pope Francis produced a document on the protection of minors and vulnerable

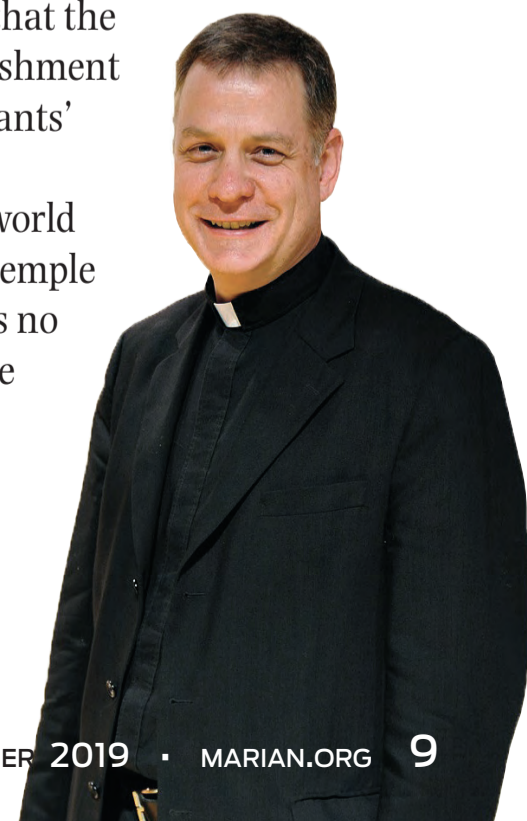
persons. The Vatican established new rules calling upon dioceses to create “easily accessible” offices for receiving abuse claims and new procedures for cases concerning prelates accused of abuse or cover-up.

Also, a plan is underway to create task forces to help local churches who need assistance to solve problems and develop initiatives. Many countries around the world lack trained personnel to tackle some of these problems. These task forces could also help Bishops Conferences and dioceses to write guidelines and to set up educational programs about abuse.

Some wondered if the summit was enough. Was it just talk, or would it lead to real change? One survivor, who had met with the organizers at the vigil of the meeting, said that this was his third trip to Rome to speak about this issue. He said this meeting felt like a milestone, though he said he’s been disappointed before.

Father Hans Zollner, SJ, from the Centre for Child Protection at the Pontifical Gregorian University, which trains people to work in the field of child protection, concluded that the meeting’s essential accomplishment was to transform its participants’ hearts.

Bishops from around the world are now convinced that the temple needs to be cleansed. There is no turning back. Let us continue to pray for the purification and the sanctification of our Church.



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



Faith, hope, and glove

By Marc Massery

Before every start, Pittsburgh Pirates starting pitcher, 27-year-old Trevor Williams, clutches a crucifix and prays a simple prayer that reflects a life-long journey of faith and devotion. That prayer is: “Jesus, I trust in You.”

“It’s a terrifying prayer to pray as a pitcher, because there is always, ‘Jesus, I trust in You — comma — but I’d love to have zeros today,’” he said. “It’s a terrifying prayer to pray, especially when I’m in a skid.”

His trust in Christ, however, has helped him accumulate plenty of zeros. Last season, his best with the Pirates, he started 31 games, winning 14 and registering 126 strikeouts. He had the second best ERA in the Majors for the second half of the season.

One of the best seasons of his life, however, had little to do with baseball.

Upon receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation in high school, he experienced a new season of faith.

“When I got confirmed is when I had a conversion of my heart,” he said. Trevor found himself interested in starting new devotions, attending daily Mass, and spending time in Adoration. “I started making every decision as best as I could to build the Kingdom of Heaven,” he said. “It’s either every decision you make is going to help destroy the Kingdom of Heaven or help build up the Kingdom of Heaven. That’s when I started taking it more seriously.”

As his love for Christ grew, so did his talent for pitching. After high school, Trevor spent three years at Arizona State, where he made a name for himself as a starting pitcher and earned All-American.

While Trevor worked on honing his delivery on the field, off the field he refined his knowledge of the Catholic faith. Though he ended up graduating with a degree in U.S. history, he spent a year studying early Christianity, and he doesn’t regret it.

“I knew the Catholic Church was the truth and the full truth, but it really clicked in my brain when I started studying early Church history,” he said.

In 2013, the Miami Marlins picked Trevor early in the second round of the Major League Baseball (MLB)

draft. Thanks to his firm faith in Christ, he didn’t fear the spotlight stealing his devotion. He had some help staying grounded thanks to his faithful wife, Jackie. They have a 3-year-old son, Isaac. “My wife is my rock,” he said. “She keeps me humble and helps me understand baseball is not the most important thing in the world.”

In fact, instead of letting his success destroy his faith, he’s learned to let baseball sanctify him. “Jesus humbles me sometimes on the baseball field,” Trevor said.

“It’s a very humbling game. The highs are very high and the lows are extremely low. When I say, ‘Jesus, I trust in You’ before I go out on the mound, I trust He’s either going to build me up or He’s going to bring me down. If I go out there and get blown up, it’s a sanctifying moment, it’s a learning moment. It’s something that I need to overcome and learn. ‘Jesus, I trust in You’ — if I get hurt out there, I trust in You, and I trust in Your plan.”

Since Trevor was picked high in the draft, he made it up the ranks in the minor league system fairly quickly. In October 2015, the Marlins traded him to the Pirates, where he would play for their triple-A affiliate, the Indianapolis Indians.

At the same time, his dad, Richard, was battling cancer. “He had stage 4 double-cell lymphoma,” Trevor said. “When he was diagnosed with that, he was given 60 to 90 days to live. His time was running out. I wanted to make it to the big leagues so bad so he could celebrate it with me.”

Richard dreamed of his son making it to the big leagues as much as Trevor did. “He was always in my corner growing up. He took me to all these baseball practices, pitching lessons. Pretty much every one of my starts in college he made the drive from San Diego to Phoenix,” Trevor said.



From the left, Trevor’s father, Richard; his spiritual director and chaplain of the Pirates, Fr. William Schwartz; his wife, Jackie; and Trevor holding his son, Isaac. “My wife is my rock,” Trevor said. “She keeps me humble and helps me understand baseball is not the most important thing in the world.”



From the left, brothers Trent and Tanner Williams; their father, Richard; and Trevor.

In the 2016 season, Trevor was pitching well for the Indianapolis Indians, but he believed his dad was running out of time. “There were about 10 or 12 people who were called up before I was called up,” he said. “I always knew in the back of my mind I was good enough to become a big-league pitcher, but you just didn’t know when it was going to happen.”

This trial helped Trevor learn to trust in God’s perfect timing. “Finally, I was called up in September after my dad went through chemo — and he was cleared of cancer!” he said. If Trevor had been called up in the spring, his father would have been too sick to attend the game. “It was perfect timing,” Trevor said.

In his first big-league appearance, with his dad looking on, Trevor pitched three scoreless innings, recorded three strike outs, and earned his first win.

“Then we got to share a really awesome embrace after the game,” he said. “Even though it seemed like we were running out of time — I didn’t know if he was going to be healthy or not — we were able to share that moment, one of the most raw emotional moments of my life.”

Trevor continues to make a name for himself as one of MLB’s rising stars. All the while, his faith keeps him grounded in his true identity. “I’m going to [play base-

ball] as long as I can,” he said. “[But] first and foremost, I’m a child of God, then I’m a husband, then I’m a father, I’m a brother, I’m a son, and then I’m a baseball player. That identity of being a baseball player is going to be stripped away eventually.”

'I've dealt with trials. I've dealt with tribulations, and I know that at the end of the day, I'm good if I have to step away from baseball. I'll never be good losing my faith in Christ.'

— Trevor Williams
Starting pitcher for the Pirates

As he continues to compete at the professional level, Trevor has learned to make his career as a big leaguer into a continual prayer. “I can’t live a Benedictine lifestyle as a professional baseball player,” he said. “But it’s something that I strive for. I love the ‘work and pray’ aspect. In baseball, there’s so much monotonous work and monotonous drills. ... I love that if today I’m just working on lifting my leg up in my delivery, then I’m going to be the best leg lifter for Christ every time I’m doing this. I’m praying, ‘Make me better for You. Help this to build the Kingdom of God.’”

“I understand that baseball is not the most important thing in the world. I don’t know why I’m still playing baseball. I really don’t. There are a lot more talented people than I am,” he said. “I just know that as long as I have this platform, as long as I’m in the big leagues, I’m going to use it as much as I can to build up the Kingdom of God and not be afraid to let people know that there are Catholic athletes who are devout, who can be positive role models.”

MH



THE FIRST OF RIGHTS

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING ON ABORTION

Catholic social teaching is one of the great treasures of the Church, and yet all too often it's neglected or overlooked entirely. In this issue of Marian Helper, we continue our exploration of the Church's social teaching, this time focusing on abortion.

