



# DIVINE MERCY

The National Shrine of The Divine Mercy Newsletter

Winter 2003

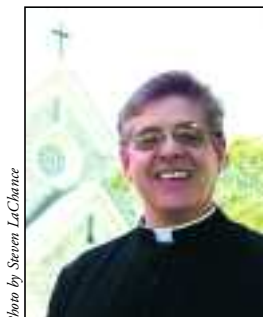


Photo by Steven LaChance

Fr. David Lord, M.I.C.

## Dear Brothers And Sisters In Christ

### A Message From The Shrine Rector

Here at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, the autumn leaves rustle and fall gently to the ground upon the sloping vistas of the Berkshire Hills. Yet the eyes of faith glimpse far more. For, like the autumn leaves, our memories of God's tender mercies rustle and fall from the slope of our souls — revealing a spectacular view of the heavenly mountain. Ah, what a sight!

As we gaze toward and contemplate the heavenly mountain, our true home, we may recall the cherished memories of departed loved ones. We may be overcome with sadness as we remember them; a tear may fall from the corner of our eye. Yet, Christ promises that our sadness will turn to joy and that on the heavenly mountain God, Himself, will wipe every tear from our eye — for there will be no more sorrow or death.

This fall the Church gives us two important feast days, which are celebrated with special solemnity at the National Shrine. Both evoke a remembrance of eternal life.

We have All Saints Day (November 1) followed by All Souls Day (November 2). Both of these feasts point our gaze to the heavenly mountain. The first feast points toward the splendor of perfect union achieved between God and souls, while the following feast witnesses to the hope of glory for those in purgatory — a union still hoped for.

One of the founding charisms of my religious Congregation is to pray for the poor souls in purgatory. As a matter of fact, every November 2 through 9, as a novena remembrance, we Marians pray the Office of the Dead for the poor souls.

As the Mercy of God stirs your own memories, you might wonder: What can I do for my loved ones who have died? Or how might I assist the poor souls? You might consider arranging a Holy Mass for your loved ones, or decide to remember them in your daily devotions. You might want to light a votive candle for their blessed repose.

As all of us prepare for these days of remembrance, may our hope be strong and our faith sure. May we turn with confidence to Our Lady and ask her to pray with us for the living and the dead.

In Jesus and Mary,  
**Fr. David Lord, M.I.C., Rector**  
*The National Shrine of The Divine Mercy*



All candle intentions are remembered at the Immaculate Conception Candle Shrine.



Statue of St. Bernadette in the Lourdes Grotto.

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A Publication of  
the Marians of  
the Immaculate  
Conception



## “It’ll be OK”

*A hero’s words of comfort span the generations*

By Jason Free

I was 12. It was only a few days after Christmas, but it surely didn’t feel like the Christmas season. The light of my young life had been extinguished by the darkness of my mom’s leukemia. At only 37, she was gone.

I don’t remember all the people who were in my house that dreaded day. Yet, there was one figure who will forever be etched in my memory: my maternal grandfather, Herman Jakubiec. He was always a man of few words. This strong Polish-American man was quite proud of serving under General Patton in World War II. He had been awarded the Purple Heart for serving his country. And on that dark December day, he climbed to new heights of heroism as he held me on his lap.

I remember thinking that I was too old to be sitting on his lap. That thought didn’t last long, though. I needed to be somewhere safe. My world was falling apart. I was in a daze. Grandpa held me tightly in his arms. I felt so secure, so cared for.

I remember looking up at him, my body quaking as I sobbed, and his eyes just loved me. “It’ll be OK,” he would say periodically. That was it: “It’ll be OK.” Those words were like the first rays of sunlight after a ravaging storm. I hung on to them in utter desperation. I may have been only 12, but I knew Grandpa. He carried through on his word. His word was good.



Photo by Williams Soza

**The Shrine**  
*To remember your departed loved ones with a votive candle please use the enclosed envelope.*

### Remembering a hero

Seventeen years later, it was time for me to return the favor. As Grandpa lay in the hospital bed, I quietly prayed by his side. Now, legally blind and with his right leg amputated up to his knee, Grandpa was quickly fading. It would only be a matter of time.

It was my birthday. Before going to celebrate with my family, I had decided to stop by and be with Grandpa. He was completely unresponsive while I was there. After an hour or so, with almost no words said, I decided I should get back to Grammy’s. As I put on my coat and turned to leave, I was frustrated that I could not find any words.

Something stopped me at the door. It was like I ran into an invisible wall. I couldn’t move, only turn back. And so I did. I turned to look at that great hero, who had held me so tenderly the day my mom died. His eyes were closed and his breathing was shallow. I just stood there and looked at him.

