

Mission of Divine Mercy

Our Divine Mercy Center

...dedicated to a Venerable Priest

Summer 2015, A.D.

MDM and the Friesenhahns of T&F Construction join Monsignor on the front porch of the Center



© FP

Fr. John Mary and our architect Mark Morkovsky and his wife Decel (right) join in the Chaplet during the Dedication ceremony.



View from St. Joseph's

PHOTO CREDITS: We are very grateful to **Frances Pullin** (FP), of Pullin Photography, who donated her time and skill for the event of the Dedication. We also thank our friends **Larry Layfield** (LL) and **John Rucker** (JR) for their photographs in this issue. All other photographs by Community and Staff members.

FROM FR. JOHN MARY:

SURVIVING IN A HOSTILE WORLD: Three Life-Saving Skills...*from Sheep*

PRACTICAL WISDOM

The Word of God, in its simple language, is teaching us essential lessons for the difficult challenges we face today. If we receive them with an open heart, they lead us to eternal life.

NOT FLATTERING BUT REAL

Scripture often compares us to sheep. It's not a very flattering comparison.... Sheep are not strong, swift, agile, or smart. Or even well-protected like a turtle. And yet they have survived and thrived.

Not a comparison that flatters our ego. But it does teach us essential skills for living in a hostile world.

RECOGNIZE THE DANGERS

We can have a sentimental view of sheep. Scripture takes a very realistic approach. It recognizes that sheep are very vulnerable.

And they are exposed to many dangers. Dangers that reflect our situation today. Through the prophet Ezekiel [Ch. 34] the Lord speaks of sheep who are not being fed; who are sick, crippled, strayed, lost, harshly treated. "My sheep were scattered, they wandered over all the mountains... with none to search or seek for them." Because they have no shepherd, they are stalked by the wild beasts, who prey on them, ripping them apart and devouring them. Jesus Himself speaks of the wolves that attack the sheep. And "the thief [that] comes only to steal and kill and destroy."

These menaces reflect the many dangers that we face today. "Be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." A first step to survival is recognizing that there are grave dangers. A sheep that doesn't recognize them will not last long....

In the face of these dangers, what can we do?

It's here that the sheep have three vital lessons to teach us.

HUMILITY: ACKNOWLEDGING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

An arrogant, stupid sheep who imagines that — faced with all these dangers and enemies — he can take care of himself, will soon provide the beasts with a delicious meal.

But if the sheep simply recognizes the truth of its own weakness, it has taken a key step towards surviving.

Simply recognizing our weakness, our sinfulness, our ignorance is a powerful step towards survival.

FAITH: TRUSTING THE GOOD SHEPHERD

However, something more is needed. Once the sheep recognizes that it needs help, it needs to find that help. It needs a good shepherd.

Here Jesus reveals something unheard of: A Shepherd Who lays down His life for His sheep, so much does He care for them. A Shepherd with mercy. A Good Shepherd.

But it's not enough that the sheep have a Good Shepherd. They need to *trust* Him.

The Good Shepherd has to help us. Calling us each by name to Himself. At the same time, though, He respects our freedom. We must freely choose to trust Him; or not.

OBEDIENCE: FOLLOWING THE SHEPHERD

Because it's not enough to simply say, "I trust Him." If they truly trust this Good Shepherd, that leads them to the final decision: They listen to His voice and they follow Him. And if they do, He gives them eternal life, "...and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My Hand."

He leads them on the path that He Himself has walked. A difficult path. But one which leads to His Eternal Kingdom.

MDM VIRTUES

This year, in past newsletters, I've been sharing what I think are the three key virtues that the Lord is calling MDM to live and to share: Humility, faith and obedience. In the challenges that we are facing, these show a simple but sure road through the dangers. As we prepare for this Jubilee Year of Mercy, let us *acknowledge our need* for His Mercy, *trust* in His Mercy and *obey* the Lord of Mercy.

The Lord is my Shepherd....

Psalm 23

*The Lord is my Shepherd,
I shall not want;
He makes me lie down in green pastures.*

He leads me beside still waters;

He restores my soul.

