



APOSTLES of the HOLY SPIRIT

# *Bulletin*

*Summer 2016*



## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH



## THE ROLE OF MERCY IN EACH OF THE SACRAMENTS

# The Role of Mercy in Each of the Sacraments

In *Misericordiae Vultus*, the papal document declaring a Year of Mercy, the Holy Father explains that mercy is “the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us” (2). Since the Catechism tells us that a sacrament is “a meeting of God’s children with their Father,” it is most especially in the sacraments that we find God’s great act of mercy (CCC 1153).

Each of the seven sacraments instituted by Christ enacts the merciful healing of God. The mercy of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross flows over us in the seven sacraments as each heals a disorder present in the human community.

Baptism, for example, cleanses the wounds of Original Sin. God’s mercy heals the sin of Adam by means of adoption into the Trinity. Far from simply a community initiation, in baptism the mercy of God flows from his pierced side to his newly adopted children.

In confirmation, God’s mercy heals the fear that often accompanies being a public witness to the faith. How needed in our age is the merciful grace of confirmation to restore the Church’s public witness, especially about the truth of the moral law.

God’s mercy is enfleshed in the Holy Eucharist. Jesus, the merciful face of the Father, heals venial sins in Holy Communion. The mercy of God, which brings us the Eucharist, means we are never alone. God’s mercy waits for us in the sacrament of love.



As part of their preparation, candidates for confirmation are asked to write a letter to me. In it they not only request to receive the sacrament, but also write about their service, hobbies, sports, and favorite subject in school. One student wrote a line that caught my attention: My favorite subject is math because there is only one answer.

Those of us of a certain age know how much we need the Spirit when there is more than one answer to life’s questions. Or when things don’t add up and the answer is unclear.

The Sacrament of Penance is the sacrament of mercy par excellence. Sin, more than any other wound, requires God’s healing. And being drawn to his mercy - even more than revulsion against sin - should bring us to confession.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick heals the effects of sin. In holy anointing, God’s mercy ensures that the doubt and despair that often accompany sickness and death are healed in a soul already restored to his friendship in confession.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders ushers a man into the role of instrument of mercy. As Pope Francis so often reminds his priests, they are to be, perhaps more than anything else, messengers of mercy. This sacrament heals the division that arises when God’s people lack sound pastoral care.

And finally, the Sacrament of Matrimony applies God’s mercy to human love. Sacramental marriage can heal the disordered appetites so evident in our culture. The community flourishes when spousal love is raised to the dignity of a sacrament.

God in his goodness comes to meet us with his mercy. And he does so most of all in the sacraments.

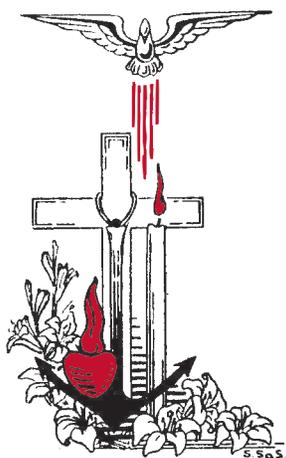
-Father Ryan Connors

## Lord Let Your Mercy Be On Us As We Place Our Trust In You

A major focus of the Letter of James is the ethical conduct of Christians, particularly in moments of challenge. Reminiscent of the Sermon on the Mount, his advice is timeless: mercy triumphs over judgment (Jas 2:13). James tells us that the moral life is based on mercy.

The mercy God shows to us must be lived with others. In life we are faced with difficult situations and people we do not like or understand. We find ourselves judging others, often harshly, while excusing our indifference and impatience. We insist we have no choice or don’t know what to do. There is always one answer: be guided by mercy.

-Monsignor Gregory E.S. Malovetz



## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES THROUGH BAPTISM

Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (*vitae spiritualis ianua*), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we

become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water and in the word."

This sacrament is also called "*the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit,*" for it signifies and actually brings about the birth of water and the Spirit without which no one "can enter the kingdom of God."

The baptized have "put on Christ." Through the Holy Spirit, Baptism is a bath that purifies, justifies, and sanctifies.

### Faith and Baptism

Baptism is the sacrament of faith. But faith needs the community of believers. It is only within the faith of the Church that each of the faithful can believe. The faith required for Baptism is not a perfect and mature faith, but a beginning that is called to develop. The catechumen or the godparent is asked: "What do you ask of God's Church?" The response is: "Faith!"

