



RAYS OF MERCIFUL LOVE

Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy Newsletter Summer 2008

www.thedivinemercy.org

“Mercy is Love that seeks to lessen the misery of others”

Divine Mercy, the Eucharist, and the Mother of Mercy Shrine

by Bryan Thatcher

I had a recent discussion with Marie Romagnano of Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy, and she mentioned how glad she was that the Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine is being built in Stockbridge; she said that we need a place to safely protect the Eucharist during Divine Mercy Sunday celebrations and other activities. That struck a chord with me, as I vividly recalled the torrential rains and winds experienced in previous years by pilgrims on Divine Mercy Sunday. It made me realize that, as Director of Eucharistic Apostles, I must do a better job of making you aware of this project and the many memorial opportunities available for individuals and EADM groups as we build the outdoor shrine on Eden Hill. As Eucharistic Apostles, we aim to spread the message of mercy, as well as the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. So it is only fitting that we help build a suitable and safe place for the King of Mercy!

This point hit home for me even more in light of the fact that our daughter Elizabeth Rose recently made her First Communion. My wife and I were filled with joy as we watched our beautiful little girl receive Jesus in Holy Communion for the first time. I recalled my own First Communion, and I felt the need to share with readers about the Shrine, the gift of the Eucharist and the Real Presence, and Blessed Imelda Lambertini.

First of all, any discussion on The Divine Mercy Incarnate must include the Eucharist, for they are one



The new Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine (above), used for the first time on Divine Mercy Weekend 2008, provides a suitable and safe place for the King of Mercy. In previous years, the Blessed Sacrament had minimal shelter from the elements. Those attending Divine Mercy Sunday 2007 (right), experienced particularly harsh weather.



and the same; that is, The Divine Mercy Incarnate is Jesus, and Jesus is the Eucharist.

Just as blood carries life-sustaining oxygen and nutrients to all the cells in our body, the Eucharist is our spiritual food and transfuses us with life-saving grace and power, providing us with nourishment and grace for our travels on the spiritual road of life.

The Church teaches that at the moment of consecration during the Mass, the bread and wine on the altar become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The Council of Trent in 1551 condemned the opinion that Christ is present only in the elements as a sign or that Christ is received only spiritually.

When discussing the Real Presence, one can see from John, Chapter 6, that even at the time of Christ, there was disagreement and discussion, and many did not understand what He was saying. In verses 48-56, He speaks of being “*the living bread which came down from Heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever;*” and He added, “*for My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.*” However, in verse 60, it is written that many of His disciples, when they heard this, remarked, “*This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?*” And in verse 66, “*After this, many of His disciples drew back and no longer went about with Him.*”



Elizabeth Rose Thatcher at her First Holy Communion.

Continued on page 5

CENACLES' UPDATE

REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

Shirley Oleskiw wrote and told us:

A Divine Mercy Sunday celebration on March 30, 2008, hosted by the Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy (EADM Canada), was held at St. Mary's Church, Regina, Saskatchewan. More than 200 people attended. Religious articles from EADM were available in the Church entrance. At the end of the celebration, people were invited to the EADM Centre at 484 Hamilton St., Regina, for coffee, fruit, and muffins.



The celebration began at St. Mary's Church at 11:00 a.m. with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, The Divine Mercy Chaplet and the Holy Rosary. At 1:00 p.m., Shirley Oleskiw, Director of EADM of Canada, gave a presentation. She spoke about The Divine Mercy message and the past year of Eucharistic Adoration at the EADM Centre. Also, she mentioned EADM's upcoming first anniversary celebration on April 16, 2008, exactly one year since the opening of the EADM Centre. On this day the Centre was officially blessed by Archbishop Daniel Bohan. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered to the faithful on a daily basis. The Centre includes the office, a religious articles room, a meeting room, and two guest rooms for visitors. Shirley also thanks anyone who helped in any way!

Many miracles have occurred in the chapel through the intercession of St. Faustina. Shirley mentioned the successful appeals for sponsors of the Divine Mercy billboards, which are constantly being put up in Regina and Saskatoon. Divine Mercy religious articles and books were also offered for a suggested donation.

