

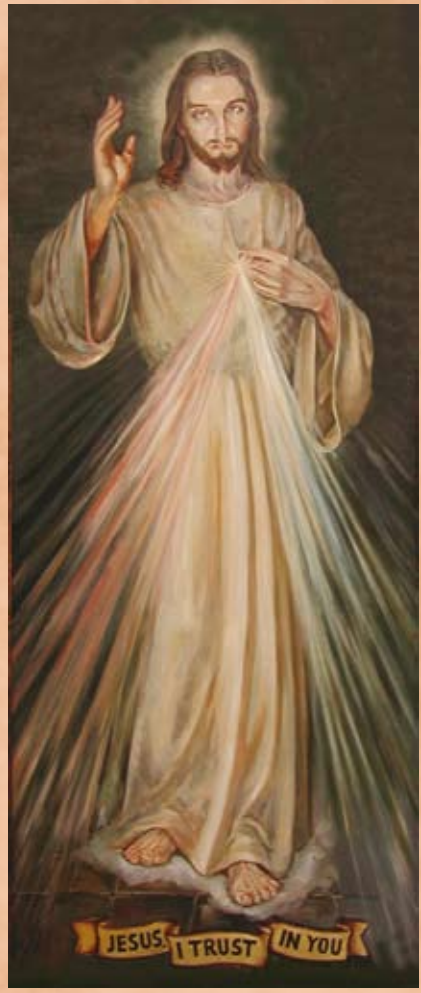
**T I M E**

**O F M E R C Y**

CZAS MIŁOSIERDZIA • TIEMPO DE LA MISERICORDIA

No. 1 (181) 2010

ISSN 1234-3218



SANCTUARY OF DIVINE MERCY IN HOLLYWOOD  
CHRIST THE KING ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

## The Image of the Merciful Jesus

The image of Merciful Jesus widely used today comes from the revelations to Sister Faustina. From her Diary “Divine Mercy in my Soul”, it can be read: “In the evening, when I was in my cell, I saw the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand was raised in a gesture of blessing the other was touching the garment at the breast. From beneath the garment slightly drawn aside at the breast, there were emanating two large rays, one red, the other pale. . . .After a while Jesus said to me, ‘Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You’.” (Diary 327, Plock, February 22, 1931) Three years later in Vilnius Jesus explained what the rays meant: “The two rays,” He said, “denote Blood and Water” (Diary 299).

One of the essential constituents of the image are the words inscribed in the signature:

“Jesus, I trust in You.” Jesus talked about these words during His first apparition at Plock and later on as well at Vilnius. Saint Faustina wrote: “Jesus reminded me... that these three words must be clearly in evidence: Jesus, I trust in You” [in Polish the motto consists of three words; Jezu Ufam Tobie]. (Diary 327).



Jesus drew special attention to one more of the details in the image represented by the picture. He said, “My gaze from this image is like My gaze from the cross” (Diary 326).

Father M. Sopocko thought that Sister Faustina’s vision of Christ corresponds exactly to the vision described by St. John (Jn 20:10-21). It is the resurrected Christ, as He appeared to the gathered apostles when He bestowed on them the power of the Holy Spirit for the redemption of sins.

The meaning behind this Image in the worship of Divine Mercy must be understood in the same way as any other Image. That is, it is not the canvas or the frame that is honored, but Whom the image represents. A picture is not a sacrament. It is a sign referring to a defined reality. In this case, the importance of the inscription: “Jesus, I trust in You” because it shows the purpose of looking at the image. This purpose is the “awakening of trust in God

through the Intermediary, Jesus Christ.

The image occupies a key position in the entire devotion to the Divine Mercy, since it gives a visible synthesis of the basic constituents of the devotion. It recapitulates the essence of the devotion: boundless trust in God’s goodness and the obligation of a merciful love of one’s neighbor.

The spirit of trust is clearly expressed in the signature, “Jesus, I trust in You.”

In other words, veneration of the image rests in the combination of trustful prayer with the practice of works of mercy. Jesus called this Image a Vessel of His Graces “I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of Mercy.” (Diary 327, Plock, February 22, 1931)

Archbishop Edward Ozorowski



## Why must we honor Divine Mercy?

Honor in man’s heart is born of wonder, respect and gratitude. It is an act of free will, not forced upon a person. It can appear spontaneously or in a setting in the form of a ritual. It is then subject to law but is never depleted. It is governed by the spirit of the law rather than by the written law. When worship is separated from morality, it degenerates. When it is limited only to the fulfillment of the written law, it then becomes soulless and changes into ritualism.

God’s mercy enters into the structure of the world, a part of which is man, and creates a sacral sphere around it. “The Heavens declare the glory of God -the psalmist sings – the sky proclaims its builder’s craft” (Ps 19:2). This world evokes wonder in man, especially when he realizes who he is and what his place is in it. From his heart comes forth a sigh, “What are humans that You are mindful of them, mere mortals that You care for them? Yet You have made them little less than a god, crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them rule over the works of Your hands” (Ps 8:5-7). God created everything for man and only desired man for His own sake (Gaudium et Spes, No. 24).