The two principal effects of baptism are purification from sins and new birth in the Holy Spirit.



## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES THROUGH PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

### JESUS GAVE US THIS SACRAMENT

"On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, Jesus showed himself to his

apostles... He breathed on them, and said to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any,

they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'" (*Jn 20:19,22-23*).

St. John the apostle tells us: "If we say we have no sins we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us". (*1 Jn 1:8*).

### THE PRIEST'S PRAYER DURING THE SACRAMENT

When the priest gives absolution for our sins in the Sacrament of Penance, the prayer is a beautiful example of the Trinity in action. "God the Father of mercies through the death and resurrection of His Son brings salvation...and sends the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins..." Life in the Holy Spirit compels us to turn away from sin. When we are emptied of sin, the Holy Spirit fills the vacuum. The prayer of absolution finds us embraced by God the Father who puts both arms around us.



## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES THROUGH HOLY EUCHARIST

At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until he should come again.

### During The Mass

In the *preface*, the Church gives thanks to the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, for all his works: creation, redemption, and sanctification. The whole community thus joins in the unending praise that the Church in heaven, the angels and all the saints, sing to the thrice-holy God.

In the *epiclesis*, the Church asks the Father to send his Holy Spirit (or the power of his blessing) on the bread and wine, so that by his power they may become the body and blood of Jesus Christ and so that those who take part in the Eucharist may be one body and one spirit (some liturgical traditions put the *epiclesis* after the *anamnesis*).

In the *institution narrative*, the power of the words and the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, make sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine Christ's body and blood, his sacrifice offered on the cross once and for all.

It is Christ himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is offering the Eucharistic sacrifice.

The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper: "This is my body which will be given up for you....This is the cup of my blood...."



### THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES THROUGH CONFIRMATION

Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the "sacraments of Christian initiation," whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For "by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed."

One of the best ways to grasp the meaning of confirmation is to analyze the rite itself, the Sacrament of Confirmation. The rite consists of three ceremonies: (1) the renewal of baptismal promises; (2) the prayers of Bishop and priest with extended hands, calling down the Holy Spirit with His seven Gifts upon those receiving the Sacrament; and (3) the anointing with chrism on the forehead which is done by the laying on of the hand.

It was God Himself who directed Moses to prepare a sacred oil for anointing sacred vessels and persons. Thus anointing with oil came to symbolize two things: *choice by God and enablement by the coming of the Holy Spirit.*

It symbolizes the same thing in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Confirmation becomes God's choice of you at baptism and enables you by a new outpouring

of the Holy Spirit to fulfill His call at baptism to be a light to others.

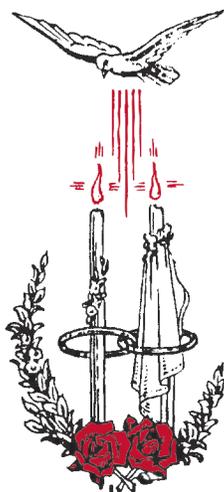
### THE CEREMONY

#### THE LAYING OF THE HAND

**Bishop.** N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit **Candidate.** Amen.

**Bishop.** Peace be with you. **Candidate.** And also with you.

The words "Be sealed" mean that you are marked, stamped as belonging to Christ (2 Cor. 1:21-22). When a document is sealed with wax, only the owner may break open the seal. Confirmation seals one as belonging to Christ. It is like a "No Trespassing" sign to Satan. He thinks twice before attacking anyone signed and sealed by the Holy Spirit.



### THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES THROUGH HOLY MATRIMONY

Holy Scripture affirms that man and woman were created for one another: "It is not good that the man should be alone." The woman, "Flesh of his flesh," i.e., his counterpart, his equal, his nearest in all things, is given to him by God

as a "helpmate"; she thus represents God from whom comes our help. "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." The Lord himself shows that this signifies an unbreakable union of their two lives by recalling what the plan of the Creator had been "in the beginning": "So they are no longer two, but one flesh."