To encourage the faithful to increase their faith, she recommended attending the annual Divine Mercy Conference, which will be held on the last weekend of September 2008. There will be speakers from around the world. The 7th Annual conference will feature speakers such as Father Wade Menezes, Fr. Dennis Phaneuf, and Fr. Ben Fiore. For additional information, go to www.EADMCANADA.COM

Several priests came to assist in the Divine Mercy Sunday celebration. EADM would like to express their gratitude to Fr. Norm Marcotte, Fr. Eusebio Tubale, Fr. Raymundo Rodriguez, Fr. Art Vandendreissche, and Fr. Louis Kubash; and many thanks to Fr. Danilo Rafael, parish priest of St. Mary's Church, who warmly welcomed EADM to his church. Private confessions were available from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. At 1:40 p.m. a Holy Hour of Prayer and Benediction was conducted by Fr. Louis Kubash, the Spiritual Director of EADM. This was followed by Mass at 3:10 p.m.,

celebrated by Fr. Louis Kubash, and concelebrated by the above mentioned guest priests. Mass concluded with the blessing of religious articles by Fr. Danilo Rafael and the individual blessing of the faithful by Fr. Louis Kubash with the first-class relic of St. Faustina Kowalska.

Shirley and her husband, Leo, attended the first World Apostolic Congress on Mercy in Rome this April. Pope Benedict XVI was in attendance, and it opened on the third anniversary of the death of Pope John Paul II. ☩

LINDENHURST, IL

Terry Muzones wrote and told us:

I recently returned from the Philippines. I went for the induction of the EADM group in Iloilo. They were honored by Archbishop Lagdameo, and he inducted them into EADM at the Archbishop's palace. The Mass was presided over by Fr. Sequito and was followed by the induction and dinner. It was a blessed event! They all thank you, and appreciated the letter from Dr. Thatcher, as well as all the formation materials that were sent.

I was able to attend the Feast Day in Stockbridge and flew on to Rome for the World Mercy Congress. From Rome, I went to the Philippines to attend the induction. While in Rome, I was able to network and was able to speak to many people from all over the world about EADM.

I went to the Netherlands in late May to speak on Divine Mercy and EADM. While there, I met with Father Elferink and numerous laity, and we hope to establish EADM in Purnerend. I'm just now recovering from the trip. It went very well. We encountered some roadblocks, but I expected it as it happens every time I do something for the Divine Mercy. I have gotten used to it.



The Eucharistic Apostles of the Divine Mercy, Iloilo Chapter, Philippines, had their induction ceremony on April 12, 2008, with Mass celebrated by Fr. Sequito (seated, 4th from left) who is in charge of The Divine Mercy devotion in the archdiocese, and Fr. Rudi (seated, 3rd from left), spiritual director of EADM, Iloilo Chapter. The final blessing was given by Monsignor Lagdameo (seated, 5th from left), followed by a dinner celebration.

We got full cooperation from the parish priest and will incorporate EADM with their Eucharist Adoration. There were around 20 in attendance, which I thought was a good number to start with. Father Elferink expected less. After we left, another group expressed their interest. A tourist who was visiting Amsterdam was likewise interested and wanted to be contacted when she gets back to the U.S.

I am extremely excited about the Marians starting a house in the Philippines, especially on Guimaras, as my family owns a parcel of land near the proposed site. My prayer is for many vocations, and may the message of Divine Mercy spread from this beautiful place in the Philippines! ☩

DIEGO MARTIN, TRINIDAD

Najette Abraham wrote and told us:

The Cenacle of Divine Mercy began activities at St. Finbar's Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Trinidad and Tobago in 2001, using the original Cenacle Formation Manual. We are very appreciative of and grateful for our spiritual director, Father Michael Hayden, OP.



We meet weekly and have immersed ourselves in the lessons using Sacred Scripture, the *Catechism*, and the *Diary of St. Faustina*. Members were already involved in parish activities — catechesis for Baptism, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, RCIA parish groups, ministry to the sick, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, and Adorers during Perpetual Adoration in our Blessed Sacrament Chapel. We have begun to build a new and larger chapel as there is not enough space for all who want to be with Our Lord and for other various works. The Divine Mercy Cenacle became the pivot around which we functioned, and we all looked forward to the weekly meetings as they added new dimensions to our understanding of life through the eyes of this special saint. Several members went on pilgrimage in May to the Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Krakow. They brought back with them a first-class relic of St. Faustina! There was tremendous excitement among the members about this blessed gift for our parish.

Through the EADM membership at the church, we fulfilled the requirements for the celebration of this special Feast, as requested by Our Lord to St. Faustina, and as decreed by Pope John Paul II in 2000. The altar was beautifully decorated with the Image of The Divine Mercy for the entire celebration. Parishioners came to venerate the Image during and after the five weekend Masses. At 2:00 p.m., we began a three-hour program of selected readings from the *Diary of St. Faustina*, a talk by Fr Michael Hayden, OP, on the mercy of God and applying it to our daily lives, followed by the Chaplet, and ending with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Each year, the number of parishioners who usually come for the program has been increasing and the turnout this time was awesome. Each person who attended the celebration was given their personal image of the Divine Mercy. The response from all who attended this short but deeply meaningful celebration was simply... thank you and please continue to do this every year ... and that we will, God willing!

