

TIME
OF MERCY

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**Eleventh
Southern
California
DIVINE MERCY
CONGRESS**

September 10 - 11, 2016

**Christ the King
Roman Catholic Church
617 N. Arden Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90004
(Corner of Melrose and Vine)**

**EXTRAORDINARY
JUBILEE OF MERCY**

DEC. 8, 2015 - NOV. 20, 2016



"IT WILL BE A HOLY YEAR OF MERCY."
-POPE FRANCIS

**DOOR OF MERCY
at Christ the King
Roman Catholic Church**





Misericordiae Vultus – The Face of Mercy

“Jesus Christ is the face of the Father’s mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him. The Father, “rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4), after having revealed his name to Moses as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” (Ex34:6), has never ceased to show, in various ways throughout history, his divine nature. In the “fullness of time” (Gal 4:4), when everything had been arranged according to his plan of salvation, he sent his only Son into the world, born of the Virgin Mary, to reveal his love for us in a definitive way. Whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 14:9). Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.

We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace.

Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.

At times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father’s action in our lives. For this reason I have proclaimed an *Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy* as a special time for the Church, a time when the witness of believers might grow stronger and more effective.”

Pope Francis

“Misericordiae Vultus”

Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy



Greetings to all who seek the warm embrace of God the Father which opens our hearts to the certain hope of being loved by Him forever despite our sinfulness - This we call Divine Mercy! Divine Mercy is not our seeking God to appease His anger and punishment against us sinners, rather as Pope Francis wrote in *Misericordiae Vultus* (Letter on the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy), God’s Mercy is “a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it.” [N. 2] In short, God’s Mercy is something to be thought of as positive, not negative. No matter how much and often we sin, our compassionate God never tires of forgiving us, if we turn to Him and trust in His Mercy - He wants you to know that and others to know of that Mercy through you!

This is my first year at Christ the King as Administrator and I am personally excited to welcome all to Christ the King Church for the 11th Southern California Congress of Divine Mercy. Early in my priesthood, God placed in my heart the charge to spread the message of His Mercy and now I find myself in this special place, Christ the King, and in this special time, the Year of Mercy!

Christ the King Church has an established history of following with great faith and trust in Our Lord Jesus the devotions to the Divine Mercy – It is because of this history that Our Archbishop, His Excellency Jose Gomez, designated and declared Christ the King Church with its Divine Mercy Sanctuary (which houses the only 2nd class relic of St. Pope John Paul II in the United States) a church of Pilgrimage for the Year of Mercy. He also designated Christ the King Church as one of the site’s for the Holy Door of Mercy where one can gain a Jubilee Indulgence - A great grace experienced through the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist that helps fortify us in our weakness as we journey toward holiness.

The practice of the pilgrimage, particularly through the Holy Door during this Year of Mercy, is a great gesture of disposing our will to be open to receiving God’s mercy, never tire in extending that mercy to others, and being ever patient in offering compassion and comfort. “All the divine Floodgates through which Graces Flow are Opened” (Saint Faustina, Dairy 699).

I welcome you to the 11th Annual Divine Mercy Congress. Let us receive all the graces of the Year of Mercy, through participation in conferences, prayers, confession and pilgrimage to the Holy Door at Christ the King Church. And may we never forget that God’s anger lasts but a moment – HIS MERCY FOREVER!

Fr. Don Woznicki

Administrator, Christ the King Parish in Hollywood



This Jubilee of Mercy is a beautiful gesture by our Holy Father – and one that is close to my heart. [...] For me, mercy is the mission of every Christian and the mission of the Church. The Church exists to evangelize – and the mercy of God is always the “content” of evangelization. Mercy is God’s revelation to us, it’s the good news the Church proclaims.

That has been my vision for the family of God here in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for these past four years. I want us to be a Church that evangelizes – a Church that bears witness to God’s mercy in everything we do. A Church that shares God’s love and makes it real for every person in our society.

The five pastoral priorities I have set out are all aspects of this one mission of mercy – teaching about God, inspiring vocations, serving families, building the identity of the family of God, defending the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person. All of these priorities help us to become a people of mercy and a Church of mercy. Mercy is the heart of the Gospel and we must make it the heart of our identity as Christians.