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

It's Catholic.

By Chris Sparks

I became a committed pro-lifer in a matter of minutes. I knew the Church forbade abortion. I knew abortion was a hugely emotional, enormously controversial topic. But one day, walking through the halls of my high school in Oregon, I thought that I should give it some consideration and figure out whether I agreed with the Church. After all, I'd been raised to think for myself — why not see where my reason led me on one of the most controversial issues of our time?

So I thought about it. Within a minute or two, I realized I was done thinking. Here's my train of thought:

- I wouldn't support the killing of an infant, even if its

parents faced economic hardship or other challenges that made caring for it difficult or impossible.

- I can't think of any significant difference between the child in the womb and the child outside of the womb — no substantive difference between the 6-week-old in the womb and the 6-week-old outside the womb.
- So I wouldn't support the killing of the unborn child, either.

I couldn't see any other significant information to take into account.

I've been pro-life ever since.

Reason and revelation

That's a quick and easy walk through the fundamental argument against abortion using natural reason and basic morality.

The Church teaches, "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth — in a word, to know himself — so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves" (St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio [Faith and Reason]*, 1).

So much of the Church's moral teaching (and her social teaching more specifically) is grounded in the natural law — that is, the morality written into the created order by the Creator Himself, a morality that rational people can discern simply by using their intellects rightly (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1952, 1954-1960).

In other words, a good portion of Christian (and Jewish) morality can be proven by reason. You don't have to have faith in order to perceive the natural law, though the light of faith certainly helps.

This is incredibly important when we're discussing abortion. A lot of Americans are pro-choice because they have the misguided conviction that opposing abortion is solely a matter of applying religious teachings to a secular issue: the issue of women's health and their choice of what to do with their bodies, made in consultation with their doctors. Hence the famous pro-choice slogan, "Keep your Rosaries off my ovaries!"

But that misses the mark. Abortion is wrong, not merely because the Church says so, but because the natural law, knowable by human reason alone, says so.

Here's an outline of a natural law argument against abortion:

- Life begins at conception, according to modern embryology and common sense. After all, if the embryo isn't alive, there's no point in talking about having an

abortion at all!

- From the moment of conception on, the living cells of the new individual in the woman's womb bear unique, complete DNA — human DNA.
- Therefore, a human life begins at the moment of conception.
- And every human being is a person, by our very nature. Even a human life temporarily lacking consciousness and self-awareness (such as a person in a coma) is still a personal being with an inherent capacity for developing or recovering all the proper expressions of personhood.
- Every innocent human person has a clear right to life, a right not to be killed by other human beings. This right is recognized by the founders of our country in the Declaration of Independence.
- By the simple use of human reason, then, discerning the natural law (a philosophical reality undergirding one of the founding documents of the United States), we can discern that every human being has been endowed by God with inalienable rights, starting with the right to life. And the purpose of government is to secure, defend, and preserve those rights.
- Therefore, the right of the unborn to life should be reflected in the laws of the land, and abortion should be illegal.

The light of faith

The teaching of the Church confirms and reinforces that human beings have an intrinsic right to life and that abortion is wrong. The Church has forbidden abortion since the earliest days of her existence (see below).

What's less commonly known or understood is why. Why would the Catholic Church make the defense of the unborn such a central part of her witness? Why this issue above all others? Why, given the tidal wave of feminism and the sexual revolution washing over the world and changing civilization from the ground up, does the

What the Church believes

"[Y]ou shall not murder a child by abortion nor kill that which is begotten" — *Didache (The Lord's Teaching Through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations)*, first or second century, Ch. 2.

"[T]he direct interruption of the generative process already begun and, above all, all direct abortion, even for therapeutic reasons, are to be absolutely excluded as lawful means of regulating the number of children" — Pope St. Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae (On the Regulation of Birth)*, 14.

"The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death [CDF, *Donum vitae* III]" (*Catechism*, 2273).

Church stake out such a contested idea on which to take her stand?

The answer is because the right to life is the foundational right, the first right before all other rights. Unless that human right is protected and respected by society, no other human rights are secure. After all, corpses cannot participate in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If the dignity of the unborn, the most vulnerable and voiceless among us, is not protected, then all human dignity is up for grabs. On this fight, then, stands or falls our civilization's understanding of humanity's place in the cosmos as children of a loving God, as individual persons with dignity and worth that doesn't depend on how much we make, what we produce, or our social status.

As the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny."

Unfortunately, it's not so easy for many people to see the truth of the pro-life position. There are many reasons for that moral myopia. Many times, the reason is that they or someone close to them has had an abortion. Sometimes, it's because they feel solidarity with women in difficult situations — an abusive boyfriend, partner, or husband. There is no money; no marriage; a baby now would make college difficult or impossible; and so on. Pro-choice people look at those difficulties and want to support the person whom they perceive as the underdog.

Meanwhile, they ignore the well-documented and negative medical and psychological costs to women who have abortions. If you really wish to come to the aid of a pregnant friend or relative who is not ready to be a parent, guide her toward putting her child up for adoption (see page 18).

How to turn the tide?

It will largely fall to women, the group that the pro-choice movement thinks it's helping, to help overturn the culture of death and inaugurate a culture of life.

Men must stand as staunch defenders of life, but women must take the lead in this. After all, women can speak with a unique and powerful credibility about both the rights of women and the rights of the unborn, about the responsibilities of parents and the blessings of bearing children, even unplanned children, even in difficult or seemingly impossible circumstances.

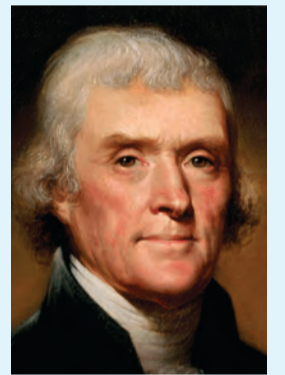


"The acceptance of abortion in the popular mind, in behaviour and even in law itself, is a telling sign of an extremely dangerous crisis of the moral sense, which is becoming more and more incapable of distinguishing between good and evil, even when the fundamental right to life is at stake."

— Pope St. John Paul II (*Evangelium Vitae [The Gospel of Life]*, 58)

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

— Declaration of Independence



The culture of life will be inaugurated by women following in the footsteps of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Unborn, bearer of a Son whose conception took place during her engagement. Bear in mind Mary's choice to bear the Christ Child was a risk to her own life. After all, Joseph was not the biological father, and she could have been accused of adultery, punishable by stoning.

The culture of life will be inaugurated by women like St. Gianna Beretta Molla, whose heroic choice to forego necessary medical treatment that would kill the child in her womb meant she offered her own life, instead.

The culture of life will be inaugurated by women like Abby Johnson, the former Planned Parenthood clinic director turned pro-life advocate when she had to assist at an abortion and saw on the ultrasound the child being killed.

The culture of death will be turned back by women, led by the Blessed Mother, the Immaculate Conception, with men serving them as Christ serves Mother Church.

The right to life is the first of all rights. It's the only choice we can all live with.

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WHERE TO BEGIN?

How to be pro-life

By Marc Massery

The recent confirmations of Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh to the United States Supreme Court have given pro-life advocates hope that *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion throughout the country in 1973, might finally be overturned. This potential reversal could help save thousands, if not millions, of unborn lives.

After all, since 1973, more than 60 million unborn children have been aborted. Each year in this country, about 900,000 more are added to that list.

Yet even if it were overturned, even if every state in the union ended up outlawing abortion for any reason at any time (which is doubtful), we know that abortion, somehow or another, would continue to exist in this fallen world.

Though we can and should hope, pray, vote, and advocate for an end to legalized abortion, we must focus on what we can do here and now in our own communities.



We need to double up our efforts on changing hearts and minds, one at a time, to understand the inherent dignity of unborn life.

So where do we begin? How do we become the best pro-lifers we can be? As with anything, to change the hearts and minds of others, we must start by working on our own hearts and minds.

First and foremost, we must refrain from condemning those who have had an abortion, procured an abortion, or advocate for abortion. As the Apostle Paul said, "All have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23).

How many times have we done something wrong,

believing at the time we were doing what was right or at least best for us? We must remember that pro-choice advocates are not the enemy. Satan is the enemy. We need to treat everyone we meet with dignity and respect, because that's what being pro-life is all about.

After cultivating this charitable attitude, we need to arm ourselves with the truth. We need to know the basic arguments to defend life (see [page 13](#)).

Once we know these basic arguments, we need to place ourselves in a better position to talk about abortion and encounter those who misunderstand.