And then it happened. A movie reel of memories flashed before my eyes. It must have lasted for five minutes. I saw him holding me on his lap; taking me and my brother fishing on Lake Erie; pattering in his perfect garden; taking long bike rides in the summer; praying the rosary half in English and half in Polish; reminding me to save my money and work hard. And then I saw the picture on his living room wall — his wedding picture — a young, fit soldier with his beautiful bride. The

memories went on and on, and I simply sat back and drank them in.

When it was over, I slowly walked over to him, knowing I had to say something. “Grandpa,” I whispered in his ear, “can I hug you?” He nodded. I was so happy that he responded. I rested my head on his shoulder and placed my arms awkwardly around him. I cried.

And then he ever so gently patted me on the back of my shoulder, his arm wrapped in IV tubing. I couldn’t hold back my tears. I pulled up to look at him and told him of all the fond memories I had of him. “Grandpa,” I said quietly. No response. “Do you remember the day Mom died, and I was sitting on your lap? You kept telling me, ‘It’ll be OK.’” His eyes were open and alert. I knew he was hearing me loud and clear. “That meant so much to me. I’ll never forget that.” And with 17 years of gratitude stored up, I whispered a simple, “Thank you.”

Pause.

“I tried,” he finally said. “Grandma and I tried with all you kids.”

“Oh, you did more than try,” I told him. “You did good; you did real good.”

His eyes seemed watery and so tired. I looked at the man who had fought in World War II, the man who had delivered mail to support his family, the man to whom I clung

**DIVINE MERCY**

A Publication of  
the Marians of  
the Immaculate  
Conception

is published four times a year at the  
National Shrine of The Divine Mercy  
2 Prospect Hill, Stockbridge, MA 01262  
1-800-462-7426 or (413) 298-3931  
[Http://www.marian.org/shrine](http://www.marian.org/shrine)  
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Editor: Jason Free Design: Elizabeth Kulak  
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for dear life on that cold December day 17 years ago. I told him that we'd take care of Grammy. He smiled and then closed his eyes. And then I said to him, over and over again, as tears skipped down my cheeks, those precious, simple words he once gave to me: "It'll be OK. It'll be OK."

He opened his eyes one last time and quietly said to me, "Now, I'm better."

"Goodbye, Grandpa," I said, as I got up to leave.

"I'll sleep now," he said.

I offered a simple prayer to our Almighty Father, commending my grandfather to His mercy. "Sleep in peace, Grandpa," I whispered, as I walked out of the door.

### "Taps"

We were all at the cemetery now. The gray February sky almost perfectly blended with the color of Lake Erie, which bordered the Catholic cemetery. The small wooden chapel was simply built, and it was a refuge from both the outdoor cold and our inner grief.

Most everybody gathered in the chapel close to the coffin. I stayed with my 3-year-old boy off to the side, near a large window. I figured the view would be a good distraction for him.

The priest concluded his prayers. The camaraderie and pride of the veterans who were present made them seem like giants. Their salutes were slow and steady, reverent. They came to honor a fellow soldier, and to pay their respects to the widow who sat beside the flag-draped coffin.

After a few words, the leader ordered that the 21-gun salute commence. The front door of the chapel was opened. My son pressed against the windowpane, anticipating the gunshots. As the soldiers fired their rifles, the noise of the expelled bullets seemed to perfectly express the collective cries in our hearts. The bugler then placed the horn to his lips and played the song that so beautifully captures the finality of death.

While "Taps" filled the air, a soft rain pelted against the window. My body quivered. At that moment, it seemed as if time stood still. The movie reel of memories ran through my mind again, but at hyper speed this time. The last picture I saw was of Grandpa and me in the hospital. Two men from different generations holding one another before death comes. As the bugler put away his horn, the movie reel ended.

The rain gently spotted the window. My son watched the veterans pick up the gun shells from the grass to give them to the family



## THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE DIVINE MERCY WINTER SCHEDULE

### Mass Schedule

#### Holy Mass

Monday-Friday 7:15am and 2pm  
Saturdays & Holidays 8am and 2pm  
2pm Sat. Mass does NOT fulfill Sunday's Obligation

Sundays 10:30am and 2pm

**Rosary For Life** ~ Daily 1:30pm

**Chaplet of The Divine Mercy** ~ Daily 3pm

**Confessions** ~ Daily 1-2pm and 3:15-4:30pm or by appointment.

*Donations accepted. All programs are subject to change without notice.*

**For up-to-date information, contact us at [shrine@marian.org](mailto:shrine@marian.org) or at (413) 298-3931.**

### Weekly Events

#### Marian Movement of Priests Cenacle

Tuesdays at 7pm

#### Charismatic Prayer Meeting

Thursdays at 7pm followed by Holy Mass with music by Heartsong.

### Monthly Events

#### Charismatic Healing Mass

The Mother of Divine Mercy Prayer Group hosts this healing Mass on the last Thursday of every month at 7pm. Music is provided by Heartsong, whose CD's and tapes are available at The Shrine Gift Shop.