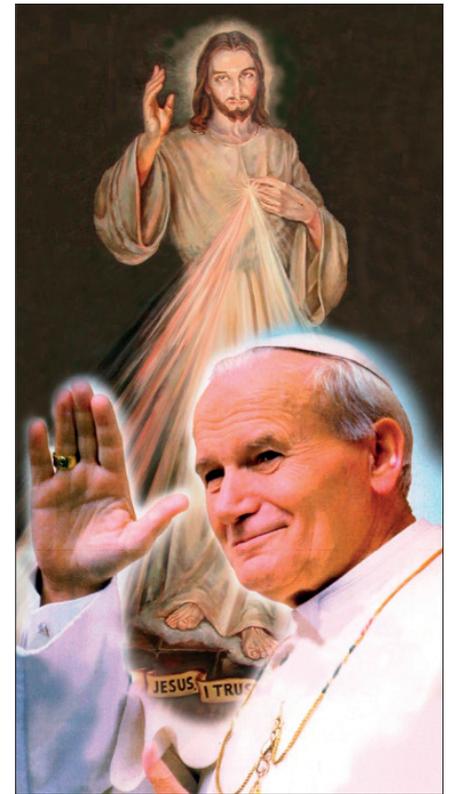
Archbishop José H. Gomez
The mission of mercy, April 14, 2015

The Divine Mercy Image in Christ the King Church in Los Angeles

The parish of Christ the King in Los Angeles opened its Sanctuary of Divine Mercy in 2003. The image of the Merciful Christ is venerated in its own chapel. The image was blessed in Rome by the Holy Father Saint John Paul II on April 30, 2003 during a special audience at the Vatican. Saint John Paul II, The Great Pope of Mercy, put his signature on this image at the request of Msgr. Zenon Jarzabek, Fr. George J. Bobowski and Fr. Antonio Cacciapuoti.

On September 14, 2003 the image was placed in the chapel which also includes the paintings of Saint Faustina and Blessed Father Michael Sopoćko. Today, this image of the Merciful Jesus is the only icon in the United States signed by Saint John Paul II. This makes this icon a relic.

This center of devotion to Divine Mercy at Christ the King Parish has made a considerable contribution to spreading the devotion to Divine Mercy, the Highest Attribute of God. The devotion to 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.

Lelis Cruzata
Divine Mercy Ministry Coordinator



Living Mercy in the Jubilee Year of Mercy

Jesus is the “face” of the Father’s mercy

Jesus of Nazareth, Pope Francis writes in *Misericordiae Vultus*, the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, is the “face” of the Father’s mercy – he reveals the mercy of God by his words, actions, and person. We follow Jesus’ example when we open ourselves to the Father’s mercy by looking “sincerely” into the eyes of our brothers and sisters, including those “who are denied their dignity.” **How have you experienced the Father’s mercy in your own life? How might Jesus be calling you to look “sincerely” into the eyes of those who are denied their dignity?**

Mercy is “the beating heart of the Gospel”

Pope Francis writes: “It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy.” Mercy, he says, is “the beating heart of the Gospel” (*Misericordiae Vultus*). To live mercy, we must rediscover both the spiritual works of mercy (counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead), and the corporal works of mercy (feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead). **Which spiritual works of mercy might Christ be calling you to practice? Which corporal works of mercy?**



Holy Door at Christ the King Church

Mercy “demands justice”

“True mercy, the mercy God gives to us and teaches us, demands justice, it demands that the poor find the way to be poor no longer,” Pope Francis notes. “It asks us, the Church, us, the City of Rome, it asks the institutions — to ensure that no one ever again stand in need of a soupkitchen, of makeshift-lodgings, of a service of legal assistance in order to have his legitimate right recognized to live and to work, to be fully a person” (Address to Jesuit Refugee Services, 9/10/13). **In your own life, and in your faith community, how do you work for justice? Do you seek to address the root causes of problems that affect those who are vulnerable?**