Putting it all together through the works of mercy

We can do this by:

- **Praying and offering sacrifices strategically** — We must pray and offer penance for the sake of ending abortion. Pray the Rosary or Chaplet of Divine Mercy daily for the sake of the unborn and expectant mothers. Consider having a Mass said for them. Consider bearing witness to your belief in the dignity of human life by praying respectfully in front of abortion clinics.

And pray for the abortionists, the clinic staffers who facilitate abortions, and the women who go to get them. Pray for those who encourage the women to get abortions or who prevent them from having their child, as well as for the unborn children themselves. Pray for our legislators and those who prolong the present culture of death.

Our Rosaries, Divine Mercy Chaplets, Masses, and penances can gain a special outpouring of God's merciful love and change the course of history. Our prayers and sacrifices enable God to pour out His graces more lavishly upon us. We must, therefore, pray and offer sacrifices as never before for the sake of an end to abortion.

- **Giving our time** — Contact the local National Right to Life. Consider sidewalk counseling, tabling, or sign holding.
- **Helping expectant mothers** — Volunteer at or donate to your local pregnancy resource center. Chances are, they need volunteers and resources to assist expectant mothers in choosing life.
- **Being open to life** — Be open to life in your own marriage. Quoting from *Humanae Vitae* (14), the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that “every

“Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development.”

— Pope Francis

action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible' is intrinsically evil" (2370). Ever since the first oral contraception was marketed in the U.S. in the 1960s, abortion has become commonplace. This is because the contraceptive mentality treats pregnancy as if it were a disorder needing medical treatment. As a result, many turn to surgical abortions as a remedy for failed contraception.

- **Considering adoption** — Couples can choose life in an important way through adopting children. As we promote adoption as an alternative to abortion, we need to follow up by giving these children a home and a family.
- **Voting pro-life** — The Church has identified five non-negotiable moral issues. Abortion is number one. As Catholics, we are forbidden to be pro-choice. We are therefore forbidden to vote for pro-choice political candidates if the reason we are voting for them is because of their pro-choice views. With about 900,000 children aborted each year, abortion is the preeminent moral issue of our time.
- **Writing your elected officials** — Keep it brief. State who you are, where you're from, and the purpose of your letter from the very beginning. Go to usa.gov/elected-officials to find your state and federal representatives.

Bringing an end to this decades-long holocaust is within our reach. But the change we want to see in this country needs to begin within ourselves. So, let's learn to become the best pro-lifers we can be and do everything we can to defend the dignity of human life every day, no matter what happens in Washington. MH



Stephen Jagla, in the first picture taken with his biological mother, Laura.

‘A special plan’

A wondrous life after one young woman chose adoption

By Melanie Williams

Stephen Jagla, 31, of Fort Wayne, Indiana, knows well the burden that pregnant women bear in choosing life. Despite her difficulties and fear, his then-19-year-old birth mother elected for adoption over parenting or abortion.

Brent and Kathy Jagla of South Bend, Indiana, adopted Stephen in the 1980s. Because it was a closed adoption, whereby there was no interaction between his birth mother and adoptive parents, Stephen wasn't raised knowing his birth parents. And he wasn't much interested in knowing them, either — not until he found himself in college struggling to discern what God wanted him to do with his life.

Should he pursue the priesthood? Should he pursue

marriage?

A close friend offered to pray with him. “God, since the beginning, has had a special plan for you,” his friend assured him.

Stephen soon felt God pointing him toward the proper path of discernment — that in order to discern his future, Stephen would need to understand his past. In the summer of 2010, following graduation and having been accepted into the seminary, he decided to try to find his birth mother. He signed a form at the adoption agency, and a few months later he received an email from a woman named Laura.

“Are you Stephen Jagla, adopted by Brent and Kathy Jagla?” the email read. “I’m your birth mother. I’ve been



waiting 23 years and eight days to talk to you.”

That night, Stephen and his birth mother talked on the phone for three hours. One of the first things she asked him was, “So, you’re not upset with me?”

For 23 years Laura had been carrying these heavy questions: Was her son OK? Did she make the right choice?

“I could say to her, ‘Yeah, I had a wonderful childhood. I’m not upset with you at all. It all worked out in God’s plan,’” Stephen recalled.

Stephen could hear over the phone her sigh of relief — of the weight of 23 years of worrying coming off of her shoulders.

In those 23 years, Laura had fallen away from the faith. She’d married a man who wasn’t Stephen’s birth father. They had three children together, none of them baptized.

Laura and Stephen decided to meet in person the next time Stephen was visiting home. He chose the location: the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes on the University of Notre Dame campus. He wanted to meet his birth mother in a prayerful place overseen by the Blessed Mother.

“I remember getting there early to pray, and I was really nervous,” Stephen said. “I had a moment of peace and thanked Our Lady for my whole life, for the Church, and then I turned around and saw my birth mother there.”

They didn’t want to hug for long because they wanted to look at each other face to face — to see the resemblance in each other’s eyes. Stephen shared with her what the Lord had done in his life and what a blessing it was to finally meet her.

“I just kept telling her how much God loves her and has a plan for her, too,” Stephen said.

Laura also shared with Stephen information on his birth father, with whom he eventually connected and established a relationship. His birth father, too, had married and had three children. In a matter of months, Stephen went from being an only child with two parents, to also having birth parents and six half-siblings.

A few months later, Laura called Stephen and shared with him that she had gone to Confession for the first time in 23 years. She experienced a complete reversion to the faith. With Stephen serving as their godfather, she eventually had her children baptized. Laura is now a third order lay Carmelite and attends daily Mass.

Meanwhile, Brent and Kathy, Stephen’s adoptive parents, understandably experienced mixed emotions as Stephen was discovering this part of his life. They wondered if Stephen would still consider them his parents.

“I just kept trying to reassure them that I’m not leaving,” Stephen said. “I told them, ‘You’re my parents. You are the ones who have done everything for me.’”



Stephen, with (from left) his adoptive parents, Kathy and Brent Jagla, and his biological father, John, and wife, Kristy.

Ever since Stephen was a baby, Brent prayed a Rosary every day for him and for his birth parents. His prayers were answered in a way he probably had never imagined.

The Mysteries of the Rosary, indeed, serve as a guidepost to understanding this stunning and intricate story. Brent and Kathy were able to live the Joyful Mysteries when Stephen was growing up, while his birth parents lived the Sorrowful Mysteries. As Stephen reunited with his birth parents, they experienced the Joyful Mysteries, while Brent and Kathy experienced the Sorrowful Mysteries. And, of course, those Mysteries are all connected by the Glorious and Luminous Mysteries. Such is the beauty of life.

“I have been blessed with the sorrow and the joys and the enlightenment and the glories of it all,” Stephen said.

He has since discerned out of the seminary. He’s engaged to be married this July. He works at the Women’s Care Center — “the most life-saving pregnancy resource center that our country has ever known,” he said.

The Center has a total of 32 pro-life centers across 11 states, and they have a 92 percent choose-life rate. Just this past year alone, they served over 28,000 women and had over 15,000 babies born. Some women choose to keep their babies, and some choose adoption. It’s a perfect fit for Stephen, as his story continues to inspire him to help mothers in need.

Visit SupportWomensCareCenter.org to learn more about this life-saving work.

MH



“People need to know that no matter what our sins may be, God’s love is greater. He already paid the ultimate price for our sins,” says Dina Pacillo. “God loves us, and all He wants is for us to love Him in return — to truly love Him.”

WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR ME

By Dina Pacillo

Here’s how little I knew about Jesus: I never once spoke His name, not until I was well into adulthood, because I thought to say the name “Jesus” was to say the Lord’s name in vain.

Here’s how little I knew about the mercy of God: I had no idea how much He loved me. I was truly afraid of Him.

Here’s how little I knew about the child I once carried in my womb: I believed the lie that it was merely a clump of tissue, not a baby, not my son or daughter.

On an October morning in the early 1990s, about nine weeks pregnant, I stepped into an abortion clinic where they would extinguish the life of the only baby I would ever carry in my womb.

I didn’t comprehend the magnitude of this grim undertaking then.



As you know, our nation’s long battle over abortion has reached a critical point. Political clout and forceful conviction run deep on both sides of the issue — both for those who seek to end legalized abortion and those who wish to safeguard it. But this is not merely a battle over laws. Fundamentally, it’s a spiritual battle between good and evil, a battle of life and death, a battle for souls, a battle that must be won through *love*.

For this reason, I wish to share my own story: a story of what can happen when you don’t know about Jesus, when you don’t know about the mercy of God, when you believe the lie that a child of God is merely a “clump of tissue.”

The baby whom I aborted — *my baby* — had a beating heart. I know this now. And when I finally realized this I begged my child to forgive me. I begged God to forgive me!

Without faith

I can count on one hand the number of times in my childhood that I entered a church. While my parents loved my three brothers and me, our spiritual formation wasn't a huge priority. I *knew of* God, but I didn't *know* God. And what I thought I knew of God made me fearful of Him.