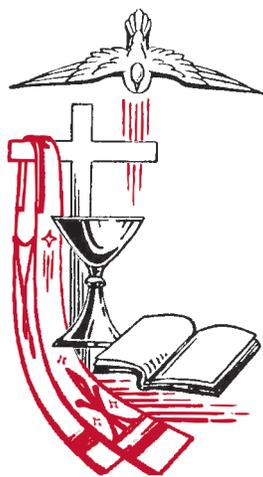
The various liturgies abound in prayers of blessing and epicles asking God's grace and blessing on the new couple, especially the bride. In the epiclesis of this sacrament the spouses receive the Holy Spirit as the communion of love of Christ and the Church. **The Holy Spirit is the seal of their covenant, the ever available source of their love and the strength to renew their fidelity.**

The consent by which the spouses mutually give and receive one another is sealed by God himself. From their covenant arises "an institution, confirmed by the divine law,...even in the eyes of society. The covenant between the spouses is integrated into God's covenant with man: Authentic married love is caught

up into divine love.

Thus *the marriage bond* has been established by God himself in such a way that a marriage concluded and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved. This bond, which results from the free human act of the spouses and their consummation of the marriage, is a reality, henceforth irrevocable, and gives rise to a covenant guaranteed by God's fidelity. The Church does not have the power to contravene this disposition of divine wisdom.

**The married need the strong and patient love of the Holy Spirit. The grace of the sacrament of matrimony is at their disposal to walk in the paths of patient love, it is strong enough to lead them to the perfection of the saints.**



## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES THROUGH HOLY ORDERS

One has but to read the rite of ordination to see what a prominent part holy Church attributes to the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The bishop lays his hand upon the head of the ordinand he says, "Receive the Holy Spirit

unto power, and to resist the devil and his temptations." The priesthood is bestowed by the imposition of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit. In the prayer accompanying the imposition of hands the bishop prays for a multiplication of heavenly gifts. The greatest gift of the Most High God is the Holy Spirit Himself, and He brings with Him in ever increasing abundance His gifts of grace. Holy Church sees in the Holy Spirit the Maker of the priest. How could it be otherwise? The priest is another Christ. What the Holy Spirit has done for Christ, He does for the priest who is to continue the mission of Christ. The Holy Spirit bestows upon him the priestly office as well as the holiness which this office calls for.

### THE GIVER OF THE OFFICE

All office, rank, and honor in the Church comes from God. The Church is the divine institution for the salvation of men, but who can save but God alone? The Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier, and the office of the

priest is to sanctify; he will do it through the teaching, the pastoral, and the priestly office just as the divine High Priest did. But Jesus gave testimony to the Holy Spirit, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; wherefore He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart".

The priest continues the work of Christ. If we consider Him in his teaching office we know that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth; He has preserved the truth of Christ in the Church in all its original purity. His light enlightens the mind and urges acceptance of the truth. If we consider the pastoral office, St. Paul tells us, that all those that are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. He enables the faithful to hear and understand the voice of the shepherd and to follow in His steps.



## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES THROUGH ANOINTING OF THE SICK

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given to those who are seriously ill by anointing them on the forehead and hands with duly blessed oil - pressed from olives or from other plants - saying, only once: "Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up."

### THE EFFECTS OF THE CELEBRATION OF THIS SACRAMENT

*A particular gift of the Holy Spirit.* The first grace of this sacrament is one of strengthening, peace and courage to overcome the difficulties that go with the condition of serious illness or the frailty of old age. This grace is a gift of the Holy Spirit, who renews trust and faith in God and strengthens against the temptations of the evil one, the temptation to discouragement and anguish in the face of death. This assistance from the Lord by the power of his Spirit is meant to lead the sick person to healing of the soul, but also of the body if such is God's will. Furthermore, "if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven."

# HEAVEN

according to passages from the  
Diary of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska  
(1905-1938)



After Holy Communion, I was carried in spirit before the throne of God. There I saw the Heavenly Powers which incessantly praise God. Beyond the throne I saw brightness inaccessible to creatures, and there only the Incarnate Word enters as Mediator. (Diary 85)

Today I was in heaven, in spirit, and I saw it inconceivable beauties and the happiness that awaits us after death. I saw how all creatures give ceaseless praise and glory to God. I saw how great is happiness in God, which spreads to all creatures, making them happy; and then all the glory and praise which springs from this happiness returns to its source; and they enter into the depths of God, contemplating the inner life of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, whom they will never comprehend or fathom.