Divine Mercy Congress Schedule

Saturday – September 10, 2016

8:00 A.M	Congress Check-In & Registration
9:00 A.M	Opening/Welcoming Remarks & Invocation (<i>Bilingual</i>) Fr. Don Woznicki, Pastor of Christ the King Parish
9:30 A.M – 10:30 AM	Conference: A Church with Open Doors. The Prophecy of Pope Francis Speaker: Bishop Oscar Solis
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Conference: Mercy as the Mission of the Church Speaker: Fr. Joseph Fox, O.P.
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Conference: Mercy – the Heart of Revelation and Center of Kerygma Speaker: Fr. Luke Mata
2:30 PM – 3:00 PM	Mercy in Deeds and Offertory (<i>Bilingual</i>) Facilitators: Fr. George J. Bobowski and Fr. John-Paul Gonzalez
3:00 PM	The Hour of Great Mercy – 3:00 O’clock Prayer (<i>Bilingual</i>)
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Conference: The Grace and the Challenge of the Year of Mercy Speaker: Robert Martinez
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Penance Service and Individual Confessions
5:30 PM	Concelebrated Healing Mass (<i>Bilingual</i>)

Sunday – September 11, 2016

10:30 AM	Solemn Holy Mass presided by Bishop Edward Wm. Clark will be preceded by the crossing of the Holy Door
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Conference: Communion in Mercy, Mission for Mercy. Called by compassion, sent for Mercy Speaker: Fr. Don Woznicki
3:00 PM	The Hour of Great Mercy (<i>Bilingual</i>) Meditation: “May You be Witnesses to Mercy! May you be Apostles of Divine Mercy” Speakers: Fr. George J. Bobowski and Fr. John-Paul Gonzalez Stations of the Cross, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Veneration of the Relics
4:30 PM	Closing Remarks: Your Experience And Testimonies. Conclusion. Fr. George J. Bobowski and Fr. John-Paul Gonzalez

Individual confessions will be available during the two days of the congress
Confesiones individuales serán disponibles durante los dos días del congreso

Programa del Congreso de la Divina Misericordia

Sábado – 10 de Septiembre 2016

- 8:00 AM Registración para el Congreso
- 9:00 AM Apertura/ Palabras de Bienvenida e Invocación (*Bilingüe*)
- 9:30 AM – 10:30 PM Conferencia: **Una Iglesia con Puertas Abiertas. La Profecía del Papa Francisco**
Conferencista: **P. Agustín De La Vega, L.C.**
- 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Conferencia: **Misericordia como La Misión de la Iglesia**
Conferencista: **P. Agustín De La Vega, L.C.**
- 12:00 PM ALMUERZO
- 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM Conferencia: **Misericordia - El Corazón De La Revelación Divina y Centro del Kerigma**
Conferencista: **Diácono Ricardo Villacorta**
- 2:30 PM – 3:00 PM Obras de Misericordia y Ofertorio (*Bilingüe*)
Dirigentes: **Padre George J. Bobowski y Padre John-Paul Gonzalez**
- 3:00 PM La Hora de la inmensa Misericordia
Oración de las Tres de la Tarde (*Bilingüe*)
Coronilla a la Divina Misericordia
- 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM Conferencia: **La Gracia y el Reto del Año de la Misericordia**
Conferencista: **Sra. Guillermina Fabián**
- 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM Adoración del Santísimo Sacramento
Servicio de Penitencia y Confesiones Individuales
- 5:30 PM **Misa De Sanación Concelebrada (*Bilingüe*)**

Domingo – 11 de Septiembre 2016

- 10:30 AM **Misa Solemne presidida por Su Excelencia Obispo Edward Wm. Clark. Iniciando con la entrada por la Puerta Santa de la Iglesia Christ the King**
- 12:00 PM ALMUERZO
- 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM Conferencia: **Comunión en la Misericordia, Misión para la Misericordia. Llamados por la Compasión, Enviados por la Misericordia**
Conferencista: **Diácono Carlos Ortega**
- 3:00 PM La Hora De La Inmensa Misericordia (*Bilingüe*)
Meditación: **Sean Testigos de la Misericordia! Sean Apóstoles de la Divina Misericordia**
Oficiada por **P. George J. Bobowski y P. John-Paul Gonzalez**
Estaciones de la Cruz, Bendición del Santísimo Sacramento, Veneración de las Reliquias
- 4:30 PM Culminación, Comentario de Clausura: Experiencias Personales y Testimonios.
Oficiada por **P. George J. Bobowski y P. John-Paul Gonzalez**