Over the years, membership has dwindled as we had illnesses of members and their families, as well as the concern of security for members returning home at night after the meetings. The original group of 15 was reduced to six devoted members.

After this year's feast and celebration, Fr. Michael Hayden, one of our very dear Dominican priests, offered to take on the spiritual directorship on a full-time basis. Needless to say, we were thrilled. We regrouped and expanded the original membership by invitation to the parish — something

that had been done previously with little response. There are now 20 members attending the current cenacle meetings, and we hope that others may be encouraged to join and promulgate the message of Divine Mercy.

We have recommenced the Cenacle using the new Cenacle Formation Manuals. The new members were very excited to learn and become immersed in the *Diary* as they had been aware of Divine Mercy and had been saying the Chaplet regularly.

Members of the cenacle hold very dear the promise made by Our Lord for those who are sick and dying, and we bind together in a circle of Chaplet prayers whenever we are aware of a dying person in our community. ☩

PENSACOLA, FL

Tony Cate wrote and told us:

Our group is enjoying the structured format from the Cenacle Formation Manual. We take turns reading based on the weekly reading assignment. After the opening song and prayer, one of our members will read the week overview, learning and discussion, and the lesson goals. Each one will read the Scripture reading, another will read the *Catechism* entries, and we all take turns reading a paragraph from the *Diary*. Each shares his or her experiences related to the paragraph, and comments on how it can help us grow spiritually. All the members really enjoy each other's contribution to the learning and discussion based on the weekly topic. We are certainly learning much from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as well.



Every time the group meets, each member or a family will have a different assignment for the next two weeks — to pray for certain souls, using The Divine Mercy Novena. It has served as our Spiritual work of mercy. For example, a member will pray the novena for the souls of mankind, especially all sinners. Next time, that same member will pray the novena for the souls of priests and religious, and so on. In April, we had a dialogue with our pastor on how best we can serve the community without duplicating the several corporal works, which are now being done by other groups. Most of our members belong to more than one particular group, and the pastor will advise us how we can better serve the parish community.

Week 19, "Tell the World of My Mercy," was very meaningful to all of us. We were able to incorporate the Holy Father's visit, his message "Christ is our Hope," and at the same time we saw the relationship of God's Mercy to the Passion, Death, Resurrection (Easter Sunday), and Divine Mercy Sunday. Our group seems to have an attachment to Romans 12:12, "*Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.*" This may be one of the many ways God is guiding our group.

Most of our members have submitted an application and have received certificates, and we thank you for that. Thank you, and may the Divine Mercy continue to guide all of the EADM groups worldwide! ☩

CENACLES' UPDATE

DAVAO, PHILLIPINES

Mary Sumerling wrote and told us:

Thank you for the assistance that you have given us, and the message of Divine Mercy is growing and very active here. Our regular prayer group meeting is every Tuesday, and we try to invite a guest to share with us. Our cenacle meets monthly, and we try hard to improve our spiritual life. As for me, the devotion has given my faith a deeper foundation, and I realize that I need Jesus in my heart to handle all the stresses and struggles of life.

Several members attended the Congress in Rome, and we were spiritually blessed. We hope to take back to Davao an even greater enthusiasm for spreading the gift of Divine Mercy!



We hope that you will visit us here in Davao and help us spread the message of Divine Mercy. I hope you enjoy the picture of our group in Rome! ❀

KAPLAN, LA

Greg Mitchell wrote and told us:

In 2006, I was sponsoring a fund raiser for a Catholic Family Ministry on Divine Mercy Sunday, and with over 600 coming for our BBQ, I had the idea for a Mercy Fest as a way to help with the call for the “new evangelization,” as mentioned by John Paul II. My goal was to bring excitement about our Catholic faith and help spread the message of Divine Mercy in this area. I shared the idea with members of the clergy and lay faithful, and the event took shape and was scheduled for Divine Mercy Sunday of 2008.