The source of happiness is unchanging in its essence, but is always new, gushing forth happiness for all creatures. Now I understand Saint Paul who said "Eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man what god has prepared for those who love Him." (Diary 777)

The sight of this great majesty of God, which I came to understand more profoundly and which is worshiped by the heavenly spirits according to their degree of grace and the hierarchies into which they are divided, did not cause my soul to be stricken with terror or fear; no, no, not at all! My soul was filled with peace and love, and the more I came to know the greatness of God, the more joyful I became that He is as He is. And I rejoice immensely in His greatness and am delighted that I am so little because, since I am little, He carries me in His arms and holds me close to His heart. (Diary 779)

O my God, how I pity those people who do not believe in eternal life: how I pray for them that a ray of mercy would envelope them too, and that God clasp them to His fatherly bosom. (Diary 780)

I learned in the Heart of Jesus that in heaven itself there is a heaven to which not all, but only chosen souls, have access. Incomprehensible is the happiness in which the soul will be immersed. O my God, oh, that I could describe this, even in some little degree. Souls are penetrated by His divinity and pass from brightness to brightness, an unchanging light, but never monotonous, always new though never changing. O Holy Trinity, make Yourself known to souls! (Diary 592)

A vivid presence suddenly swept over me, and I was caught up in the spirit before the majesty of God. I saw how the Angels and the Saints of the Lord give glory to God. The glory of God is so great that I dare not try to describe it, because I would not be able to do so, and souls might think that what I have written is all there is...

And all that has come forth from God returns to Him in the same way and gives Him perfect glory. (Diary 1604)

# HEAVEN

**"Incomprehensible is the happiness  
in which the soul will be immersed."**

*"I feel certain that my mission will not come to an end upon my death, but will begin...  
I will draw aside for you the veils of heaven to convince you of God's goodness."  
(Diary of St. Maria Faustina 281)*

## YEAR OF MERCY

### (EXCERPS FROM ST FAUSTINA'S DIARY)

**Jesus:** Write this for the many souls who are often worried because they do not have the material means with which to carry out an act of mercy. Yet spiritual mercy, which requires neither permissions nor storehouses, is highly meritorious and is within the grasp of every soul. If a soul does not exercise mercy somehow or another, it will not obtain My mercy on the day of judgement. Oh, if only souls knew how to gather eternal treasure for themselves, they would not be judged, for they would forestall My judgement with their mercy. (Diary, 1317)



**Jesus:** My great delight is to unite myself with souls. Know, my daughter, that when I come to a human heart in Holy Communion, My hands are full of all kinds of graces which I want to give to the soul. But souls do not even pay any attention to Me; they leave Me to Myself and busy themselves with other things. Oh, how sad I am that souls do not recognize Love! (Diary, 1385).

**Jesus:** When you go to confession, to this fountain of My mercy, the Blood and Water which came forth from My heart always flows down upon your soul and ennobles it. Every time you go to confession, immerse yourself entirely in My mercy, with great trust, so that I may pour the bounty of My grace upon your soul. When you approach the confessional, know this, that I Myself am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest, but I myself act in your soul... Tell souls that from this fount of mercy souls draw graces solely with the vessel of trust. If their trust is great, there is no limit to My generosity. The torrents of grace inundate humble souls (Diary, 1620)

**Holy God, Holy Mighty One,  
Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us  
and on the whole world.**

## Saint Faustina and Divine Mercy

Did you know that the Doctor of the Church known for the “Little Way” of merciful love, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, once appeared to the Divine Mercy saint, Maria Faustina Kowalska? The subject of their encounter tells us a lot about Saint Faustina and her message.

It happened while Faustina was going through a particularly painful trial, the specifics of which she didn’t disclose. Whatever it was, it caused the future “Secretary of Mercy” to wonder how she could go on living.

Though Faustina sought help from various saints, the situation had gotten worse. Then, the thought occurred to her to pray a novena to Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, to whom she’d had a devotion before entering the convent.

On the fifth day of the novena, Thérèse appeared to Faustina in a dream and comforted her. Faustina then asked the French sister if she, too, would become a saint. Thérèse replied, “Yes.” But Faustina pressed further, “Shall I be a saint as you are, raised to the altar?” Thérèse replied, “Yes, you will be a saint just as I am, but you must....”

What do you think this Doctor of the Church said? Did she tell Faustina that she needed to spend more time in prayer or make more sacrifices? No. Amazingly, Thérèse told her simply, “you must trust in the Lord Jesus.”

Trusting in Jesus gets to the heart of the Divine Mercy message and devotion that comes to us through Saint Faustina. It’s why we find the prayer, “Jesus, I trust in you,” at the bottom of every Divine Mercy image. It’s also probably why Saint Thérèse appeared to Faustina. I say that because Faustina’s message of mercy continues and develops Thérèse’s “Little Way” of humble confidence in the Lord. In fact, both of their teachings bring us back to the fundamental spiritual attitude of Christians, which is trust - also described by Saint Faustina in her diary as “living faith.”