As for the facts of life, I recall my father saying to me once, "Boys are going to want to touch you. Don't let them." I had boyfriends in high school. I didn't take my father's advice.

Then, in my late teens, I was introduced to an older man, a family friend, who eventually coaxed me into what became a seven-year abusive relationship. He was married, although I didn't know it at the time this all started. And, by the time I found out, I was in so deep I didn't know how to get out.

I didn't understand it at the time, but he was a master manipulator who preyed upon my vulnerabilities, lack of spiritual foundation, shyness, loneliness, and need for love and affirmation. He made bogus promises that he could get me into a modeling career, promises I believed. He would verbally, emotionally, and sexually abuse me. All I wanted was to be loved.

I was on the pill, but still I became pregnant.

A close family member brought me in to Planned Parenthood for the abortion. Trying to shelter me from the "sidewalk advocates," he told me not to listen to them, and I didn't.

Once inside, all I remember was the vacuum sound and how I turned to the nurse and said, "You're an angel" because she was guiding me every step of the way. The nurse looked at me with an expression of utter sadness. She knew what I *didn't* know — what I didn't *want* to know.

Later that day, I went to work as if nothing had happened. I never mourned — not until years later, not until the day I finally found myself on my knees, crying like I had never cried before, with Jesus' name upon my lips.

The scales fall off

Through it all, I now see that God and the Blessed Mother never abandoned me. God eventually put the

Rosary into my hands. I began praying it, and the scales that blinded me morally, spiritually, and emotionally started falling from my eyes. Finally, I was able to see the lies and the deception. And finally, I had the courage to break away from that man.

Then, God sent me my husband, Brian, a cradle Catholic with whom I began regularly attending Sunday Mass. Yes, God rescued me. He rescued me in stages and through people who loved and served Him.



Dina Pacillo, with her daughter, Jasmine, who is now 16, and her husband, Brian. "There are still so many times when I hear her call me 'Momma' and my eyes well up with tears," Dina says.

I took RCIA classes and began meeting parishioners and priests who guided me in the faith. I learned about the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I eventually confessed the abortion, but I still didn't fully understand the gravity of the sin and the loss of life.

After attending the RCIA program, Brian and I got married in the Church. In 2008, after years of trying unsuccessfully to conceive a baby, we finally put an end to the emotional roller coaster. In prayer, the question was laid upon my heart: "Would you be able to love someone else's child?" I said out loud, "I could love someone else's

child." Through tears, I said that I had all this love to give and no child to give it to.

The thought of never having a child brought me to my knees, sobbing. I finally surrendered everything, all of my hopes and dreams, to God and promised that I would take any path He wanted me to take.

Not too long after that, I finished a novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary. I was praying for God's will. The *very next day*, through circumstances that only God could have choreographed, He sent me the mighty and tenderhearted Jasmine, a 5-year-old relative who had suddenly and tragically found herself in need of a home as much as I was in need of a child. I finally had a beautiful little child. The Blessed Mother had heard my cries and interceded.

We ended up adopting Jasmine, a child who, in five years, had experienced more trauma than most of us experience in an entire lifetime. She's now 16. She is beautiful, spunky, and probably the strongest person I've ever met. She fills my heart with a love I had never known existed, the kind only a mother and child could share.

It would be many years before I realized that it was God who had answered my prayers, through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother and His Divine Mercy. The Blessed Mother helped me to come to her Son because she knew I needed her gentle motherly guidance. She knew I needed to actually feel and experience His love before I could learn to trust Him.

Well into this journey, something else extraordinary happened: God sent me St. Faustina.

'Not as the just Judge'

In 2014, I finally got around to opening a thick red book I had purchased three years prior: St. Faustina's Diary. I lay in bed stunned as I read the promises Jesus makes to those who pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet, how He will stand "not as the just Judge but as the Merciful Savior" (1541).

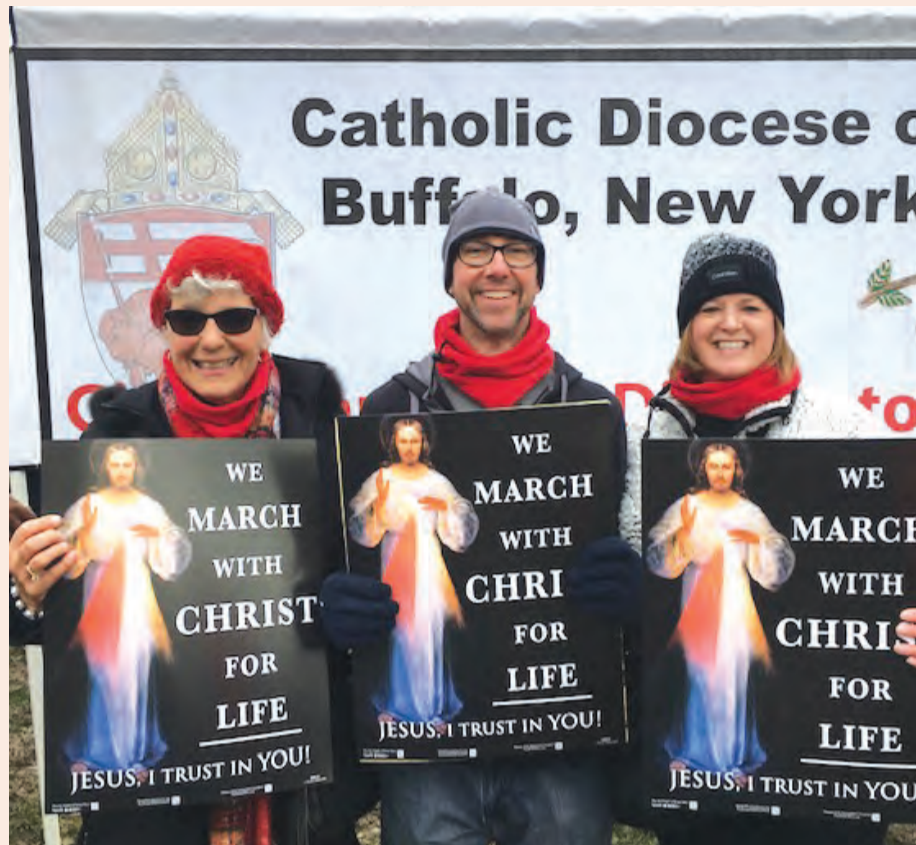
I shouted out to Brian, "Did you know this?"

"Know what?" he responded.

"This!" I said, pointing at the Diary. "We should be shouting this from the rooftops!"

Not long after this moment, I visited the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy. In prayer, I begged God to heal my heart. Later that week, after I had returned home, He did!

I attended a "Life in the Spirit" seminar and listened to a talk on redemption, salvation, and the choices we make that determine where we will spend eternity. During that presentation, I was interiorly overcome with the memo-



"We who oppose abortion must help others understand the truth about abortion using the same love and mercy that God extends to us," says Dina Pacillo (right), shown at the 2019 March for Life, in Washington, D.C.

ries of all the sins I had committed throughout my life. They all projected onto my consciousness like a horror movie. I struggled to suppress tears welling in my eyes.

When I got home, I fell to my knees and cried out to Jesus — using His name. In my heart, He allowed me to feel the weight of my sins and how physically painful it felt for Him to carry such weight. He then gave me the grace to see that it was *my baby* that I had aborted.

In prayer, I said to him, "I'm so broken." He responded to my heart, "I make all things new again."

It was then that He allowed me to feel His love for me. He took every ounce of pain away from my heart. I knew I would spend the rest of my life helping others come to understand this love He has for each one of us. We don't need to be afraid of Him. We need to come to Him, repent of our sins, ask for forgiveness, and completely trust in His mercy.

We need to be shouting this from the rooftops!

Earlier this year, I prayed for God to tell me the sex and the name of my baby whom I had aborted. I heard in prayer that it was a boy. His name is Joshua, which in Hebrew means "God is generous. God saves."

How great is our God!

That's my story, my love story. My cup truly runneth over. Jesus, I trust in You!

MH

Dina Pacillo is a Marian Helper who lives in Derby, New York.

Discover God's mercy when grieving a child

To remember a deceased child at the Shrine of the Holy Innocents with a glass tile, visit MemorialsOnEdenHill.org/sohi or call (413) 298-1382.



LIFE MATTERS!

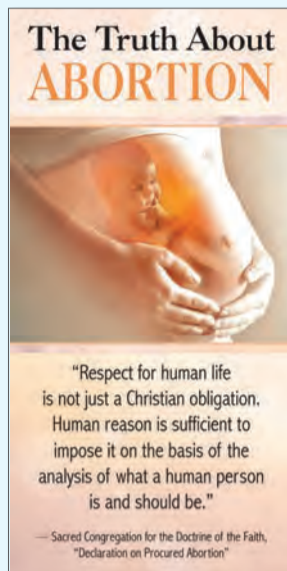
Help fight the culture of death by reading, using, and sharing these pamphlets and prayer cards, all proclaiming the Gospel of Life.