*He leads me in paths of righteousness
for His Name's sake.*

*Even though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil;*

for You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

*You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;*

*You anoint my head with oil,
my cup overflows.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
for ever.*

One Sheep

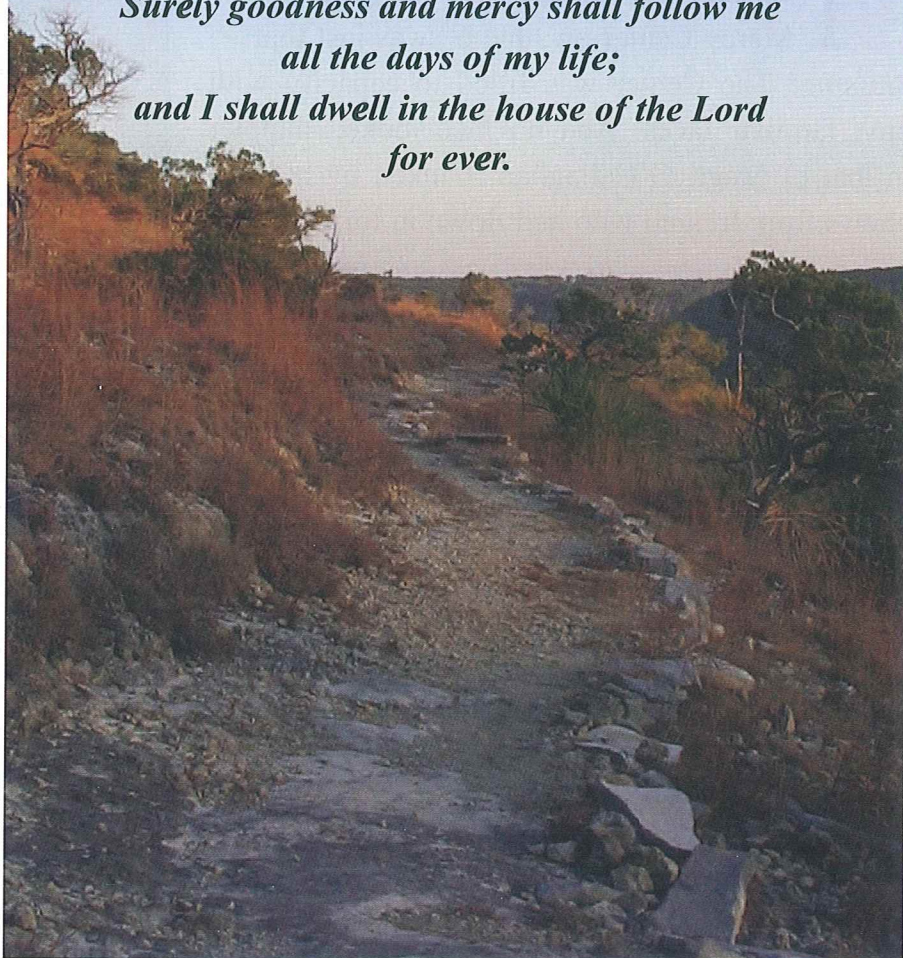
Reflects....

Twenty years ago I had a discussion with Fr. John Mary where I voiced my concern about some of the things I saw happening around me in my community. I remember very clearly what he said. "Most people are carried along by the prevailing current of the culture. If the culture is going in a positive direction then that is good. But if the culture is heading in a negative direction then they are pulled along with it, and this is not a good thing. Most people are not strong enough to swim against the prevailing cultural current." I have thought about this conversation repeatedly over the ensuing years.

Perhaps now more than ever good people need the companionship and support of *the* Flock; led and guided by the voice of the Good Shepherd rather than the cattle prod of our media-dominated culture. Conversely, being part of *His* Flock strengthens our ability to think *independently* from our culture. I know that I am mixing metaphors, but associating with people whose actions and values remind me of the life I wish to lead, helps me to swim against the prevailing current.

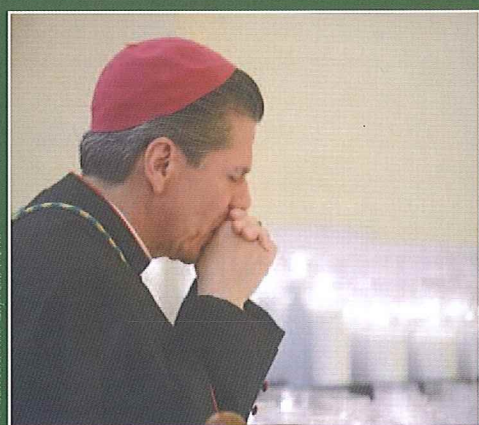
Who knew you could learn so much from sheep? ♦

Emily Foster-Jebbia





Long Awaited Dedication



"The Center will be a source of joy to the many who come seeking communion with God in solitude and away from the distraction of life, and to be able to listen to the message of God's Divine Mercy...."