God’s mercy, as a form of His love, spreads over all creation and is not limited to the shadow of the man who committed the sin. God is the Lord of mercy (Wis 9:1); He is merciful to all; He closes His eyes to our sins so that we may turn ourselves around; He loves all His creatures; He does not abhor anything He created, for if He did, He would never have created it (Wis 11:23-25). Original sin did not take away the glory of God’s creation, in spite of the fact that it was “subject to futility” (Rom 8:20). Creation, in itself, brings hope



“that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom 8:21).

When encountering God in the world, man either is engulfed by admiration for Him (misterium fascinatum) or is overwhelmed with existential fear (misterium tremendum). God is always greater than any human conceptions and descriptions of Him. The discovery of mercy in Him makes Him even greater. The closeness of God through mercy does not change His transcendence to the world and to man. He is the Creator, and man is only the creation. When trusting in God's mercy, one cannot forget about the infinite difference of the state, which distinguishes the Creator from the created. The greatness of God bends the human knee and from this, devotion is born.

The ecclesiastical devotion to God's mercy has its beginning in faith. It is the faith of the Church. It “follows the footsteps of tradition of the Old and the New Covenant, and first of all of Jesus Christ Himself and His apostles” (Dives in Misericordia, No.12), in order to, aided by knowledge gained, interpret what is happening in the world and in each individual human life. A faithful person learns from the Church how to believe in God's mercy and how to reveal it to others.

The belief in God's mercy is accompanied by adoration of God in His mercy. It is a veneration of God, Who in His gracefulness became accessible to the faith of man. Faith is never an indifferent phenomenon. It is always directed at thanksgiving. The “berakha” of the Old Testament and the “Eucharist” of the New Testament are composed of the confession of faith in God, the adoration of God and proclamation of His great deeds. There always is the mercy of the Almighty God on all of these three stages.

The announcement of God's mercy assumes different forms in the Church: it uses the word, applies colors, shapes, tones and creates a picture. The worship arising from it both publicly and privately brings to order the spontaneous impulses of man.



## Sanctuary of Divine Mercy in Hollywood

Father George J. Bobowski



### Everything is the work of God's Mercy

Saint Sister Faustina, accidentally being a witness of a group of people talking aimlessly, she wrote in her Diary: “My Jesus, how little these people talk about You. They talk about everything but You, Jesus. And if they talk so little [about You], it is quite probable that they do not think about You at all. The whole world interests them; but about You, their Creator, there is silence. Jesus, I am sad to see this great indifference and ingratitude of creatures. O my Jesus, I want to love You for them and to make atonement to You, by my love”. (Diary 804)

To pray, because others do not pray, to pray for those who do not pray — it is especially pleasing to God. The same way it pleases God all efforts made to reach out with His word, there, where generally is not designed to provide room for Him.

Since some years ago, in the world wide known place of entertainment, capital of the movies, world-famous Hollywood, known as a vanity fair, the Devotion to the Divine Mercy is spreading. In 2003, three years after the canonization of Sister Faustina, the Image of the Merciful Jesus came from Poland to the local parish of Christ the King. The Image was placed in a separate chapel, which also includes the paintings of Saint Faustina and Blessed Father Michael Sopocho. Also, in the Church there is a plaque dedicated to John Paul II. Today, the Image of Merciful Jesus is the only one Icon in the United States signed by God's Servant John Paul II. This makes this Icon a relic.

The teaching of John Paul II is an important element of the devotion in the parish community, especially among the devotees to God's mercy. In the Encyclical Letter “Dives in Misericordia”, which is very often studied by Parishioners, the Holy Father

wrote: “The Church of our time, constantly pondering the eloquence of these inspired words, and applying them to the sufferings of the great human family, must become more particularly and profoundly conscious of the need to bear witness in her whole mission



to God's mercy, following in the footsteps of the tradition of the Old and the New Covenant, and above all of Jesus Christ Himself and His Apostles. The Church must bear witness to the mercy of God revealed in Christ, in the whole of His mission as Messiah, professing it in the first place as a salvific truth of faith and as necessary for a life in harmony with faith, and then seeking to introduce it and to make it incarnate in the lives both of her faithful and as far as possible in the lives of all people of good will. Finally, the Church — professing mercy and remaining always faithful to it — has the right and the duty to call upon the mercy of God, imploring it in the face of all the manifestations of physical and moral evil, before all the threats that cloud the whole horizon of the life of humanity today.” (DM VII)

The Pastor, Father Antonio Cacciapuoti, with the assistance of his parishioners, took various measures to spread the Devotion to the Divine Mercy through annual congresses, monthly formation and prayers. Guests from around the world: Poland, Philippines and Russia are invited as speakers. Archbishop Kondrusiewicz from Belarus, Bishop Bacani from the Philippines and others. Specially from Poland, from Bialystok — City of Mercy, were present Archbishop Stanislaw Szymecki and Archbishop Professor Edward Ozorowski, who had a series of homilies and lectures, and answered questions asked by parishioners. The answers were published by Oficyna Wydawnicza “Wybor” in a separate book “Dialogues on Divine Mercy” in the series of Library of Mercy. The Library of Mercy was initiated under the supervision of His Excellency Archbishop Edward Ozorowski, Reverend Monsignor Zenon Jarzabek from the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy, and Miss Ewa Bobowska President of the Editorial House “Wybor”.