When we turn away from sin and grow in a living faith (trust) in Jesus, our Lord is able to work miracles in our lives, even the miracle of forming us into great saints! For instance, Faustina tells us in her diary, “Let no soul, even the most miserable, fall prey to doubt; for, as long as one is alive, each one can become a great saint, so great is the power of God’s grace. It remains only for us not to oppose God’s action.” How do we avoid opposing God’s action? As Thérèse told Faustina, “You must trust in the Lord Jesus.”

-Father Michael Gaitley, M.I.C.

## PRAYER FOR THE YEAR OF MERCY

Lord Jesus Christ,

You have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.

Show us your face and we will be saved.

Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the Gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.

You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

Amen.

*Source: Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization*

KNOW + SHOW  
MERCY + MERCY



Let us turn in prayer to Mary Immaculate, asking her to strengthen us in holiness and guide us to her Son, Christ the King.

Let's forgive those who have hurt us.

Let's go to Confession regularly.

Let's meditate on the Sacred Scriptures.

Let's pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet daily, imploring mercy" on us, and on the whole world."

Let's perform one or more works of mercy every day.

## Salve, Regina

Hail, holy Queen, **Mother of mercy**; hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope!

To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.

Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine **eyes of mercy** toward us; and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

## Memorare

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence, we turn to you, O Virgin of virgins, our Mother.

To you we come, before you we stand, sinful and sorrowful.

O Mother of the World Incarnate, do not despise our petitions, but in **your mercy** hear and answer us. Amen.

## MEDITATIONS

What a depth of thought unreels from the words of Psalm 33: Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have hoped in you (Ps 33:22)... Indeed, someone might inquire: "How far can we count on God's mercy?" For although in itself it is infinite and limitless, yet we, as created beings, can partake of it only in a limited, finite way.

The above-quoted words of David...provide us with an answer: Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us according to the measure of our hope in you. In other words, the amount of mercy obtained by us from God corresponds to the greatness of our hope in him. The more we trust in God, the more abundantly shall we draw from the treasures of his mercy. The measure is, therefore, in our own hands since it depends on the hope we have in the Lord.

If we remind God of our hope, we can obtain from him ever more and more. God wishes us to appeal to him with confidence because such a confession of faith and hope in his mercy is an unending hymn of praise of his infinite perfection. Saint John of the Cross remembered this well, saying that God never refused him any grace when he implored him with the words of Psalm 119, Be you mindful of your word to your servant: in which you have given me hope (Ps 119:49). Is that "Word of God" anything other than his mercy revealed to us?

The Virtue Of Mercy Belongs To the cortege of the virtues of love and is closest helper... Mercy is a habit of the will which regulates our attitude towards another's ills...

We love our neighbor as something belonging to God and loved by God, as a friend of God, or if he is not his friend as yet, then someone invited to the friendship of God, who awaits him with eagerness. If the love of neighbor is understood in this manner, it can be extended to all, even to our enemies who, though they have hostile dispositions towards us, do not cease to be an object of God's love and his effort to win their love in return.

Christian mercy should be permeated with the same spirit of love of God; it should have its roots deeply anchored in that spiritual faculty of the soul which is called the will....It is of the utmost importance that our will be penetrated by mercy so that it may become an instrument of God's holy will pouring out his mercy through us upon the world. Whenever the love of neighbor is alive in the will, it will always find its expression

in the sensitive faculties also, and will produce a true compassion for another's suffering.

God's Love And Mercy are acts of his holy will; under the name of mercy come all those manifestations of love which tend to remove any wants, needs, pains, sufferings, in a word, any deficiencies.

It follows, therefore, that in the broad sense all exterior works of God, that is, the whole of the created world, is a result of divine mercy or, in other words, that divine mercy is at the very foundation of creation. Indeed, the greatest possible want is the want of being or the want of existence; therefore, the act of creation, meaning the act of calling something into being out of non-being, is the first and most fundamental act of God's mercy upon which all his other acts are based. Even divine justice, which rules over the created world, has God's mercy for its starting point, for the world owes its existence to mercy.

Mercy is not limited to the very first act of calling the world into being. Since creatures have no reason for their being in themselves and are finite and limited in their perfections, they carry a germ of non-being in themselves from which their wants and needs arise. Therefore, divine mercy exercises a constant vigil over creatures; preserves their being; makes up for their wants; heals their wounds, and supplies new strength.