The blessing of the O'Callaghan Divine Mercy Center on June 6th was just that — a *Blessing!* The Center was filled to capacity with happy, familiar faces. And no face looked happier than that of Msgr. O'Callaghan, flanked by his two nephews from Ireland who had flown in for the occasion.

While the unusually wet spring had delayed even minimal attempts at landscaping, all those who had been watching the building rise on the hillside were eager for their first glimpse of the interior. And from their many remarks and exclamations, they were not disappointed with the Center or with the day.

The ceremony began with the reading of a congratulatory letter from Archbishop Gustavo. (*See side bar.*)

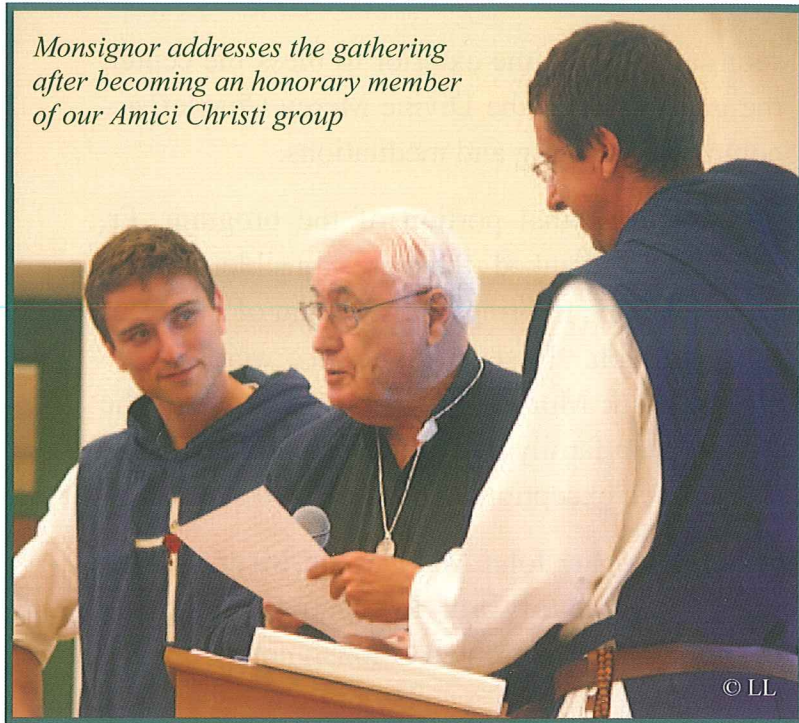
After greeting all those who had come to celebrate the occasion, Fr. John Mary spoke first about the Center's purpose: The great need in our world



for the healing message of God's Mercy; and of how the Center will help to bring this message to many more people. He spoke of how each person sitting in front of him was part of the huge effort that had made the Center a reality. Referencing one of his favorite quotes, *"For we are God's co-workers; you are God's field, God's building,"* (1 Cor. 3:9), he noted that the completion of the construction was a major step in the labor that would help to bring God's Mercy to a suffering world.

And sitting in front of him was Msgr. Eugene O'Callaghan, the Center's namesake, and the person around whom the event was organized. That weekend Monsignor was celebrating the 60th anniversary of his ordination. Msgr. O'Callaghan's extraordinary moral and material support of the newly-formed MDM community is a well-known

Monsignor addresses the gathering after becoming an honorary member of our Amici Christi group



and oft repeated story. And it was worth mentioning again! But on this occasion Fr. John Mary also spoke of Msgr. O'Callaghan's sixty years of service since his ordination and what a witness that was to lay people

and to his fellow priests. While Father spoke, those listening to him could gaze on the new photo portrait of Monsignor, which included a statement he once made when summing up his Priestly vocation: **"I have given my life for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist."**

Next came the actual blessing of the Center which began with a solemn prayer by Fr. John Mary while Msgr. O'Callaghan sprinkled the bronze dedication plaque with holy water. Then while the priests moved from room to

Fr. Alberic, Pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, delivers the greeting sent by Archbishop Gustavo.