King in Los Angeles, as well as questions asked in various occasions by people in Poland. The questions are divided into three categories: God in His Mercy, Worship of Divine Mercy, Acts of Mercy. These three categories comprise the spectrum of knowledge of God's Mercy which is helpful in the finding and contemplation of God's closeness”.

This very new center of devotion to the Divine Mercy has made a considerable contribution to the spreading of that devotion to the Divine Mercy — the Highest Attribute of God. The devotion to the Divine Mercy occupies an important place in the ministry of the Priests serving at Christ the King Parish. Divine Mercy is a way of Life for the parishioners.

Thanks to these, one of the most important publications related to the Divine Mercy was created. This is a very practical book to which you can refer to, in any situation. It is like a Catechism of the Divine Mercy. In the introduction Archbishop Ozorowski, as always, very carefully explained the nature of the whole project: “This book was created in response to questions received from the parish of Christ the



*Fr. George J. Bobowski, Ph.D*

of the Divine Mercy – the most important truth of our faith, in the “Noisy” Hollywood, but the steps to heaven, where we will always venerate God in His Mercy.

I strongly believe that it was God's Will to bring the Devotion to His Mercy to Hollywood. Now is the Time of Mercy, Divine Mercy. This is the time to bring God's mercy to all, and I am very grateful to those who supported this idea from the beginning, to those who helped me to share the time of Divine Mercy with the faithful in Los Angeles. Although Sister Faustina lived in Poland, we found so many devoted people to the Divine Mercy here in Los Angeles. I believe that the shrine of Divine Mercy at Christ the King Parish, is not only a place of silence, prayers and contemplation

**Lelis Cruzata**



## **Divine Mercy Image in Christ the King Church**

Since seven years ago the parish of Christ the King in Los Angeles owns its Sanctuary of Divine Mercy.

The Image of the Merciful Christ is venerated in a separate chapel. The Image traveled a long way from Poland, Saint Faustina's country, through the Vatican to find its place here in Hollywood, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

The modest nun has heard the words repeated today in uncountable languages: “Tell to the world about my mercy” (Diary 699). Thanks to devotees to God's Mercy, and especially to Father Antonio Cacciapuoti and Father George J. Bobowski, the echo of these words of Jesus became much louder even in the world's movie capital — Hollywood. The Image at the Church of Christ the King, one of the contemporary copies of the countenance known through Saint Faustina's revelations, deserves special attention, for it has been blessed by the Holy Father on April 30, 2003 during a special audience in the Vatican. The Great Pope of Mercy, John Paul II has placed his signature on it.

Thus, the Image has been blessed by the Vicar of Christ and together with the simple message of mercy has reached the faithful in Los Angeles. Looking carefully to this image, you will see this exceptional signature.



For many years, the devotion to Divine Mercy has encountered in its way in the Church with serious difficulties and only the commitment of the contemporary Bishop of Krakow Cardinal Karol Wojtyła made possible for these obstacles to disappear. From the beginning the mysticism had been very close to God's Servant John Paul II, whom as early as in his youth has been interested in the work of Saint John of the Cross. He has dedicated to the Spanish Mystic both his greatest literary work, the poem *The Song of the hidden God*, and his doctor's thesis — *Doctrina de fide apud S. Joannem de Cruce*.

No wonder that he was interested in a contemporary mystic, humble, uneducated nun, who has been chosen by Christ as the Apostle of His mercy. Once again the word of God's Son has

been accomplished: "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him." (Mt 11, 25-27).

The teachings about God's Mercy are one of the foundations of John Paul II's Petrine Ministry. In his book "Memory and Identity" there is a separate chapter titled "The Mystery of Mercy"; He wrote: "I recall here Sister Faustina and the devotion to the Merciful Christ initiated by her, I do it also because she belongs to our age [...] Words written in Saint Faustina's Diary appear to be an special Gospel of God's Mercy written from the 20th Century's perspective. The people of this century understood this message. They have comprehended it though this dramatic compiling of the evil, which has been brought by the Second World War and later, by cruelties of totalitarian systems. It is just like Christ wanted to show that the measure of evil, in which the casualty was the man, is finally the Mercy



of God." Thus, in such light we should see the initiative of the devotees of the Divine Mercy, whom — with the Image of Jesus painted for the parish of Christ the King in Los Angeles — first made a trip to the Vatican.