How to Be Pro-Life

This pamphlet offers an action plan for all Catholics and people of good will promoting the culture of life and fighting the culture of death.

[B42-HPLT](#)



The Truth About Abortion

This pamphlet presents the arguments against abortion both from natural reason and from Catholic faith.

[B42-SMLT](#)



Do You Know Someone Contemplating an Abortion?

This pamphlet explains how to speak the truth in love to someone contemplating having an abortion, and the works of mercy we need to be ready to perform, as well.

[B42-CNSLT](#)



A Prayer for Those Considering an Abortion

Use this prayer to offer spiritual help and many graces to those who are in dire straits and considering an abortion.

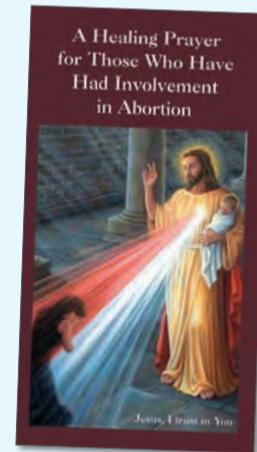
[B42-CONPC](#)



A Prayer for an End of Legalized Abortion

Use this prayer to help fight against the evil of abortion.

[B42-HEALPC](#)



A Healing Prayer for Those Who Have Had Involvement in Abortion

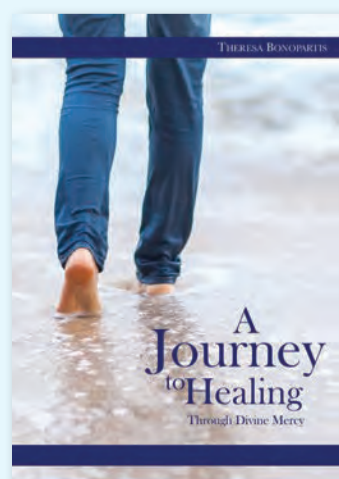
Seek the healing and conversion of those who have had an abortion, helped others procure an abortion, or who have performed abortions, all by praying this prayer.

[B42-INTPC](#)

A Journey to Healing Through Divine Mercy

Bringing the full fruits of her own process of healing from having had an abortion, Theresa Bonopartis, foundress of a post-abortive healing ministry, offers a series of meditations for post-abortive mothers and fathers to aid their reconciliation with God, their families and friends, and themselves.

[B42-MERBK](#) \$9.95



For more pro-life resources, [click here.](#)



Father Andy Davy, MIC (left), with Fr. Jim McCormack, MIC, at the exhibit “Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth” at The Morgan Library & Museum in Manhattan.

Into the world of wonder

By Marc Massery

When Fr. Andy Davy, MIC, was in the third grade, he plucked *The Hobbit* off a library shelf and soon entered another world, a world that would make a lot of sense to him as he drew deeper into his Catholic faith.

“Going into this enchanted realm, there was this wonder, this joy, this sense of something profound,” he said.

Through books like *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, the 20th-century English author J.R.R. Tolkien followed in the footsteps of epic storytellers like Homer and Virgil, creating his own ancient mythical world for England, which he called Middle Earth.

Like many who have encountered Tolkien’s mythology, Fr. Andy has since become a connoisseur of all things Tolkien. So, it was no surprise then that when the most extensive display of original Tolkien material for several generations came to New York City’s Morgan Library



J.R.R. Tolkien in his study.

& Museum, Fr. Andy and fellow Tolkien enthusiast Fr. Jim McCormack, MIC, made the trip.

Indeed, in the dozens of original photographs, memorabilia, drafts, letters, and illustrations on display, the two Marian priests rediscovered their love for this legendary storyteller whose creativity and deep Catholicity convey powerful spiritual truths.

“He wasn’t setting out to create an allegory of the Christian faith,” said Fr. Andy, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Plano, Illinois. “But Tolkien did say that *The Lord of the Rings* is a thoroughly Catholic work.”

Tolkien Catholic

Tolkien (1892-1973) grew up in rural England. His father, Arthur, died when Tolkien was just 4 years old. His mother, Mabel, died when he was 12, but not before

instilling in him a love for language and the natural world.

Having converted to Catholicism before her death — an act that ostracized her from her Baptist family — she left her two boys to the care of a Catholic priest, Fr. Francis Morgan.

His mother's unwavering Catholic faith in the face of so many trials had a powerful effect on Tolkien.

“He just saw the way of giving glory to God was through the gift of creativity,” Fr. Andy said. “God made the human heart for storytelling, and Tolkien understood how myth could help us sense aspects of the truth.”

As a student at Oxford, Tolkien began creating his own original language and mythology. He once said, “I do not remember a time when I was not building it.” While teaching at Oxford University in the 1920s, Tolkien drew, painted, and developed his mythical world to entertain himself, but especially his children.

Indeed, Tolkien's creativity was a great source of comfort and amusement for his children. One of the images on display in the exhibit included a colorful owl, which Tolkien drew for his son, Michael, who had been having nightmares about “a large sinister owl-like figure.” By drawing the source

of Michael's terror, Tolkien assuaged his son's fear. After Tolkien's death, Michael said, “[My father was] a unique adult, the only ‘grown-up’ who appeared to take my childish comments and questions with complete seriousness.”

The story of *The Hobbit* and eventually *The Lord of the Rings* developed from this same fatherly desire to comfort and nurture his children. His three young boys would gather in the evenings in his study to hear *The Hobbit*, which Tolkien told originally as bedtime stories.

Tolkien was merely drawing upon the mythical world he had been creating for years. He also created maps of the worlds and sketched images of the characters he invented. In fact, the dust cover of the first edition of *The Hobbit*, and the drawings within it, were all original. Many of these were on display at the museum, sometimes accompanied by notes or letters written by Tolkien, musing about his designs.

After Tolkien compiled *The Hobbit* into a manuscript, friends and colleagues who read it encouraged him to publish it. As a result, Tolkien's inspiring storytelling ended up nurturing not just his own children, but entire generations.

Myth as a tool

Father Andy can testify to the power of fiction to pull us out of our world and bring us to a place where we can rediscover everything anew.

For example, he explained how the ending of *The Lord of the Rings* reveals the power of mercy to set things right.

After a long journey, escaping evil orcs, traitorous friends, and giant beasts (among other dangers), Frodo has the chance to destroy the power of the Dark Lord Sauron once and for all by casting the One Ring into the volcanic fire of Mount Doom. But just before he decides to destroy it, the power of the Ring proves too tempting for Frodo, and he takes it for himself.

“The only thing that saves Frodo is that he was merciful in the past to Gollum,” Fr. Andy said, referring to a wicked, decrepit hobbit who serves as Frodo's guide.

Throughout the series, knowing that Gollum would likely betray them, Frodo and his friend Sam argue over whether to kill Gollum. But at the advice of the wise wizard Gandalf, Frodo never sends Gollum away or tries to hurt him, despite having many reasons and opportunities to do so.

“This sense of mercy, this renewal that happens when we live under God's mercy, we start to realize how everything is grace and mercy, and we appreciate this deep sense of the wonder of a God who loves us so much,” said Fr. Andy.

He continued, “This type of storytelling helps us have a deeper meditation on the reality of Christ breaking into our world. Going into this fresh world helps us see the same reality and understand that all these other myths point to the one great story that actually did happen — the Incarnation.”



The exhibit includes the author's first map of the world he created in *The Lord of the Rings*.



Bishop's Homily from
Divine Mercy Sunday



The Most Rev. Edward B. Scharfenberger, bishop of Albany, New York, offered a blessing with the heart relic during Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday.

A HEART for the PRIESTHOOD

By Melanie Williams

Thousands of hearts were touched by the presence of the heart of the patron of parish priests, St. John Vianney, at the [National Shrine of The Divine Mercy on Divine Mercy Sunday Weekend](#), thanks to the Knights of Columbus and their “Heart of a Priest” relic tour.

In this time of scandal and purification of the priesthood, the Knights launched a tour throughout the United States with the relic of the incorrupt heart of the 19th-century French saint. Saint John Vianney is the patron saint of parish priests and, therefore, a most fitting intercessor for healing and holiness.

The heart is normally kept with his incorrupt body in Ars, France. But since November 2018, with permission from the current Curé of Ars, Fr. Patrice Chocholski, the Knights have been traveling with the heart.