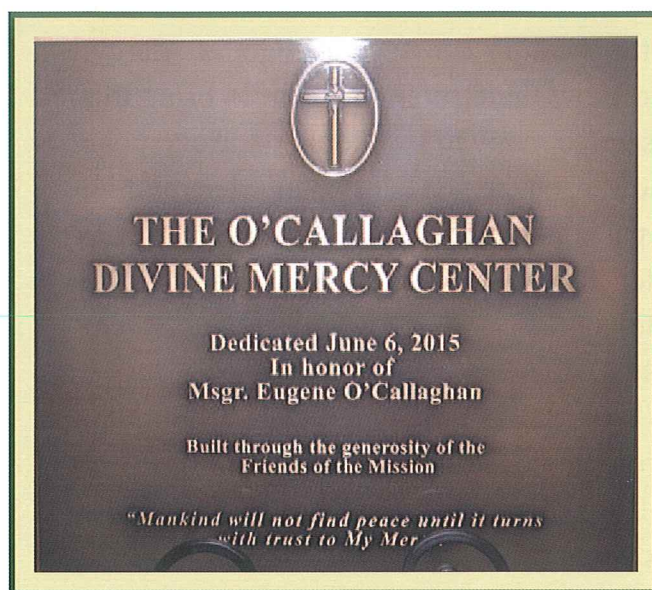


room and circled the exterior to bless the center, the guests recited the Divine Mercy Chaplet, accompanied by song and meditations.

In the final portion of the program, Fr. John Mary thanked those responsible for the work involved in bringing the dream of the Center to fruition. First in importance were our architect Mark Morkovsky and our contractor the Friesenhahn family of T&F Construction for providing such exceptional and dedicated service.

Then Fr. John Mary asked Msgr. O'Callaghan to come forward. In a simple but moving ceremony, he presented Monsignor with the large medal worn by members of our lay branch, the *Amici Christi*, making Monsignor the first ever honorary *Amici Christi* member. The program concluded with a few words from Msgr. O'Callaghan, and a final blessing.

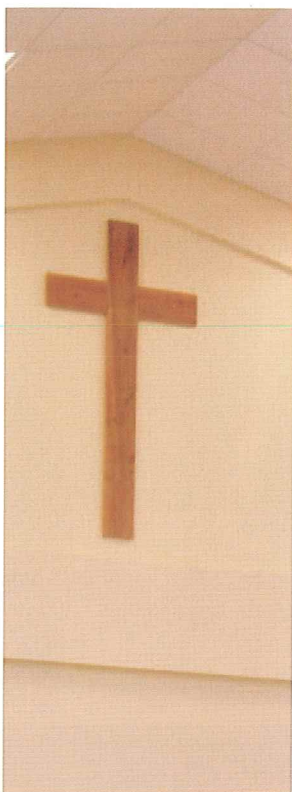
Then it was time for refreshments and the happy buzz of new and old friends greeting the