The faithful from the Parish of Christ the King led spiritually by their pastor Father Antonio Cacciapuoti and Father George J. Bobowski prepared themselves for the enthronization of the Image in a separate chapel with prayers and deep reflection during special days of retreat conducted by Bishops from Bialystok — City of Mercy. First, on September 6 and 7, 2003, they have met Bishop Edward Ozorowski, who delivered the lecture titled "Is There a Need to Talk About God's Mercy These Days?" Also, he blessed a smaller image of the Merciful Christ, which soon after begun its peregrination through the households



of the families of the parish which continues until now. As of today, approximately Four Hundred families were blessed to have the Icon in their homes for one week. The Pilgrim Image of Merciful Jesus was donated to the Parish by the President of Bialystok and Miss Ewa Bobowska. Thanks to the Lay Institute of Divine Mercy, Bishop Ozorowski also gave as a gift to every Parishioner of Christ the King his book "Dialogues on Divine Mercy" in English and Spanish, published by the Oficyna Wydawnicza "Wybor".

The main celebration took place one week later, on September 13 and 14; presided by Archbishop Stanislaw Szymecki from Bialystok, Poland. On the first day's conference he taught about the "Divine Mercy according to the teachings of John Paul II" and celebrated Holy Mass. The following day, during the solemnly concelebrated Holy Mass, Archbishop Szymecki blessed the Chapel of Divine Mercy in Christ the King Church, the first sanctuary in Los Angeles. This is where the Image of the Merciful Christ found its place. On September 14, the day the Chapel was blessed coincides with the Solemnity of the Elevation of the Cross, the worshippers of God's Mercy remember this day as the day when Christ dictated to Saint Faustina the Chaplet to the Divine Mercy. Since then this sanctuary has become a Shrine of the Divine Mercy. Jesus is really present, miracles had happened and continue to happen touching people's lives.

Recently, on April 11, 2010, during the Divine Mercy Sunday, after 7 years, since the Chapel's initial blessing, and thanks to the generosity of the Chen Family, the altar in the Chapel of Merciful Christ, built by Mr. William Gonzalez, has been completed and solemnly blessed by Father Antonio Cacciapuoti and Father Charles Chaffman and Father George J. Bobowski with the assistance of Deacon Ricardo Villacorta.

## Divine Mercy Ministry in Christ the King Church



The fact that God is merciful should not surprise us. The Holy Bible has over 400 direct references to the Mercy of God. There are many more indirect references. Fifty five of the Psalms praise God's Mercy. Belief in a Merciful God became one of the characteristics of the Jewish religion. We could almost call **the Holy Bible the DIARY of GOD'S MERCY toward mankind.**

The most comprehensive statement by the Magisterium on the meaning of Divine Mercy can be found in Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter "Dives in Misericordia" (Rich in Mercy, 1981). In that Encyclical, the Holy Father made two very important statements about mercy. First, he wrote, "Mercy is love's second name." Secondly, he taught that mercy is "the greatest attribute of God."

### FORMS OF THE DEVOTION TO DIVINE MERCY

The *Diary* of Sister Faustina contains several beautiful passages which reveal the greatness and depth of the mystery of the mercy of God as well as of prayer in various situations arising out of different needs of both body and soul. Yet, a special role in the Apostolic Movement of the Divine Mercy is played by those forms of the cult to which the Lord Jesus had attached His promises addressed to everybody, and not just to Sister Faustina. Having accepted this criterion, after a detailed theological analysis of the *Diary*, the chief theologian in Sister Faustina's beatification process, Rev. Prof. Ignacy Różycki, had distinguished five forms of the devotion to the Divine Mercy; these are:

- 1- **The Image of the Merciful Jesus**
- 2- **The Feast of the Divine Mercy**
- 3- **The Chaplet to the Divine Mercy**
- 4- **The Hour of Mercy**
- 5- **Spreading the Divine Mercy Devotion**

The Divine Mercy Ministry at Christ the King Parish was established in 2003. The main goal of the Ministry is to work with the Parish to spread the devotion and to teach about the devotion to the Divine Mercy. Our vision is that the Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Christ the King Church in Hollywood becomes one of the regular places to visit for all the people who visit Hollywood. Our Parish exercises all the forms of the Devotion to the Divine Mercy.

### 1- THE IMAGE OF THE MERCIFUL JESUS

Jesus said to Saint Faustina: *"I am offering people a vessel, with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this image with the signa-*

*ture: "Jesus I trust in you." (Diary 327). "By means of this Image I shall be granting many graces to souls; so, let every soul have access to it." (Diary 570)*

### THE DIVINE MERCY PILGRIM IMAGE AT CHRIST THE KING PARISH "FAMILIES TAKE THE IMAGE HOME FOR ONE WEEK"

- **10:30 MASS:** January, March, May, July, September and November.
- **12:30 MASS:** February, April, June, August, October & December

### 2- THE FEAST OF THE DIVINE MERCY

Jesus said: *"I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the Fount of My Mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain Complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet."* (Diary 699)

The Feast of Divine Mercy, celebrated on the Octave of Easter (the Second Sunday of Easter), is a relatively new addition to the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar. Celebrating the Divine Mercy of Jesus Christ, as revealed by Christ Himself to Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, this feast was extended to the entire Catholic Church by Pope John Paul II on April 30, 2000, the day that he canonized Saint Faustina.