Congress Speakers



Most Reverend Oscar A. Solis, D.D., V.G. – Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

Bishop Oscar Solis was born on October 13, 1953 in San Jose, Nueva Ecija, Philippines. He attended the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City, in the Philippines. He was ordained a priest on April 28, 1979. In the Philippines, he served in the archdiocese of Manila and Cabanatuan. He also served as associate pastor at St. Rocco's Church, Union City, NJ and St. Joseph Co-Cathedral, Thibodaux, LA. In 2004 he was ordained auxiliary bishop and was named Episcopal Vicar for the San Pedro Region in 2009.



Rev. Luke J. Mata – Vicar of Opus Dei in California

Fr. Luke Mata was born in Madrid, Spain. He graduated from Bergen Catholic High School in New Jersey. Fr. Luke has a Doctorate in Moral Philosophy from the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome. He is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, with a degree in Economics and computer applications. He is a Priest of Opus Dei. Currently he is a Chaplain at the Tilden Study Center at UCLA.



Reverend Father John-Paul Gonzalez

Fr. John-Paul is a native priest of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He was born on the first anniversary of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II and twenty-two years later the two would meet during a papal audience. Father John-Paul studied at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California where he received his Master of Divinity and Master of Arts (Systematic Theology) degrees. He was ordained a priest on June 3, 2006 in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. After ordination he was an associate pastor of St. John of God Parish in Norwalk, California where with his support the shrine to Divine Mercy was erected. For five years Fr. John-Paul was a Chaplain at St. Paul High School. Currently he serves at the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. His own personal pilgrimage to Poland made him a great devotee and promoter of the Divine Mercy devotion.



Robert Martinez

Mr. Robert Martinez is the Director of RCIA and Bible Discussion Group coordinator at Our Mother of Good Counsel Church, Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He is also the Retreat Director, regular parish speaker of the subjects of Divine Mercy and Evangelization. Robert was involved in the Youth Ministry and Confirmation Program for many years at Christ the King Parish. Mr. Martinez is a Doctoral candidate in Higher and Postsecondary Education.



Reverend Father Joseph Fox, O.P.

Fr. Joseph Fox, a member of the Order of Preachers in vows since 1969, was ordained a priest in 1974. He has a licentiate degree in theology from the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception, a licentiate degree in canon law from the Catholic University of America, and a doctorate in canon law from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum) in Rome. Fr. Fox served in a variety of positions during his 22 years in Rome including that of staff official of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, bureau chief of the personnel office of the Holy See, teaching in the faculties of theology and canon law at the Angelicum, economic administrator of the Convitto San Tommaso and of the Dominican priory at the Angelicum, and as the director of pastoral formation at the Pontifical North American College. Since September 2003, he has served as theologian and canonical consultant to Adam Cardinal Maida in Detroit, while teaching on the faculty at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, and as his delegate for special services at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, DC. In 2007 he was made the Vice President for Advancement at the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception and in 2008 he was elected Prior of St. Dominic's priory in Washington.

**Guillermina Fabián**

Guillermina Fabian was born in Morela, Mexico. Her training is in catechesis and methodology, Child and Youth Psychology. She was a Catechist in her parishes in Mexico. Since 1993 she has been a Catechist in her parishes in El Monte and Azusa in California. In 2000 she has been trained in the School of Faith completing her formation in Religious Science as well as extracurricular courses of “Parent’s school”, Spiritual Direction”, “Bioethics” as well as workshops on Catholic Communications. She facilitates the Spanish program “Lord of Mercy”, broadcasted Monday to Friday at 3:00 PM at Guadalupe Radio and TV. She is the author of the book “Destellos de Misericordia” as well as Audio producer of “Viacrucis Meditado de Santa Faustina”, “Rosario Meditado desde Tierra Santa” with Father Juan Maria Solana, L.C.