Holy Rosary Parish, which happened to be my parish, decided to sponsor the event. With the guidance of my pastor, I began to inform the other parishes and met with the Vicar of our region about the idea. The plan moved forward and became a regional event. Some of the highlights of the day included: seven members of the clergy in attendance, many blessings



such as 70 to 100 people receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation, testimonies given by people who had experienced the mercy of God in a profound way, the Chaplet sung before the Image of The Divine Mercy,

and a Eucharistic procession and Mass. The event also included games for children, a fun jump, Christian concerts, a children's workshop, and an adult evangelization tent with all types of literature from evangelization to pro-life with ministry representatives in attendance.

I have since found my own personal spirituality growing and since I started reading the *Diary*, almost daily feeling the constant help and compassion of Jesus in my own life and zeal for souls rising to the front of my consciousness. My whole family has been richly blessed by this devotion and way of life — we now pray the Chaplet daily. As a former lay Catholic foreign missionary and evangelist in the Caribbean and Central America, it is richly rewarding to have found a way to help bring so many souls to Christ, The Divine Mercy. Thank you for all you are doing, and please pray for our Parish of Holy Rosary! ❀

LINDENHURST, NY

Pat Gridley wrote and told us:

We wanted to send you a photo of our newly designated “Divine Mercy Chapel” at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Lindenhurst, NY. We have received the Apostolic Blessing from the late Pope John Paul II for praying the Chaplet for the sick and dying, as well as the Blessing for praying for pro-life causes, and we are very grateful for that.

Every Sunday night, a prayer group led by Mrs. Barbara McPhail meets in the Chapel to

pray for priests, the sick and dying, and the conversion of sinners, and it was this group that provided the impetus for our Divine Mercy celebration. We are so thankful to both the current pastor, Fr.



Anthony Trapani, and Msgr. Daniel Hamilton, Pastor Emeritus, who have been extremely supportive of The Divine Mercy message and devotion.

People from all over Long Island came to our celebration, and we are blessed to be able to venerate a first-class relic of Saint Faustina. May our works of mercy help save souls throughout the world! ❀

Next Newsletter!

Marians Head to Philippines

The next newsletter will feature the efforts of the Congregation of Marians as they work to set up the Order in two areas of the Philippines. The deep love of the Filipinos for the Blessed Mother, as well as their fervor for the message of Divine Mercy, make this an ideal place to have a Marian presence.

Divine Mercy, the Eucharist, and the Mother of Mercy Shrine

Continued from page 1

The early Christians who believed in the Real Presence suffered greatly. There was much persecution, and there were many martyrs. People met and prayed in secret and could not openly discuss their faith. As a result, a community of secrecy developed as reflected in the signs and symbols of the early Church, ones that could not be deciphered by the pagans due to their complexity.

In the 1920s, when the catacombs were discovered and excavated, several symbols were found in far greater frequency than others. They reflected on the meaning of life and the “Great Secret,” the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Interestingly, it was not Christ’s Resurrection, His numerous healings, the Sermon on the Mount, or the Passion that predominated the symbolic artwork of the catacombs. Rather, it was the symbol of the Eucharist that was the focus throughout and was even on Peter’s tomb.

Perhaps some of you have heard of the story about the Eucharistic miracle of Bologna, Italy. This took place in 1333 and occurred because a pious young woman, a girl of 11 years of age, had a burning desire to receive our Lord in the Eucharist. Little Imelda Lambertini was born of wealth, entered the Dominican convent at age nine, and was loved by the older nuns. She wanted to receive Holy Communion but was unable to because she was not the required 12 years of age. On the Feast of the Ascension in 1333, the Lord gave her a special gift. While staying after Mass to pray, a Host appeared, suspended in mid-air in front of her. A priest was called and he gave her First Holy Communion. She went into ecstasy and never awakened. She died after receiving her First Holy Communion; her First Communion was her last Communion! Her body is incorrupt and lies outside Bologna, Italy.

Several years ago, someone came up to me at a conference and asked, “What does Divine Mercy have to do with the Eucharist?” I replied without hesitation, “Everything!” You see, the Jesus we see in The Divine Mercy Image is the same Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. In the Image, the veil has been lifted. St. Faustina wrote, “O great and Divine Sacrament that veils my God! Jesus, be with me each moment, and no fear will enter my heart” (*Diary*, 4).

On another occasion, someone said to me, “Isn’t the name of the ministry redundant?” I knew this was an inspired comment, and that this person understood the Eucharist, because my answer was, “You are right! The Jesus depicted in the Image of The Divine Mercy is a human reditition of the Real Jesus Present in the Consecrated Host.” And the name Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy is redundant!