A plenary indulgence (the forgiveness of all temporal punishment resulting from sins that have already been confessed) is granted on the Feast of Divine Mercy to all the faithful who go to Confession, receive Holy Communion, pray for the intentions of the Holy Father, and "in any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, take part in the prayers and devotions held in honor of Divine Mercy, or who, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. 'Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!')."

A partial indulgence (the remission of some temporal punishment from sin) is granted to the faithful "who, at least with a contrite heart, pray to the merciful Lord Jesus a legitimately approved invocation."

## THE FEAST OF THE DIVINE MERCY AT CHRIST THE KING – May 01, 2011

At Christ the King in preparation for the DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY we will start the Divine Mercy Novena on 4/22 and end it on 4/30, 2011.

### NOVENA SCHEDULE:

Good Friday	4/22	11:30 AM	before the Stations of the Cross @ 12:00
Holy Saturday	4/23	7:10 PM	before 7:30 PM Evening Mass
Easter Sunday	4/24	9:45 AM	before 10:30 Mass
Easter Monday	4/25	7:10 AM	before 7:30 AM Daily Mass
Easter Tuesday	4/26	7:10 AM	before 7:30 AM Daily Mass
Easter Wednesday	4/27	7:10 AM	before 7:30 AM Daily Mass
Easter Thursday	4/28	7:10 AM	before 7:30 AM Daily Mass
Easter Friday	4/29	7:10 AM	before 7:30 AM Daily Mass
Easter Saturday	4/30	5:10 PM	before 5:30 PM Vigil Mass

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY AT CHRIST THE KING – May 01, 2011

- Reception in the hall after 8:30, 10:30 and 12:30 Masses.
- Pilgrim Image does not go out and will be exposed in the Hall.
- 2:30 PM gather to pray the Chaplet and the 3:00 O'clock Prayer in the Church.

### 3- THE CHAPLET TO THE DIVINE MERCY

Jesus Said to Saint Faustina: *“My Daughter, encourage souls to say the chaplet. It pleases Me to grant everything they ask of Me by saying the chaplet” (Diary 1541)... “Through the chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will” (Diary 1731)... “. Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this chaplet ONLY ONCE, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy...” (Diary 687)*

#### CHRIST THE KING CHAPLET PRAYER TIMES:

- Daily at 7:10 AM, before the 7:30 AM Mass.
- Every Tuesday during the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 7:00 to 9:00 PM.
- Wednesdays at 8:10 AM Mass by School Children (One Decade)

#### FIRST FRIDAYS DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION:

First Friday's at Christ the King starts off with the Divine Mercy Chaplet, then morning Mass and a whole day of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It ends with Mass, after the 6:30 PM Mass - the novena and prayer of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and finally in silent adoration. It is a day to glorify our Lord.

**4- THE HOUR OF MERCY:** At 3:00 O'clock, Can be prayed daily individually wherever we are, home, work, etc...

**“O blood and Water, which gushed forth from the hearth of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You. (Diary 187)**

Jesus said to Saint Faustina: *“I remind you, My daughter, that as often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it; ....In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world - mercy triumphed over justice” ... (Diary 1571)*

## 5- SPREADING THE DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION

Jesus said: *“Souls who spread the honor of My mercy I shield through their entire lives as a tender mother her infant, and at the hour of death I will not be a Judge for them, but the Merciful Savior” (Diary 1075)*

**At Christ the King we have the opportunity to learn more about the Divine Mercy Devotion by joining and participating in the following:**

### DIVINE MERCY MINISTRY MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our Ministry meets regularly every Second Saturday of the Month from 5:30 to 6:30 PM in the Library. The Current Core Members of the Ministry are: Susan Sayarot, Martha Pazmino, Chito Soriano, Marie Chen, Esperanza Izquierdo, Vilma Santos, Susan Angrisano, Nunzio Angrisano, Luisa Garrovillas, Christine Yazzie, Alicia Banzil, Edmund Bandong, Lelis Cruzata, Father George J. Bobowski, Spiritual Director

To Contact the Divine Mercy Ministry, Please call the Parish office at (323) 465-7605 or Lelis Cruzata at (323) 449-9014 or Martha Pazmino at (323) 460-4295

### DIVINE MERCY MONTHLY FORMATION

*This fire of mercy needs to be passed on to the world. In the mercy of God the world will find peace and mankind will find happiness! I entrust this task to you, dear Brothers and Sisters, [...] and to all the votaries of Divine Mercy. **May you be witnesses to mercy!***

(JOHN PAUL II)

The main emphasis in the Apostolate of Divine Mercy activity is placed on formation, which aims at introducing Faustinum members into the spirituality and apostolic mission of Saint Faustina in order to prepare the apostles of Divine Mercy to lead independent interior lives and properly understood apostolic work. The basic formation program lasts 4 years and consists of 3 cycles:



- The biblical cycle,
- The interior life,
- And the spirituality and mission of Saint Faustina, Blessed Michael Sopocko, God's Servant John Paul II. Besides the monthly conferences and lectures, there is also a Practice exercise relating to the interior life.