**Father Don Woznicki**

Fr. Don Woznicki, is a South Bend, Indiana native. Before his calling and ordination to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Chicago (Mundelein Seminary - 2002, M. Div. & S.T.B.), he attained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering from Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN. (1984). Fr. Don also pursued his interest to investigate how the Church was reaching out to the people of the entertainment industry (“Hollywood”). In 1998, the summer before beginning his seminary studies, he temporarily went to Los Angeles to work in various aspects of the industry to gain a better understanding and appreciation for the industry and the people who work in it. Fr. Don has since worked to improve relations between the Church and Entertainment Industry so that the global community can experience the great benefits that such a relationship can bring. In 2005, Fr. Don founded the non-profit organization, New Ethos, as a way for the Church and the Entertainment Industry to collaborate for the good of society. He currently resides in Los Angeles, California to develop New Ethos (Hollywood, CA.) as a vehicle for a „new ethos” in entertainment. Since July 01, 2016 Fr. Don Woznicki is the Administrator of Christ the King Parish in Hollywood.

**Father George J. Bobowski**

Fr. George was ordained as a priest on May 26, 1979 by Bishop Mikolaj Sasinowski. Since 1990 Fr. George dedicates his life to preaching and spreading the devotion to the Divine Mercy. He initiated the Lay Institute of Divine Mercy to continue the research conducted by Blessed Fr. Michael Sopocko, Confesor and Spiritual Director of Saint Faustina Kowalska. Father George is from Bialystok – City of Mercy, where Blessed Michael Sopocko lived and died. Fr. George was blessed to have met Blessed Fr. Sopocko and be a witness of this Holy man. Fr. George J. Bobowski provides formation for the “Faustinum” Apostolate. “Faustinum”, The Apostolic Movement of the Divine Mercy, sprung from the charisma and mystical experience of Saint Faustina. Fr. George J. Bobowski is also a Missionary of the Divine Mercy, who conducts retreats and conferences to spread the Divine Mercy devotion. He visited almost every corner of the world with the message of Saint Faustina. He preached in almost every country in Europe, South and North America and the Philippines. Fr. George J. Bobowski is from Pope John Paul II’s native land of Poland.

**Deacon Carlos Ortega**

Deacon Carlos was ordained in June 2011, and was assigned at St. Basil’s Parish in Los Angeles to help with Masses and Baptisms. Before ordination Carlos was very active at Christ the King Parish, where he was part of the Ministry of Divine Mercy and helped with the Divine Mercy Apostolate “Faustinum” monthly formation. He has been speaker at Divine Mercy Congress in various occasions.

**Father Agustín De La Vega, L.C.**

Fr. Agustin is a member of the Legionaries of Christ. He studied at Pontifical Gregorian University and St. Tomas Aquinas Pontifical University in Rome. He majors in Philosophy and Philosophical Anthropology. For the past ten years he was the Director of the Alter Christus Foundation of the Legionaries of Christ. He is currently in charge of Guadalupe Radio and T.V. based in Los Angeles, CA. He conducts a daily morning program in Spanish, “Levántate y Camina” (Get up and walk). He is a well-known speaker and spiritual director.

**Deacon Ricardo Villacorta**

Deacon Ricardo Villacorta, a Christ the King parishioner, was active in Parish ministry for almost two decades before he was ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacons by Cardinal Roger Mahoney on June 8th, 2002. He is a passionate apostle of the Divine Mercy and is currently helping with the Confirmation program.

Holy Eucharist during the Congress**September 10, 2016, 5:30 PM – Healing Mass****Reverend Slawomir Szkredka, S.S.D.**

Ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in 2002, Fr. Slawomir Szkredka, a native of Poland, served as an Associate Pastor at Saint Genevieve Parish in Panorama City (2002-2006) and at John the Baptist Parish in Baldwin Park (2006-2008). From 2008 till 2015 he resided in Rome pursuing his biblical studies at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, which he completed with magna cum laude. Fr. Slawomir is a Doctor in Sacred Scripture and his doctoral dissertation titled: “Luke’s Portrayal of Sinners. Rhetoric of Direct and Indirect References to Sinfulness in Luke 5, 1– 6, 11”