The Eucharist is Jesus, and when we receive Him, we enter into communion with Him. Imagine that! Jesus told St. Faustina, “*I desire to unite Myself with human souls; My great delight is to unite Myself with souls. Know, My daughter, that when I come to a human heart in Holy*



Blessed Imelda Lambertini died after receiving her First Holy Communion. Her incorrupt body lays in the Church of Saint Sigismond at Bologna, Italy.

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” (Diary, 1385).

When we receive the Eucharist, we receive the Trinity! Jesus is present as the Second Person, but you can’t separate God. Christ is present in the Eucharist as He is in Heaven. If you are united with one Person in the Trinity, you are united with all Three! So, reflect now on what is happening spiritually at each Mass. We have God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — and by the Divine Will — they are united with Our Lady, all the saints, and all the angels singing, “Holy, Holy, Holy!” Saint Faustina wrote, “I see the angelic choirs giving You honor without cease ... and without cease they are saying: Holy, Holy, Holy” (*Diary*, 80).

Do you remember the prayer called the Act of Spiritual Communion? In it, we know we cannot receive Him sacramentally, but we ask Jesus to come into our hearts spiritually. Saint Faustina was in a state of constant spiritual communion. She wrote, “Today, I have come to understand many of God’s mysteries. I have come to know that Holy Communion remains in me until the next Holy Communion. A vivid and clearly felt presence of God continues in my soul. ... My heart is a living tabernacle in which the living Host is reserved” (*Diary*, 1302).

Let us ask Jesus to come into our hearts, and never let us be separated from Him. May the rays of Blood and Water cover and protect you, and may the mercy of God flood your soul. And may the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus hold you and your loved ones in the palms of His Hands.

Lastly, please make an individual gift, or discuss with your group about a memorial gift from your EADM group for the Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine. Please see page 6 for more details. ☼

Apostolates Prepare for U.S. Mercy Congress

Dave and Joan Maroney of Mother of Mercy Messengers, Marie Romagnano R.N. of Healthcare Professionals for Divine Mercy, Dr. Robert Stackpole of the John Paul Institute of Divine Mercy, and Bryan Thatcher of EADM, met recently to discuss plans for the U.S. Divine Mercy Congress, which will include regional events across the country in 2009 and 2010.

Initial plans are to set up one-day events in California, Florida, Massachusetts, Minnesota,

Texas, Wisconsin, and perhaps other states as they attempt to further spread the message of Divine Mercy.

The main thrust will be to assist individual spiritual formation but also to assist parishes in ways that they can spread the message of Divine Mercy.

As dates and venues become established, information will be posted on the website at www.thedivinemercy.org, in *Marian Helper* magazine, and in future newsletters. ☼



"I helped build that shrine." — A Marian Helper



**Become a Founding Contributor
by donating \$25 or more
to help finish the
new outdoor shrine.**

As Eucharistic Apostles, we aim to spread the message of mercy, as well as the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. It is only fitting that we help build a suitable and safe place for the King of Mercy!

Please make an individual gift, or discuss with your group about a memorial gift from your EADM group, for the Mother of Mercy Outdoor Shrine.

For a gift of \$100, your EADM group will be memorialized on a plaque, for \$250 on stained glass, for \$500 in granite, and for \$1,000 in marble.

Mother of Mercy **OUTDOOR SHRINE**

thedivinemercy.org/momos • 1-800-671-2020

EWTN CENACLE SERIES II



Join Fr. Joe Roesch, MIC, Dr. Bryan Thatcher, and cenacle members from around the country as they discuss the difference that Divine Mercy has made in their lives. Each week, one of the following lessons is addressed: The Divine Mercy Cenacle Program • Hope • Purity of Heart and Intention • Obedience • St. Faustina and the Holy Spirit • Love • Spiritual Poverty and Humility • The Tongue and the Gift of Time • Divine Mercy and the Tongue • Eucharistic Adoration and The Divine Mercy • Divine Mercy as a Way of Life • Saint Faustina and the Way of the Cross • The Spirituality of Saint Faustina, Blessed Mother Teresa, and St. Therese of the Child Jesus.

**Watch the
Cenacle of The
Divine Mercy
on EWTN.**

Check local listings or go to ewtn.com for scheduling.

...and coming in September...

**Cenacle of
The Divine
Mercy**

**EWTN PROGRAM
SERIES II**



Available in September, 2008, Marian Press will offer the DVD and Companion Guide for the new Cenacle Series at the same prices as Series I.

DVD	\$39.95
Companion Guide	\$7.95 ea.
2-9 copies	\$5.95 ea.
10+ copies	\$4.95 ea.

EWTN CENACLE SERIES II