“The people of God need to see the testimony of good and holy priests,” Fr. Patrice said in an interview here at the Shrine in 2016, during an unofficial visit with the

relic. “Saint John Vianney’s heart is incorrupt because God is probably giving us a sign that he is a priest always — even now. He is still a friend of his people. He is a merciful priest, crying for his people and praying for his people.”

So far in the relic tour, more than 120,000 people have been able to pray before and venerate the heart of this priest that beat with a passion and love for souls. By June, the end of the tour, the Knights hope to make it to all 48 of the continental United States.

“It’s just amazing,” said Brian Caulfield, the Knights’ custodian of the relic for New England, who brought the relic to the Shrine for the celebration on April 27-28. “Everywhere we go, the pastor will expect 500 or so people to come, and invariably almost 1,000 or more will come. It’s beyond what anyone would expect.”

Shrine Rector [Fr. Anthony Gramlich, MIC](#), said, “It is a privilege to have the heart of St. John Vianney here since he had a great heart full of mercy ready to serve the

people of God as a priest.”

The theme for the Shrine’s Divine Mercy Sunday celebration was precisely “Healing.” Thousands of souls went to Confession, adored Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, and participated in Holy Mass on Eden Hill. Father Anthony and the Most Rev. Edward B. Scharfenberger, bishop of Albany, New York, offered a blessing with the heart relic at the weekend liturgies. The blessing included St. Faustina’s prayer for priests:

O my Jesus, I beg You on behalf of the whole Church: Grant it love and the light of Your Spirit, and give power to the words of priests so that hardened hearts might be brought to repentance and return to You, O Lord. Lord, give us holy priests; You yourself maintain them in holiness. O Divine and Great High Priest, may the power of Your mercy accompany them everywhere and protect them from the devil’s traps and snares which are continually being set for the souls of priests. May the power of Your mercy, O Lord, shatter and bring to naught all that might tarnish the sanctity of priests, for You can do all things (Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, 1052).

We need to pray for our priests more than ever. Saint John Vianney himself said, “A good shepherd, a pastor after God’s heart, is the greatest treasure which the good Lord can grant to a parish, and one of the most precious gifts of divine mercy.”

But when a priest commits grave evil, the damage is unthinkable. This is why we pray for healing, in reparation, and for holy priests.

We also pray for those preparing for the priesthood, that they will become holy priests. Brother Christopher Orante, a Marian seminarian preparing for the priesthood, shared his experience with the relic on Divine Mercy Sunday:

Brother Matthew and I were able to hold the relic as



The “Heart of a Priest” relic tour has attracted more than 120,000 people, including these pilgrims on Mercy Sunday.

emcees for the Divine Mercy Sunday liturgy. It was amazing. Every place that the relic has been since it began the tour in the United States that has been close to where I am, I have been unable to make it to venerate it. So now, not only was he here; I was able to hold him. God provided. For us seminarians, St. John Vianney is such a great model for us, so it was an incredible experience to be so close to him and ask for his intercession.

In addition to being blessed with this sacred relic, the faithful were also given prayer cards of St. John Vianney that had been touched to the relic, making them third-class relics. From this Shrine, and the presence of this holy priest, 18,000 souls were sent forth to pray for priests.

We invite you, Marian Helpers, to join us in praying for holy priests. As St. Faustina prayed, “May the power of Your mercy, O Lord, shatter and bring to naught all that might tarnish the sanctity of priests, for You can do all things.” Amen. MH

Thousands attend Shrine celebration

An estimated 18,000 pilgrims attended the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy’s Divine Mercy Sunday Weekend celebration on April 27-28.

The Most Rev. Edward B. Scharfenberger, diocesan bishop of Albany, New York, was the main celebrant for Sunday’s outdoor Mass, broadcast live by EWTN. Hosted by the Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Roesch, MIC, vicar general for the Marian Fathers, and Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, director of the Association of Marian Helpers, the annual broadcast brought the message of Divine Mercy to viewers across the world.

“The world needs the healing that comes from Christ’s Divine Mercy,” said Fr. Joe. “As Jesus told St. Faustina, ‘Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to God’s mercy.’”

That promise of peace isn’t merely about the fates of nations, either. In his homily, Bishop Scharfenberger said, “[I]f you’re worried about the world, if you’re worried about your family, worried about your health, worried about your parish, worried about your neighbor — whatever it is, whatever the source of the fear and anxiety and grief, that’s exactly where Jesus wants to be with you right now, because He knows that you’re struggling with that and He wants to be with you. ... That’s the message of Divine Mercy, not just today, but for the rest of our lives: Lord Jesus, I trust in You; Lord Jesus, I trust in You.” MH

Visit TheDivineMercy.org/ewtn for our full coverage of Divine Mercy Sunday Weekend.

Grandson turns life around

Several years ago, I began praying to Venerable Casimir to help my grandson, Nick, who had just been released from prison. He needed a job, and through Fr. Casimir's intercession, he got one.

Recently, Nick found himself in trouble again. He has spent about six years in prison at this point in his life. I have continually prayed to Venerable Casimir to intercede for Nick. I specifically asked for someone strong to guide him so he would turn his life around.

About a month ago, Nick asked me to call him. He told me that he was given a choice by the judge to go back to prison or enter a program. Part of the program entailed him apologizing to everyone he had hurt by his actions.

I believe the judge is the person whom I had been asking Fr. Casimir to find for Nick — someone to lead him. This program is turning his life around, too.

Nick is working at a Salvation Army facility. He prays twice a day on his knees. He also goes to Alcoholics Anonymous and is free of alcohol and drugs. He says that God is doing many things for him, changing his heart. He's wanting to live a better life, but he worries about where he will live and what kind of work he'll be able to obtain once he's released. He said he will leave that in God's hands. So, I will keep praying to Venerable Casimir for his help.

— DD

Praying for a cure for husband

I pray to Fr. Casimir Wyszynski every day, several times a day, for healing for my husband of 29 years, Sebastian. He was diagnosed in September 2014 with male breast cancer. He has been through a double mastectomy, aggressive chemotherapy, radiation, and

now suffers with left arm lymphedema. In January 2018, he was re-diagnosed with Stage 4 bone metastasis. Devastating!



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

In September 2018, Sebastian started a new clinical trial. He got off of the trial in November because it wasn't working. Doctors now have put Sebastian on a new chemo infusion once every three weeks.

Sebastian is 54 years old, and we have raised three children. Jack married Agatha; Michael is engaged to Kyrstin; and Marisa is home with us. Sebastian and I have a very close marriage and have known each other since we were 14 years old. In June 2018, through the intercession of Fr. Casimir, he was stable enough for us to visit our friends in Aruba, where we had our honeymoon.

We continue to pray for a miracle that he will be cured, but we thank Fr. Casimir and God for allowing us the time we've had with Sebastian.

— TG

Offer on house accepted

My son and his wife were looking for a modest house to buy. Every time they found something they liked, it would go to someone else. This week they found another house and placed a bid. I started a novena to Venerable Casimir, and by the time I had finished, their offer had been accepted. They lost their first home during the recession. I thank Venerable Casimir for his intercession.

— CW

For a Venerable Casimir prayer card (B42-BCWP), call toll free 1-800-462-7426. If you have received graces through his intercession, please write: Br. Andrew Maczynski, MIC, Vice Postulator of the Marian Causes of Canonization, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Email: graces@marian.org

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

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

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

Meet Blessed George's American cousin

Stephen Matulevich of Millersville, Maryland, is related to somebody special. His first cousin thrice removed is Blessed George Matulaitis-Matulewicz (1871-1927), known by the Marian Fathers as “Father Renovator.” Blessed George founded, in seed form, the present-day Association of Marian Helpers when he established the Marian Fathers’ Auxiliaries in the 1920s. We recently spoke with Stephen.

How exactly are you related to Blessed George?

My father [Alphonse John Matulevich] left us a note:

My Grandfather, Adam Matulevich, was the son of one George Matulevich (Yurgis Matulevicius). George had two or more brothers, one of whom was named Andrew. Andrew was the father of Blessed George.

So my great grandfather was a first cousin of Blessed George.

You’ve been a faithful supporter of Marian seminarians for several years. How did this happen?

Yeah. I’ve got to support my relatives! [Laughs.] About five years ago, when my father died, I just happened to be looking for pilgrimages to Israel because my dad used to say he always wanted to go there and never got to. And I’m looking through the Internet and — this is divine intervention — I see Fr. Donald Calloway [MIC], and he looks like my dad when he was younger! So I start reading about the Marian pilgrimage, and I realized, “Oh! This is where Blessed George was associated!”

That’s amazing. So you didn’t know this connection?

No. And this pilgrimage was one of the first to come up. I just had this feeling that my father was saying, “Go on this! Go on this!”

So you have always known who Blessed George was?