September 11, 2016, 10:30 AM - Solemn Holy Mass presided by Bishop Edward Wm. Clark will be preceded by the crossing of the Holy Door**Bishop Edward Wm. Clark, D.D. V.G.**

Bishop Edward Wm. Clark was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota and raised in Minnesota, Idaho and California (Orange County). He attended local schools in Los Angeles and graduated from St. John’s Seminary College in 1968. Ordained a priest in 1972, he has been serving the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for over 42 years. Bishop Clark attended the Gregorian University in Rome. He received a Licentiate Degree in Fundamental Theology in 1986 and a Doctoral Degree in Theology in 1988. From 1988 until 1990 he served as the Coordinator of Religious Formation and Instruction for the Catholic High Schools within the Archdiocese. Beginning in 1990 he was assigned to Saint John’s Major Seminary as an Assistant Professor of Theology and became a full time Professor in 1999. Appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles in January 2001, Bishop Clark was ordained by Cardinal Roger Mahony to the Episcopacy in March 2001 and assigned to Our Lady of the Angels Pastoral Region, where he currently serves. He is the author of the book “Five Great Catholic Ideas” and a number of articles published in magazines and professional journals. He is a member of the Catholic Theological Society of America, the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Order of Malta. Currently he chairs the Education and Editorial Committees of the California Conference of Catholic Bishops and the California Catholic Conference and is a member of the California Bishops’ Task Force on Health Care.

Characteristics Distinguishing the Devotion to the Divine Mercy from the Devotion to the Sacred Heart



At first sight it may seem that there is no essential difference between the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the devotion to the Divine Mercy. A superficial reading of Sister Faustina's Diary might appear to confirm this notion, since the Sacred Heart is often mentioned there, along with her personal devotion to the Sacred Heart, which was also practiced in the Congregation. However, a deeper theological insight into the content of the Diary led Father Rozycki to make a distinction between the two devotions and to describe the essential differences between them. (*Fr. Ignacy Rozycki was a theologian, who served as a Member of the International Theological Commission for the Holy See. He prepared a systematic study of Sister Faustina's writings.*) These differences concern the essential (proper)

subjects and the material subjects of the two devotions, their natures, and the privileged times for the associated promises.

Essential (Proper) Subject

- in the devotion to the Divine Mercy - the mercy of God in the Holy Trinity;
- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - the Son of God, Divine Person Incarnate.

There is thus already a difference in the aspect of the essential subject of the two devotions.

Material Subject

- in the devotion to the Divine Mercy - the image of the Merciful Jesus

corresponding in terms of subject and content to the vision of 22nd February, 1931;

- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - the physical, human Heart of Jesus;

Essential Nature of the Devotion

- in the devotion to the Divine Mercy - a spirit of trust;
- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - reparation;

Privileged Time

- in the devotion to the Divine Mercy - 3 o'clock in the afternoon every day and the Feast of the Divine Mercy;
- in the devotion to the Sacred Heart - the first Friday in every month, and the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

Father Rozycki also points out that in the particular forms of worship of the Divine Mercy "there are no familiar or favorite novenas or litanies; many people who have not come across this devotion before often ask about a novena or litany" (R. 17), so characteristic of other devotions and so firmly established in traditional Catholic piety. The novena to be found in Sister Faustina's Diary was intended for her privately, not for general use. Jesus did not attach any special promises to its recitation, and it is not one of the new devotional forms in the worship of the Divine Mercy. However, if we say it in a spirit of trust, it will be a genuine act of worship, to which the promises relating to trustfulness will be attached. This novena is a spiritual act of mercy towards one's neighbors, for in it we pray each day for other souls.

On the other hand, Jesus wanted everyone to participate in the novena



consisting of the chaplet to the Divine Mercy preceding the Feast of Mercy. He said about this novena, "By this novena I will grant every possible grace" (796). The novena is strictly connected with the Feast of Mercy, since it constitutes the preparation for it.

There is no separate litany in this devotion to the Divine Mercy, either, as one of the new forms of worship, or with any special promises attached to it, although there are now two litanies to the Divine Mercy in existence. Anyone who recites them in a spirit of trust and who performs acts of mercy "may count only on the promises which Jesus attached to the act of trust in the Divine mercy in general" (R. 18).