We invite you to join us at the Divine Mercy formation sessions held at Christ the King Roman Catholic Parish every second Saturday of the month. Join us to learn more about the Divine Mercy Spirituality. Divine Mercy is the core of our faith. Devotion to Divine Mercy is a way of Life.

To register for the formation please call:

**The Lay Institute of Divine Mercy**

Tel: 323/449-9014 - Ms. Lelis Cruzata, Coordinator

Website: [www.divinemercury.opoka.org](http://www.divinemercury.opoka.org) E-mail: [faustinum@aol.com](mailto:faustinum@aol.com)

### DIVINE MERCY RETREAT

The first Divine Mercy Retreat took place in Christ the King Parish in the Advent Season of 2006. Father Simon Stefanowicz, OSPPE was our Master of Retreat. In the first Conference he preached: "It is a real pleasure and an honor for me to be with you today. These special days of prayer and reflection in the life of our Parish Community which provides us with an opportunity for spiritual enrichment, also gives me the opportunity to reflect and share with you something that is very dear to me: the story and message of Divine Mercy. [...] While it is not possible to exhaust — or even to touch upon — every aspect of the richness of the Divine Mercy devotion, I hope that my series of reflections will help you to understand better as well as to appreciate more and hopefully implement in your lives the very practical, attainable, and powerful spiritual richness of the Divine Mercy devotion".



*Fr. Simon Stefanowicz, OSPPE*

### DIVINE MERCY CONGRESS – 2010 CONGRESS

**The Fifth Southern California Congress of Divine Mercy will be held on 19, 20 and 21 November 2010** at Christ the King Church at 627 N. Arden Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90004. The Congress is organized by Christ the King Roman Catholic Parish under the supervision of the Pastor and the Lay Institute of Divine Mercy.

The theme of the Congress is "Is there a need to talk about God's Mercy these days?"

Father John-Paul Gonzalez



## History of the Southern California Divine Mercy Congress at Christ the King parish

### 2006 CONGRESS — "DIVINE MERCY, TRANSFORM US TO BE YOUR VESSEL OF HOPE"

In 2006, in memory of the One Hundred Anniversary of Saint Faustina Kowalska's birthday, in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Encyclical Letter "Dives in Misericordia," and the Death Anniversary of Venerable John Paul II — Father Antonio Cacciapuoti, Father George J. Bobowski and Father John-Paul Gonzalez, convoked the first Southern California Congress of Divine Mercy at Christ the King Parish. The Three-Days Congress took place on April 28 to April 30, 2006 at Christ the King Parish. Most Reverend Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, Archbishop Metropolitan of Moscow presided over our Congress. The First Southern California Divine Mercy Congress was a success!

### 2007 CONGRESS — "DIVINE MERCY: THE ANSWER TO A TROUBLED WORLD"

The 2007 Southern California Divine Mercy Congress was a special call to be a Witness of Divine Mercy. Most Reverend Edward Ozorowski Archbishop Metropolitan of Bialystok, Poland presided over our Congress. Archbishop Ozorowski is a well known Theologian, Professor and Writer. He is the author of 1500 books and publications.

### 2008 CONGRESS — "CHRIST, THE KING OF MERCY"

Saint Sister Faustina, wrote in her Diary: "He desires everyone to know this before He comes again as Judge. He wants souls to come to know Him first as King of Mercy" (Diary 378). 2008 Southern California Divine Mercy Congress took place on November 21 — 23, 2008. November 23 was the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King — our Parish Feast. His Excellency Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, Archbishop of Minsk and Mahilyow, Belarus, presided over the Congress.



### 2009 CONGRESS — "DIVINE MERCY — THE SOURCE OF HOPE FOR THE MODERN FAMILY"

The Fourth Southern California Congress of Divine Mercy took place on November 20, 21, & 22, 2009 at Christ the King Church. The Congress was organized by Christ the King Roman Catholic Parish under the supervision of the Pastor Father Antonio Cacciapuoti and the Lay Institute of Divine Mercy with Fr. George J. Bobowski. The Congress theme was fo-



cused on the Modern Family. His Excellency Bishop Edward W. Clark, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles opened the Congress.

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn

## Every Christian have become an instrument of Divine Mercy

We must be aware of our responsibility. Each one of us is responsible not only for ourselves, for the Church to which we belong, but also for the people outside of the Church. We have become Christ's co-workers in His vast work of mercy. Every Christian lives in the atmosphere of Divine Mercy. By way of every single Christian, mercy reaches those who are not yet Christians, or who do not know the Divine Mercy, or again who do not know it well enough. We must remember that in



*Card. Schönborn and Fr. G. J. Bobowski*

the present times we are called in a particular way to spread the devotion to the Divine Mercy, to make people aware, in whatever way we can, that the merciful God exists and is acting, enlightening the soul by faith and sharing His nature with it through the sacraments, strengthening the Church through the priesthood and the large human family through marriage. The Holy Spirit, whom we received in Baptism and later again in the sacrament of Confirmation, strengthens not only the divine life in us, but also our apostolic mission and awareness of our belonging to the Church.