Oh, yeah. I would see his image, and I would ask my dad when I was young, “What did he do?” But I didn’t understand fully what his mission was. I always thought anybody who was beatified was somebody who was visited by the Virgin Mary. ... I knew about other saints and martyrs. But he had a different kind of role. My aunt would always send cards of Blessed George that she



probably got from [the Marian Helpers Center in] Stockbridge, Massachusetts. She used to write a lot of little side notes on pictures of what she found out.

When did you become a Marian Helper?

After I went on the pilgrimage, I had this feeling like I should have been doing this long ago. And when I talked to Fr. Calloway, I held up Blessed George’s picture and I said, “Do you know this gentleman?” And he goes, “Yeah!” So, I explained how he’s related to me. Father Calloway is the Marian vocation director, and he got me in contact with

Ellen Miller in Gift Planning.

How did the family end up with different spellings of the name?

My grandfather migrated here from Lithuania and settled in Boston to get away from the Bolsheviks. Meanwhile, Jurgis — which is Blessed George’s real name — stayed in Lithuania. ... He then migrated down to Poland where his name got changed to “Matulaitis.” I guess it was safer to have that name than the Lithuanian version of Matulevicius. The spelling of our name got changed, too, either because of the Russian influence or by U.S. Immigration.

Did the families stay in touch?

After my grandfather came over here, Lithuania was annexed by the Russians. ... So we lost contact with all the relatives there for a long time. In the 1990s, we were just starting to find some of those relatives in Lithuania, and my dad went over there to visit. He even went to the farmhouse that they had owned where Blessed George most likely lived. The house is still there.

MH

— Terry Peloquin

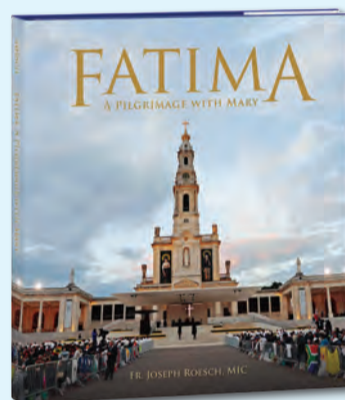
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NOTHING'S MISSING NOW

Even though Eric Cromwell was married to the love of his life and had a job that others envied — flying to Europe on business and working with elite clients — something was still missing. His wife, Gaye, felt it, too.

He changed jobs in 2001, and the couple moved from Ohio to Alabama's Gulf Coast. They were blessed with a daughter and a son and settled into life in the South. Still, something was missing.

"Our Lord was bringing me down, humbling me, so that the need for faith would finally penetrate my thick head," said Eric. They decided to find a religion they could join as a family. Yet, nothing felt right until they stepped into a Catholic church on Christmas Eve, 2012. As they entered, Eric prayed silently, "Please let this be the one."

He recalled, "We were crammed into the back of the crowded church, but we all fell in love, even my kids" (then ages 8 and 10).

Since their acceptance into the Church, the family has been active in their parish. They're grateful to their pastor for creating a vibrant community. When Fr. Dan Cambra, MIC, came to speak to the parish, Gaye and Eric obtained promises from their young children that they would be quiet if they could play video games (on mute) during the talk.

"But as soon as Fr. Dan began speaking in his deep baritone about St. Faustina and the Divine Mercy Chaplet, we were all spellbound," said Eric. "The kids even put down their video games to pay attention. From that day on, we were all stronger in our faith."

Their faith continued to grow, in part thanks to their pastor making sure parishioners have access to new books, including many written by Marian priests. As his faith grew, so, too, did the focus of Eric's career. It shifted from being a purely secular legal practice to finding opportunities to evangelize his clients.

"I asked the Lord what He wanted me to do," Eric said. "Now I seek to serve my clients not only in the protection

of their financial assets and physical health at the end of their lives, but also their spiritual well-being."

He said, "When I learned that one of the Marians' founding charisms was to pray for the faithful departed, it was a perfect fit."

Eric tells his clients that "extra prayers after you're gone won't hurt." He also points out that, although families may intend to pray for you after your death, over time those prayers have a tendency to decrease. With that in mind, he encourages his clients to make bequests in their wills to their local parishes and to the Marian Fathers for the purpose of having Holy Masses offered in their names. That ensures continuing prayers when they need it most, whether or not surviving family members are active in their faith.

Eric even encourages this practice among non-Catholics. It opens up a discussion, at least.

"I do not need to speak about any differences between our faiths," he said. "I just focus on how the Catholic Church can help them."

Sometimes it has even led to discussions about the Blessed Mother and the biblical basis for the Catholic Church's devotion to her. Eric is patient in his evangelization. He's planting seeds. He quotes Archbishop Thomas John Rodi of Mobile, Alabama, who said, "During our lives, we often plant trees, the shade under which we might never get to enjoy."

But that does not matter, because Eric knows he is doing what our Lord requested of him.

If you would like to include the Marians in your will or estate planning, please feel free to contact me.



Mary Flournoy is a donor relations officer for the Marian Fathers. Contact her at mflournoy@marian.org; (413) 298-1381; or Association of Marian Helpers, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Visit marian.org/PlannedGiving to learn more.

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With distinguished guests and journalists from around the world on hand, the Vatican played host on March 5, to the premiere of the feature-length film “Love and Mercy,” a docudrama on St. Faustina and her Divine Mercy revelations. Following unexpected delays in distributorship, the filmmaker says “Love and Mercy” will hit North American theaters this fall.

“The idea for ‘Love and Mercy’ first came to me two years ago after reading the *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*,” said the director, Michael Kondrat, who filmed in his native Poland, at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, and other locations.

“Divine Mercy is changing millions of lives,” he said, “but most Christians are still unaware of the power of the message that Jesus gave to humanity through Sr. Faustina, a simple Polish nun who is now a saint.”

Upon entering the cinema hall, the invited guests were treated to a delightful dose of irony in the form of an old newspaper clipping first published 60 years ago on the front page of *L’Osservatore Romano*, copies of which were made available for the taking. The clipping, from March 7, 1959, contained a notice issued by the Holy Office that prohibited the promotion of the Divine Mercy devotion in the forms proposed by Sr. Faustina. The ban was lifted nearly 20 years later, following an investigation that authenticated Faustina’s mystical experiences and Divine Mercy writings.

The Vatican screening, on the eve of the anniversary of the ban, stands as the latest triumph in the Divine Mercy movement since those cautionary measures were taken. In the years since the ban’s lifting, Divine Mercy has become the greatest grassroots movement in the history of the Church.

Also attending the screening were the starring actors, Kamila Kaminska and Maciej Malysa, who played the roles of Sr. Faustina and her confessor Fr. Michael Sopocko, respectively.

Attendees also included the vicar general of the Marian Fathers, the Very Rev. Fr. Joseph G. Roesch, MIC, who provided voiceovers in the film; and the provincial superior of the Marian Fathers’ United States province,



Director Michael Kondrat at the Vatican premiere of “Love and Mercy.”

‘Love and Mercy’ wows the Vatican

the Very Rev. Fr. Kaz Chwalek, MIC, who appears in the film and served as an advisor to Mr. Kondrat.

In opening remarks, Mr. Kondrat thanked Fr. Kaz for “substantive help and spiritual help” throughout the production of the film. Indeed, he said he experienced spiritual attacks, an indication that the project is an important work. After all, he said, his film centers on a saint “chosen by God to prepare the world for His final coming.”

In “Love and Mercy,” filmed in English, he dramatizes key moments in St. Faustina’s life and the difficulties and triumphs that accompanied the spread of the message following her death in 1938. Featured scenes include the handing off of key Divine Mercy documents to a Marian priest, Fr. Joseph Jarzebowski, MIC, who escaped to America to fulfill his promise to promote Divine Mercy.

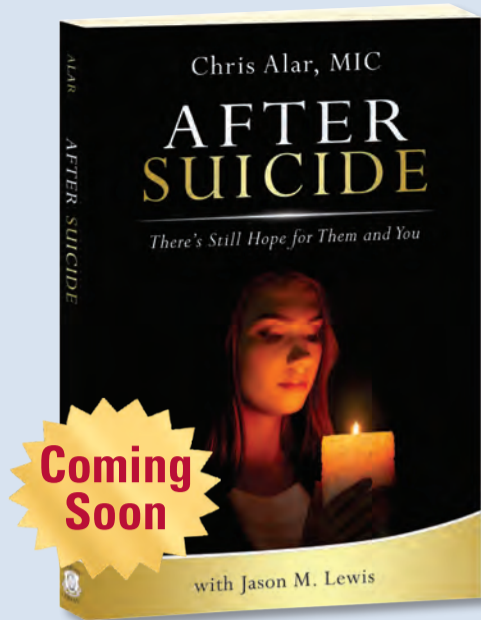
Interviews with present-day scholars and promoters of her message are interspersed among the dramatic portrayals.