#### Evenings with The Rector

Fr. David Lord, M.I.C., and special guest speakers are featured. TBA.

#### Novena for Life 2003

This monthly prayer vigil, hosted by Catholics for the Unborn of the Berkshires, honors the Infant Jesus to make reparations for sins against life. Rosary, Holy Mass, Exposition, Benediction, and Invocations to the Holy Angels. TBA.

### Special Events

**Pope John Paul II Day** Sat., October 18

**Veterans Day** November 11

**Rector's Advent Retreat** December 13  
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM

*Christmas Season Concerts in the Shrine*

**Berkshire Children's Chorus Holiday**

**Concert** - Saturday, December 13, 7 PM

**Berkshire Concert Choir Christmas**

**Concert** - Friday, December 20, 7:30 PM

members. Another soldier solemnly handed my grandmother the folded flag.

### "It'll be OK"

Then, in that small wooden chapel, out of a type of survival instinct, I grabbed the closest thing to me — my 3-year-old boy. I cried even harder as I rested my forehead on his soft cheek. "Daddy's sad," I told him.

He quietly stared at me. "Yes," he responded, in an angelic tone.

"I miss Grandpa," I went on. He just nodded, seeming to fully understand. "Joseph, will you say something to Daddy? Will you please tell me, 'It'll be OK?'"

His wide eyes looked directly into mine. I

felt safe with him. And as we hugged, his small arms strengthened me. Then came the words that I had heard before from Grandpa. The same words I had returned to him as he lay dying after a long, hard life. This time these priceless words rolled off the sweet lips of my firstborn son: "It'll be OK, Daddy."

And just like 17 years ago, the simple words, coming from someone I deeply love, were better than gold. And I did what seemed to be right and true: I believed him.

Jason Free is General Manager of Eden Hill for the Marians in Stockbridge, MA. He lives in Lee, MA, with his wife, Colleen, and their four children.



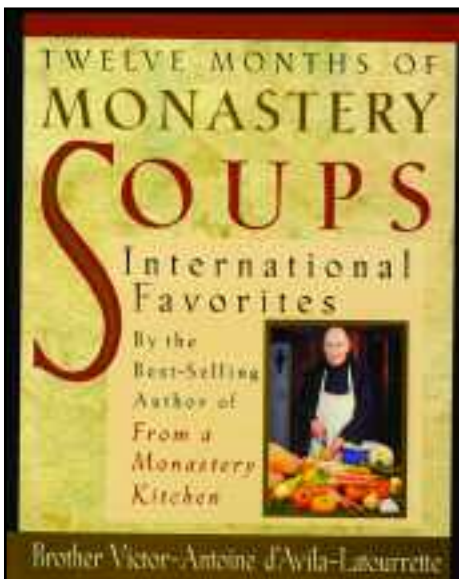
# DIVINE MERCY GIFT SHOP Open Seven Days A Week - 9am to 5pm



**Pine Advent Wreath with Berries, Pine Cones, and Bows** ~ Candles sold separately. (See below). *Gift Boxed.* 9 1/2"W.  #22691 \$19.95



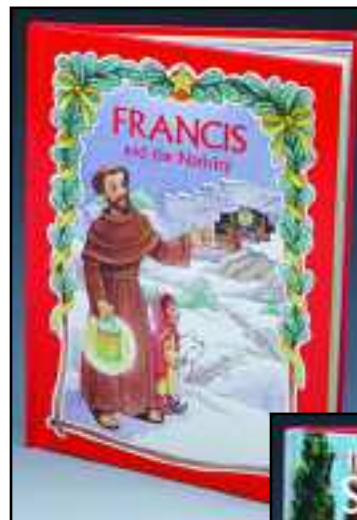
**Holy Family with Angel** ~ Etched Glass. *Gift Boxed.* 7" Tall.  #22622 \$29.95



**Twelve Months of Monastery Soups** ~ A collection of simple recipes arranged in a monthly format with an emphasis on seasonal cooking. Period block prints with stories and verse provide good reading and good cookery all in one book. *Brother Victor-Antoine d'Avila-Latourrette.* 198 pages.  #10474 \$25.00



**Advent Candle Set** ~ 4 candles, one pink, three purple. *Gift Boxed.*  #5270 \$2.95



**Francis and the Nativity** ~ The delightful illustrations of Maggie Swanson highlight the story of how St. Francis created the First Nativity in Greccio, Italy in 1223. 24 pages. Hardcover. Ages 4-6. 5 3/4"W x 8"L.  #22686 \$6.95

**The Saint Who Became Santa Claus** ~ Evelyn Bence explains the life and legend of St. Nicholas and how it evolved into the concept of Santa Claus in many parts of the world. *Beautifully illustrated by Cassandre Maxwell.* 24 pages. Hardcover. Ages 4-6. 5 3/4"W x 8"L.  #22687 \$6.95



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Jesus, I Trust In You!