We have to make efforts so that the action of Divine Mercy might penetrate us most fully, our families and our national community, since this is probably the greatest challenge we face nowadays, namely, that God's mercy embraces the world. We know what the Divine Mercy is, what it gives us. Let us remember that the action of grace, merciful love, remains within us, in the world and that it will endure all our days until the end of the world. We face a great task concerning us all. We must put an end to the false perception of the Church, because the Church is not only the priests, but it is made up of all believers. Precisely today, the lay faithful have an important role to fulfill in the Church, also including the work of proclaiming the mystery of Divine Mercy to the world. This depicts the overall perspective of Divine Mercy in the Church and in the world. In His encyclical "Dives in misericordia", the Holy Father John Paul II speaks about the task of proclaiming the mystery of Divine Mercy, saying that it is the primary task of the Church, and therefore of all believers. We should read the entire encyclical, paying close attention to the amazing voice of the pope given to us by God for our times, the voice that touches hearts not only with spoken words but through the written one as well.

Archbishop Edward Ozorowski

## In what way can a parish be a community of mercy?



A parish is a part of a universal church and of a particular one in a given location. Its duty is to take care of the spiritual and not material goods. The secular institutions serve the latter purpose. The Church is the place where people gather together to worship God and to gain from It the spiritual force to live in the world.

The model of Christian life is a cross, which to the believer indicates two directions of activity: vertical and horizontal. The vertical direction symbolizes people's prayers: individual and collective. The worshipper elevates his heart to God. This is directing of the soul, not the body. At this time, the body may assume many different positions: deeply bent, on bent knees, as forced by illness in the hospital bed, standing upright, or seated. However, the spirit always tends to heaven — to God Himself

The horizontal direction of the human spirit signifies service to fellow men. The true source of mercy is situated at the intersection of both of these lines, in the same way as the commandment of love is always focused at the point where the love of God and love for fellow man coexist. Nevertheless, limiting the activity of a parish to that of a cult would not be a realization of mercy. Performing only charitable actions does not fulfill the obligations of a parish.

Worship of Divine Mercy has already been discussed. The "Diary" of Sister Faustina emphasizes the chaplet in particular, worship of the Image of Merciful Jesus, the Feast of Mercy, the Novena preceding the feast, and the week of mercy following the feast. These forms of devotion are not difficult to practice with a little commitment on the part of the clergy and the faithful. However, if they remain forms only, they would bring little fruit. They could even face objection, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" (Mt 9:13). As Vatican

II Council stresses, liturgy does not exploit the fullness of parish life, but also is not marginal. The liturgy is at its center and is a summit for it. This means that the parish should venerate God's mercy enough to bring the daily life of the people into it.

The concern of the parish is individual as well as collective life. The help given to a fellow man could take various forms: spiritual support, material aid. Some well-organized parishes



maintain their own kindergartens, schools, orphanages, shelters, hospitals, etc. With an evangelical attitude, these actions may bring much good. The concern is to keep them from secularization and not allow them to separate from God's commandment of love.

Experience proves that where the main concern was material wealth, the temples became deserted. Where cults disregarded life's necessities, people fell into material and moral misery. God's mercy is for man an immensely great gift. It is similar to the talents, referred to in the parable, which a man before leaving on a long journey gave to his servants, with the obligation of accounting for them upon his return (Mt 25:14-30). It is not to be wasted. Man needs to manage this gift of mercy so that it will be double what he received.

*From the Book "Dialogues on Divine Mercy"*

## Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska

Sister Maria Faustina, an apostle of the Divine Mercy, belongs today to the group of the most popular and well-known saints of the Church. Through her the Lord Jesus communicates to the world the great message of God's mercy and reveals the pattern of Christian perfection based on the trust in God and on the attitude of mercy toward one's neighbors.

She was born on August 25, 1905 in Glogowiec in Poland of a poor and religious family of peasants, the third of ten children. After finishing school, she wanted to enter the convent but her parents would not give her permission. Called during a vision of the Suffering Christ, on August 1, 1925 she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy and took the name Sister Maria Faustina. She lived in the Congregation for thirteen years and lived in several religious houses. She spent time in Kraków, Plock and Vilnius, where she worked as a cook, gardener and porter.

The years she had spent at the convent were filled with extraordinary gifts, such as: revelations, visions, hidden stigmata, participation in the Passion of the Lord, the gift of bilocation, the reading of human souls, the gift of prophecy, and the rare gift of mystical engagement and marriage.

The Lord Jesus chose Sr. Maria Faustina as the Apostle and "Secretary" of His Mercy, so that she could tell the world about His great message. *In the Old Covenant — He said to her — I sent prophets wielding thunderbolts to My people. Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My Merciful Heart* (Diary 1588).