-Servant of God Father Hyacinth Woroniecki, O.P.

**Servant of God Hyacinth Woroniecki, O.P., (+ 1949)** was a Polish Dominican priest, the rector of the Catholic University of Lublin, a professor of theology at the Angelicum, and the founder of the Congregation of the Dominican Sister Missionaries of Jesus and Mary.

Jesus' Fifth Beatitude - "Blessed are the merciful" - embodies a major part of the Christian message. The paradox is that mercy is evidently offered on the principle of stern justice. The mercy we show is precisely the mercy we receive. For most of us, this appears a little concerning. It is not easy to forgive. The human heart is petty-minded, a connate master of grudge-holding.

The parable of the unforgiving servant makes this unpleasant point quite well. Here Luke comes wonderfully to the rescue. "Forgive and you will be forgiven./ Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you" (Lk 6:37-38).



## ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

### The Saint Michael Prayer

Can a prayer be inspired by a battle? Pope Leo XIII (pictured) wrote the Saint Michael Prayer in 1884, after supposedly seeing a frightening vision: evil spirits, trying to fulfill Satan's boast to destroy our Lord's Church within a century, were engaging in fierce attacks against it.



Although the Pontiff also saw St. Michael casting Satan and his demons back into Hell in his vision, he was so horrified by what he had seen he felt compelled to help defend our faith in this struggle.

In the Saint Michael Prayer he throws down the gauntlet to "the father of lies" as Jesus calls the devil in John's Gospel (8:44), by enlisting the help of a very special Archangel:



**Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.**

St. Michael makes a great general in this fight between Christ and Satan for our souls! After all, we read in Revelation (12:7-9) that "there was a great battle in heaven; Michael and his angels fought with the dragon...and that great dragon...who is called the devil and Satan, who seduces the whole world...was cast unto earth, and his angels [the demons] were thrown down with him."

St. Michael's very name (in Hebrew, Micha'el meaning "Who is like to God?") denotes the war cry uttered in that battle. Note that when we talk about Satan or the devil here we are also referring to his "army" of fallen angels, the

evil spirits referred to in the Saint Michael Prayer.

As a special patron and protector of the Church, St. Michael has been assigned to fight against Satan; to protect faithful souls from him, especially at their death; to champion God's people; and further along this line, to escort them to their judgement.

Pope Leo XIII saw to it that the Saint Michael Prayer was recited after every low Mass throughout the world. In 1994 Pope John Paul II urged the faithful to keep reciting it.

One of Satan's greatest assets is his camouflage, the belief that he doesn't exist. On the subject of resistance, keep in mind that we can and should say the Saint Michael Prayer at church or just on our own during the day for spiritual protection for ourselves and for others as well!

Satan was unable to destroy the Catholic Church in the 20th century, but certainly our faith withstood terrible onslaughts during this century. We are still engaged in that war that has gone on for all of human history, in one form or another, between God and the devil.

Each of us has had our own battles against the dark side trying to turn us away from eternal life with our Creator. Satan's idea for our eternal life is one spent with him in hatred and misery and he's after as many souls as he can get!

As St. Peter once noted "be sober and watch, because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). "The evil spirits whom roam about the world seeking the ruin of souls" mentioned in the Saint Michael Prayer have surely been busy, but in asking for help we can fight back against them every day.

Prayer and the sacraments are an essential part of what St. Paul called the "armor of God" in his letter to the Ephesians. The Saint Michael Prayer can help us indeed "stand against the deceits of the devil" (Eph 6:11) by "taking the shield of faith" (Eph 6:16). Remember, God permits us to be tempted by the devil but gives us the grace to resist him through prayer in our daily lives.

Let us not be afraid to ask for St. Michael's help in this prayer and others like it. We need to remember that each time we pray we work to defeat our real enemies, not each other, but rather the devil and his evil spirits.

As St. Paul put it, we fight "not against flesh and blood but against principalities and power, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness" (Eph 6:12). With God's help in prayer they can all be overcome.