Many of the publications about the devotion to the Divine Mercy mix up the new forms of worship as revealed to Sister Faustina with her private prayers, which often creates the impression that the most important thing in this devotion is the novena or one of the litanies. While earlier publications might have been forgiven, nowadays - once the writings of Sister Faustina have been analyzed theologically - we should endeavor to propagate the correct forms of the devotion.

Sister M. Elzbieta Siepak, D.D., "She made an ordinary Life extraordinary"

Mary's Heart Leads to Divine Mercy

In his book "True Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary" (2005), Fr. Robert Fox gave to the Church a clear exposition of the Blessed Virgin's journey into ever-deeper holiness, and we shall quote his excellent treatment of this subject at length. He wrote:

What is holiness? Essentially holiness is the possession of sanctifying grace. It is made present in a person from the moment of baptism, making one resemble God. ... We grow in holiness by doing the will of God once His sanctifying grace is implanted in our souls at baptism. Then everything done for the love of God makes one grow in grace. An increase of grace is achieved by every good work, every prayer, every loving act. ...

God first loves us. If we respond in faith to his love, we grow in grace. That grace first given to children in baptism is entirely out of the goodness of God's heart, with no act of faith or response on their part. The same was true of Mary in an eminent way. Mary did not merit her Immaculate Conception ... this is why Mary is called God's masterpiece. He has given this woman a dignity worthy of his Mother, with more grace than all the angels and saints taken together. ...

What growth of grace took place in her at the Annunciation! ... God chose to use her Immaculate Heart to accept the Savior in freely agreeing to become the Mother of the Most High, the Word incarnate, the Messiah, the long-awaited One. ...

Mary says "Yes." The increase of grace in the soul of Mary when she answers "Yes" for the whole world is unimaginable. The fact that God in his loving providence looked to the free consent of Mary for the Word to be made flesh and dwell among us gives a Marian quality to every aspect of Christianity. ...

There was then the carrying of the Word made flesh in her holy womb for



nine months. She became the world's first tabernacle for the Word Incarnate. Today in the tabernacles of our churches, He is present in the Most Blessed Sacrament... as she carried Him under her heart she continuously grew in grace. ...

Grace grew in Mary as she nurtured the infant Jesus, tended to His growing needs, served Him at table, performed domestic duties. In a human way she taught Jesus as any good mother teaches her child. ...

Mary was with Jesus to the end as He hung dying on the cross, redeeming the world. As grace was merited for the world, abundant grace flowed into her Immaculate Heart during those hours beneath the cross of redemption. ...

Mary grew in grace after the Ascension of Christ by the reception of her divine incarnate Son in Holy Communion. After the redemptive acts of the Cross, the Apostle John took her into his own home (see Jn 19:27). We may be sure that our Blessed Lady received the Holy Eucharist frequently, even daily, as was the practice of the early Christians (see Acts 2:46). She lived with John the priest, the beloved disciple. ...

The Holy Spirit came upon Mary when she conceived the Christ Child. Now that the Church is to be identified as Christ's body, with the Holy Spirit as

its Soul, this Spirit of Love descended upon all in the upper room and found a special temple adorned for His presence in Mary's heart. ...

Such magnificent beauty, such radiant brightness of the light of life, we see in Mary's Immaculate Heart. (Father Robert J. Fox, *True Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*. Fatima Family Apostolate International, 2005, pp. 84, 90, 92-96)

The result of this incredible journey of growth in grace was that Mary's heart became the source of the greatest possible joy to the Heart of Jesus. Proverbs 8:31 tells us that "The Lord's delight is in the children of men," and in the gospels we are taught that the Good Shepherd "rejoices" whenever He finds His lost sheep and brings them home (Lk 15:5-7).

How much greater must be His delight in the heart of His mother Mary, whose soul was always perfectly receptive to His grace, and never failed to return love for love!

Mary's Immaculate Heart is Full of Divine Mercy

At the same time, while Mary was growing every day in sanctifying grace, and united at all times, in the center of her soul, with the Heart of her Son, she was also completely filled with His merciful love. Saint John Eudes tells us:

To the heart of Mary God communicated in great abundance His merciful inclinations, and established in it the throne and reign of His mercy more gloriously than the heart of any other creature, save the sacred humanity of Christ.