Sister Maria Faustina, consumed by tuberculosis and by innumerable sufferings which she accepted as a voluntary sacrifice for sinners, died in Krakow at the age of just thirty three on October 5, 1938 with a reputation for spiritual maturity and a mystical union with God.

On April 18, 1993 our Holy Father John Paul II raised Sister Faustina to the glory of the altars. Sr. Maria Faustina's remains rest in the Sanctuary of the Divine Mercy in



Kraków-Lagiewniki. She was canonized on April 30, 2000. She is the First Saint of the Third Millennium of Christianity

## Blessed Father Michael Sopocko

Divine Providence entrusted a very important role in St. Sister Faustina's mission to her confessor and spiritual director Fr. Michael Sopocko. During Sister Faustina's stay in Vilnius (Lithuania) in the years 1933-1936, he was for her an irreplaceable help in discerning interior inspirations and visions. Obedient to his orders, she wrote a Diary, which is now, an extraordinarily valuable document of Catholic mysticism. In the Diary one can also find evidence of Fr. Sopocko's extraordinary character and his work in fulfilling the desires of the Lord Jesus. Jesus said to Saint Faustina: "He is a priest after My own Heart (...). Through him it pleases Me to proclaim the worship of My mercy" (Diary, 1256). "This is the visible help for you on earth. He will help you to carry out My will on earth" (Diary, 53).

The painting of the Image of Merciful Jesus and the exposition of the Image for public honor, making the Chaplet to the Divine Mercy widely known, undertaking preliminary efforts to establish the Feast of the Divine Mercy and the founding of the new Congregation all took place in Vilnius thanks to Father Michael Sopocko. From that time the collaborative efforts, brought to fruition at the cost of prayer and suffering, now radiate to embrace the whole world.

Farther Michael Sopocko was born in Nowosady, near Vilnius (Lithuania). He studied theology at the University of Vilnius between the years of 1910 and 1914. He then went on to complete at the Pedagogical Institute in Warsaw. After obtaining his doctorate in moral theology in 1926, he became the Spiritual Director of the seminary in Vilnius. He worked as lecturer of pastoral theology at the Theology Department of Stefan Batory University in Vilnius and at the Higher Theological Seminary in Bialystok (1928-1962). Between 1918 and 1932 he was a chaplain in the Polish Army in Warsaw and in Vilnius.

In his published research works, Fr. Sopocko laid down a theological basis for the new forms of devotion to the Divine Mercy, to which he was a dedicated apostle. He was deeply engaged in social work. He was the confessor for religious and lay communities. He composed prayers to the Divine Mercy based on Saint Faustina texts. He kept in contact with Sister Faustina until the time of her death, and afterwards took it upon himself to complete the tasks given to her in her apparitions. In the Diary of Saint sister Faustina there are testimonies bearing witness to the beautiful personality and inner riches of this holy priest. Farther Michael Sopocko died considered as a saint in Bialystok on the 15th of February 1975. On September 28, 2008, the Servant of God Father Michael Sopocko was beatified in the Divine Mercy Church in Bialystok (Poland).

"The message of the Gospel does not depend on proclaiming that sinners should become good, but rather that God is good for sinners" (Farther Michael Sopocko).



How greatly today's world needs God's mercy! In every continent, from the depth of human suffering, a cry for mercy seems to rise up. Where hatred and the thirst for revenge dominate, where war brings suffering and death to the innocent, there the grace of mercy is needed in order to settle human minds and hearts and to bring about peace. Wherever respect for life and human dignity are lacking, there is need of God's merciful love, in whose light we see the inexpressible value of every human being. Mercy is needed in order to ensure that every injustice in the world will come to an end in the splendour of truth.

*Joannes Paulus PP. II*



#### PRAYER FOR ASKING GRACES THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD THE POPE JOHN PAUL II

O Blessed Trinity, we thank You for having graced the Church with Pope John Paul II and for allowing the tenderness of your Fatherly care, the glory of the cross of Christ, and the splendor of the Holy Spirit, to shine through him.

Trusting fully in Your infinite mercy and in the maternal intercession of Mary, he has given us a living image of Jesus the Good Shepherd, and has shown us that holiness is the necessary measure of ordinary Christian life and is the way of achieving eternal communion with you. Grant us, by his intercession, and according to Your will, the graces we implore, hoping that he will soon be numbered among your saints. Amen.

**TIME**  
**OF MERCY**

ISSN 1234-3218,  
nr indeksu 361933

rok XV nr 1 (181) 2010

Editorial Board: Ewa BOBOWSKA – President, Lelis CRUZATA,  
Fr. George J. BOBOWSKI, Fr. John-Paul GONZALEZ,  
Computer Typesetting: Zbigniew ŁASZCZ

Oficyna Wydawnicza "WYBÓR" INC., ul. Kard. Stefana  
Wyszyńskiego 2, lok. 11,

15-888 Białystok, Poland, e-mail: wydaw\_wybor@poczta.onet.pl