The film breaks new ground with discoveries of original writings from now-Blessed Sopocko.

“When the film was over, I just uttered, ‘Wow!’” Joan Lewis, Rome bureau chief for EWTN, said following the screening.

MH

— Felix Carroll



Coming Soon

After Suicide: There's Still Hope for Them and You

By Fr. Chris Alar, MIC

What does the Church really teach about suicide? Addressing this hard issue honestly and pastorally, Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, draws from the *Catechism*, theologians, the message of Divine Mercy, and his own experience of losing his grandmother to suicide in order to offer readers two key forms of hope. There's hope for the salvation of those who've died by their own hand, and there's hope for the healing of those whom they've left behind. Father Chris feels called to share the reasons for this hope and to tell others who've lost someone to suicide that they can find healing through God's Divine Mercy.



Visit TheDivineMercy.org/hope to sign up for an email notification when the book is available for purchase, or text the word **HOPE** to **49892**.



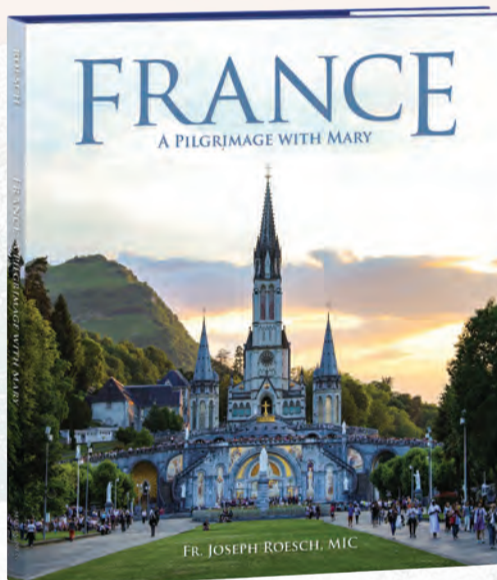
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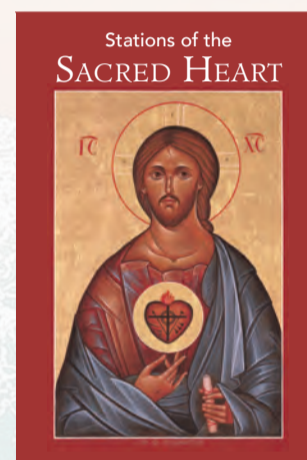
France: A Pilgrimage with Mary

By Fr. Joseph Roesch, MIC

You've accompanied Fr. Joe to Fatima and Rome. Now come along on the journey of a lifetime to the "eldest daughter of the Church": France! This latest *A Pilgrimage with Mary* brings you to some of the many shrines, apparition sites, and gorgeous landscapes of France. With Fr. Joe as your spiritual director and guide, become immersed in the history of powerful Marian devotions given to us through some of the many French saints, visionaries, and mystics. Rich in beauty and blessings, this book will inspire you to open your heart to Our Lady more than ever before. **B42-FRMBK \$24.95**



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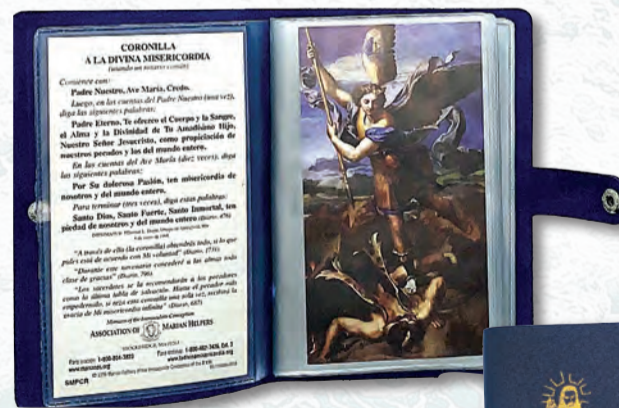


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Fill your home with your faith



'Our Daily Bread' Memo Chalkboard

An inspiring accent for your kitchen! This "Our Daily Bread" memo chalkboard provides a fun way to make a menu announcement or leave a message. Scripture reads, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Mt 6:9-13). Saw-tooth hangers for easy hanging, or easel back for tabletop display. Clean with damp cloth. Chalk not included. Measures 10" x 12" x 3/4" with easel. **B42-CHBD \$24.99**



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This woven tapestry blanket would make a great gift or a stunning addition to any home décor. Perfect as a throw or wall hanging, this blanket is woven from cotton/polyester fiber. Machine washable. Measures 50" x 60" with 2" fringe on all 4 sides. **B42-WARM \$49.95**



Song of Angels Music Box

This charming box is perfect to store your Rosary, jewelry, or small treasures. The beveled top features the William-Adolphe Bouguereau work "Song of the Angels," which can be removed and replaced with your own personal photo. The interior is lined in velvet to keep valuables safe. Wind-up, traditional musical mechanism plays "Amazing Grace." Measures 6" x 5" x 2 1/2". **B42-ANGB \$34.95**

'Love and Grace' Shadow Box



Beautiful guestbook for your visitors to sign blessings for any occasion. Each guest signs a wooden coin, then drops it in your keepsake shadow box to display in your home. Comes with 31 wooden medallions. Saw-tooth hangers for easy hanging, or easel back for tabletop display. Measures 10" x 10". **B42-SHADB \$35.95**

Order Info

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

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

mail: Order Department

Association of Marian Helpers
Stockbridge, MA 01263

Checks payable to: Association of Marian Helpers

Order total: U.S. postage/handling **Canada postage/handling**

\$0.01-\$20...	\$5.25	...	\$6.75
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over \$125...	10% of subtotal	15% of subtotal	

Postage costs may vary for online orders.



Upon the passage of Roe v. Wade, the 1973 landmark Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion throughout the country, the Marian Fathers had this to say in our Summer 1973 issue of the *Marian Helpers Bulletin*.

America, You Are Not Free! Abortion

“Your children within you. . .” St. Luke, Ch. 19, v. 43

Newsweek, October 5, 1970, carried an article on “Abortion in New York”, and in the statistics of the article were the following:

Operations.....	20,000
Deaths.....	4

It should have read: “Murders.....20,004

In March 1971, the figures rose to 80,000; in October 1971, 200,000; and in December, that same year, 215,000!

To all who have usurped the rights of God, be you Doctors, Parents, or Law-makers:

America, you are not free! You have allowed a noble profession to become a diabolical degradation. Your citizens are being slaughtered in the womb, and you are making laws to sanction the same. What right have law-makers to enact legislation against the very laws of God? The Voice of your Creator is going to cry out in vengeance-- for revenge is His!

Oh, you who march and cry for freedom, for shame that none of you defends the helpless infant of a moment's beat of life!

Oh, you who wield the scalpel, for shame! How can you face the night with all the faces of little ones calling out, “Mercy! Let us live!”? How can you face the dawning day which mirrors life? How can you face your God Who *alone* has the right to power over life and death, and Who *alone* can decree whether it shall be the mother or child who will live--or both? How can you face yourselves, you Herods of today? Get down on your knees, repent, and do penance, for the hand of the Lord, which stayed the falling sun in 1917, must one day let His just wrath fall on this sinful world.

Oh, youth growing up, listen and obey those who have the God-given duty, and so, the right, to guide you. Pray that God will give you the grace to be humble, pure, obedient, true to Him, and be ready to die for Him otherwise. Then, and only then, will we have a better world.

“...For days will come upon thee when thy enemy will throw up a rampart about thee and surround thee and shut thee in on every side, and will dash thee to the ground *and thy children within thee*, and will not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation.” St. Luke, Ch. 19, v. “. . .43,44.”

Live the call!

Perpetual Profession of Vows
by Br. John Luth, MIC



Marian Helpers Diane and Nick:

We believe it's a grace from God that we are able to donate to the Marians. They are consecrated to the Blessed Mother. For us, the Marians are very special. They are unapologetically in love with the Mother of God. At the Shrine, we see how hard they work and study. They are hope for the world. Also, we love that they pray for us. We depend on it. They are courageous and full of love and mercy. They are under her mantle. God bless the Marian seminarians!

Brother John Luth, MIC:

I felt called to the Marians after hearing Fr. Kaz and Fr. Seraphim speak at the first Divine Mercy Medicine, Bioethics, & Spirituality Conference for Healthcare Professionals. My call to the Marians continues to be strengthened by the pilgrims who come to our Shrine. With their witness and example, in their struggles and perseverance, in their faith, their fears and tears, their joys and hopes, they renew and refresh for me each day the Marian way that must be my way.

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:

Sept. 13-15

Nov. 29 - Dec. 1

Dec. 13-15

Learn more

Email: vocations@marian.org

Call toll free: 1-877-261-8806

Visit: marian.org/vocations

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

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Want to help the seminarians?

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