Divine Mercy reigns so perfectly in Mary's heart that she bears the name of Queen and Mother of Mercy. And the most loving Mary has so completely won the heart of God's mercy that He has given her the key to all His treasures,

and made her absolute mistress of them. St. Bernard says, "She is called the Queen of Mercy because she opens the abyss and treasure of divine mercy to whom she chooses, when she chooses, and as she chooses."

Divine Mercy holds such complete sway over Mary's heart and fills it with such compassion for sinners and for all persons in need that Saint Augustine addresses her thus, "Thou art the sinner's only hope" after God. "My dearest children," says Saint Bernard, "her heart is the ladder by which sinners go up to heaven; this is my reliance; this is the only reason of my hope." (*The Admirable of Heart of Mary*, pp. 126-127)

What does this mean for us today? It means that Mary's heart is now a living fountain of divine love and sanctifying grace. She looks upon the hearts of her children as parched and arid ground, but with plenty of potential, needing only to be watered by divine grace, and planted with the seeds of the gospel in order to spring into abundant life.

In fact, there is no place in the whole created universe where we can draw closer to the Heart of Jesus than the heart of Mary. Her heart is the chapel where Jesus forever dwells, ready to pour out His merciful love upon us whenever we come to Him.

Let us always seek Him there, in the Heart of Mary, where we shall always surely find Him.



Divine Mercy devotion at Christ the King Parish in Los Angeles

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 and who helped me to share the Time of Divine Mercy with the faithful in Los Angeles. I would like to give thanks to Merciful Jesus who allows us to be instruments of His Mercy.



My gratitude also goes to the Faustinum formation groups and their moderators. Here in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, I have found thousands and thousands of people devoted to Divine Mercy. I firmly believe that the Shrine of Divine Mercy at Christ the King Parish is a place of silence, prayer and contemplation of the most important truths of our faith in the noisy Hollywood. It also contains the steps to heaven, where we will always venerate God in His Mercy.

Fr. Don Woznicki in his Invitation Letter to the Congress wrote: This is my first year at Christ the King as Administrator. Early in my priesthood, God placed in my heart the charge to spread the message of His Mercy and now I find myself in this special place, Christ the King, and in this special time, the Year of Mercy!" Father Don from the first day of his pastorate embraced this beautiful Devotion. May the Holy Spirit guide Him to make this church more visible as a Shrine of Divine Mercy.

Fr. George J. Bobowski

Director of The Lay Institute of Divine Mercy

The Lay Institute of Divine Mercy is one of the most active Apostolates of Divine Mercy. The Institute was established in Poland by Blessed Fr. Michal Sopocko, Confessor of Saint Faustina Kowalska.

Today the Institute continues the research and study initiated by the Blessed Founder and has been in existence since 1946.

The principal aim of the Lay Institute of Divine Mercy is:

- to evangelize
- to make the Church a sign of the saving presence of God in the World
- to strive for Christian perfection through trust in God and showing mercy towards one's neighbors
- to get to know and proclaim the mystery of God's mercy
- to support Catholic Missions around the world
- to entreat God's mercy for the whole world

The Lay Institute of Divine Mercy, under the leadership of Fr. George J. Bobowski, provides formation for the members of the Divine Mercy Apostolate "Faustinum", which is under the supervision of Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz from Krakow.

The Lay Institute of Divine Mercy organizes Pilgrimages:

- Pilgrimages to Poland and Lithuania to help the participants become familiar with the places connected with the Divine Mercy Devotion.
- Pilgrimages to Poland and Rome to connect with the Theological Courses related to Divine Mercy and the Legacy of Saint John Paul II.
- Pilgrimages to the Holy Land to help deepen the knowledge of the Bible, specially Biblical Geography and Archeology.
- Pilgrimages to the Marian Shrines in Europe. In 2017 we will celebrate the One Hundred Anniversary of the apparitions of Holy Mother in Fatima. We invite you to celebrate this anniversary in Fatima.

**The courses are provided by leading Theologians
with the cooperation of the Catholic Universities in Poland**