**Many of us are very concerned about what is happening in our beloved country and all over the world. The decision by the Supreme Court to allow same sex marriage; the horrible videos about Planned Parenthood selling aborted fetal tissue for profit; the concerns about the plight of refugees fleeing poverty, discrimination and violence; terrorism and random killing of Christians, abortion, the terrible loss of faith in God and moral relativism. All of this is very scary.**



"The Apostle of Divine Mercy" by Janis Balabon © 1993 MIC

## The Message of Mercy

On February 22, 1931, a young Polish nun, Sr. Faustina Kowalska, saw a vision of Jesus with rays of mercy streaming from the area of His Heart. He told her to have an image painted to represent this vision and to sign it, "Jesus, I trust in You!"

Calling her the Apostle and Secretary of His mercy, He ordered her to begin writing a diary so others would learn to trust in Him.

In a series of revelations, He taught her that His mercy is unlimited and available even to the greatest sinners, and he revealed special ways for people to respond to His mercy.

By the time of Sr. Faustina's death in 1938, devotion to The Divine Mercy had already begun to spread throughout Eastern Europe.

In July of 1940, Fr. Joseph Jarzebowski, a Polish Marian priest fleeing from war-torn Poland, prayed to the Merciful Saviour to help him escape, vow-

ing to spend his life spreading The Divine Mercy message. He arrived safely on American soil in May 1941; and Marians in Detroit, MI, and Washington, DC, were soon distributing Mercy of God leaflets, prayercards, and other materials.

In 1944, a group of Marians opened a new house and apostolate on Eden Hill in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

By 1953, the apostolate had become the international center for the Divine Mercy devotion and in 1960 the Marians on Eden Hill completed construction of a shrine to the Mercy of God.

The shrine has now become the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, and the apostolate has become the Marian Helpers Center, a modern religious publishing house spreading devotion to the mercy of God and to Mary Immaculate.

On the Sunday after Easter, April 30, 2000 (Mercy Sunday), Sister Faustina was solemnly canonized in Rome by Pope John Paul II. The Pope also established Mercy Sunday worldwide.

### The ABC'S of Mercy

The message of mercy can be called to mind simply by remembering A-B-C.

**A**sk for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly.

**B**e Merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others.

**C**ompletely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust.



**"The soul that will venerate this image will not perish."** (Diary, 48)

### The Sacred Image

The image that Our Lord asked St. Maria Faustina to have painted is a portrait of Jesus as Merciful Savior. The red and pale rays represent the blood and water that flowed from His pierced Heart as a fountain of mercy for us. The image is a reminder for us to come to Jesus with trust and to be merciful to others; and it should always carry the signature, "Jesus, I trust in You!"

Many different versions of this image have been painted, but Our Lord made it clear that the painting itself is not what is important: "Not in the beauty of the color, nor of the brush lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace" (Diary, 313).

So, no matter which version you prefer, you can be assured that God's grace will flow through it.

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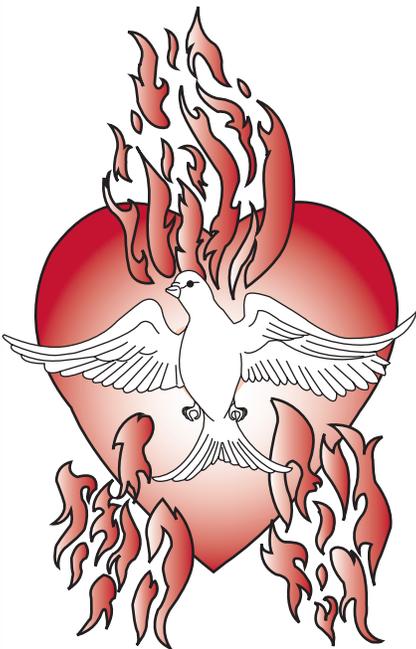
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## 12 HOLY SPIRIT GRANT UNITY TO THE HUMAN FAMILY



*"God's Love has been  
poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit."*

*Rom. 5:5*

### **Prayer For Unity**

One only Holy Spirit of Father and Son  
in whom all are baptized,  
one Giver of many gifts,  
one Tree of many fruits,  
one Speaker of every tongue,  
renew in our day  
the wonders of Pentecost.  
Grant that people of every race and nation  
may understand one another,  
and as one, proclaim  
the praises of God.  
Grant that all may be one  
as you, Spirit, with the Father and the Son  
are one God, one Lord.  
Grant unity to the Body of Christ;  
grant unity to the human family.  
Sole breath of every living thing,  
may all be one who, in you,  
live and move and have their being.

Imprimatur: Most Reverend Carl K. Moeddel  
Vicar General and Auxiliary Bishop of Cincinnati  
February 19th, 1997

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