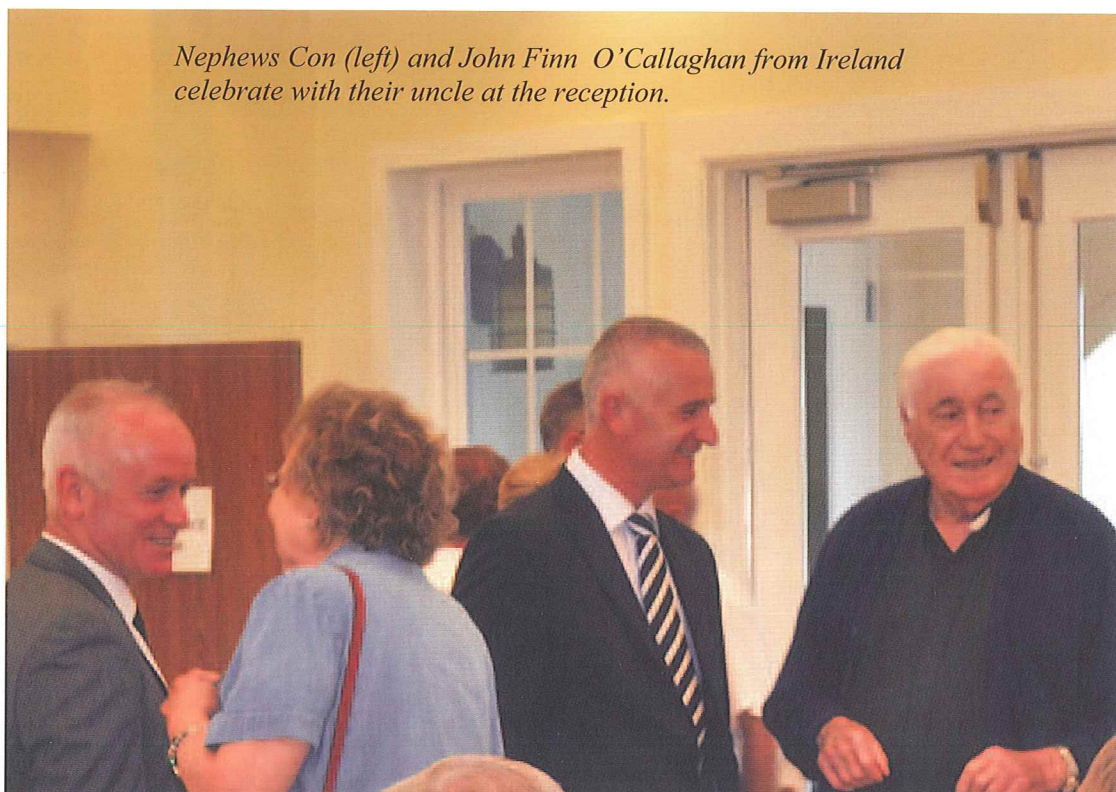
Community and each other. Among those old friends was Allen Seelhammer who had been part of the original group of men who had attended the first retreat at Rancho Maria, but who has lived in Michigan for the last ten years. Allen had made a special trip for this occasion.

It was truly a day of blessings. ♦





Nephews Con (left) and John Finn O'Callaghan from Ireland celebrate with their uncle at the reception.

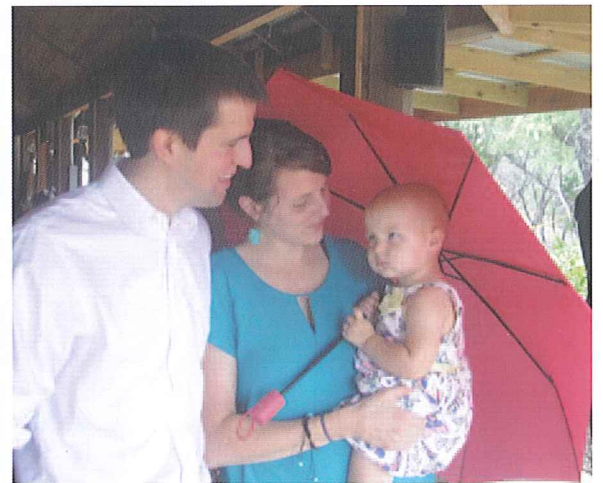
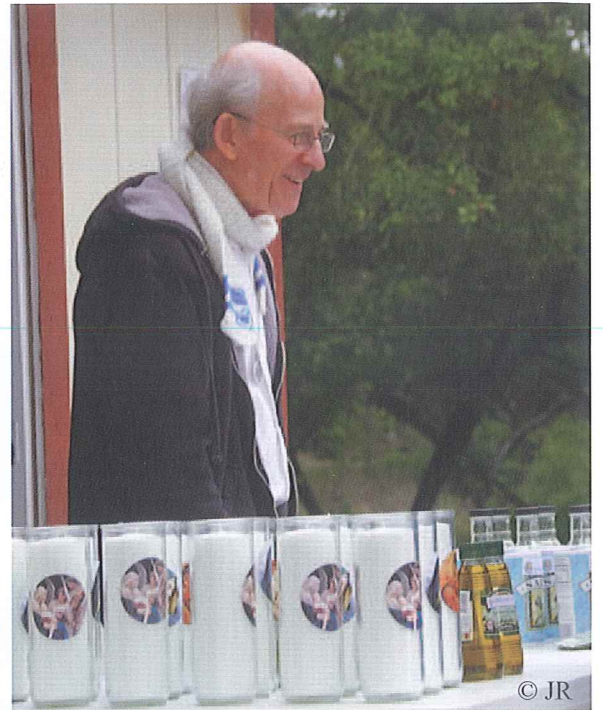


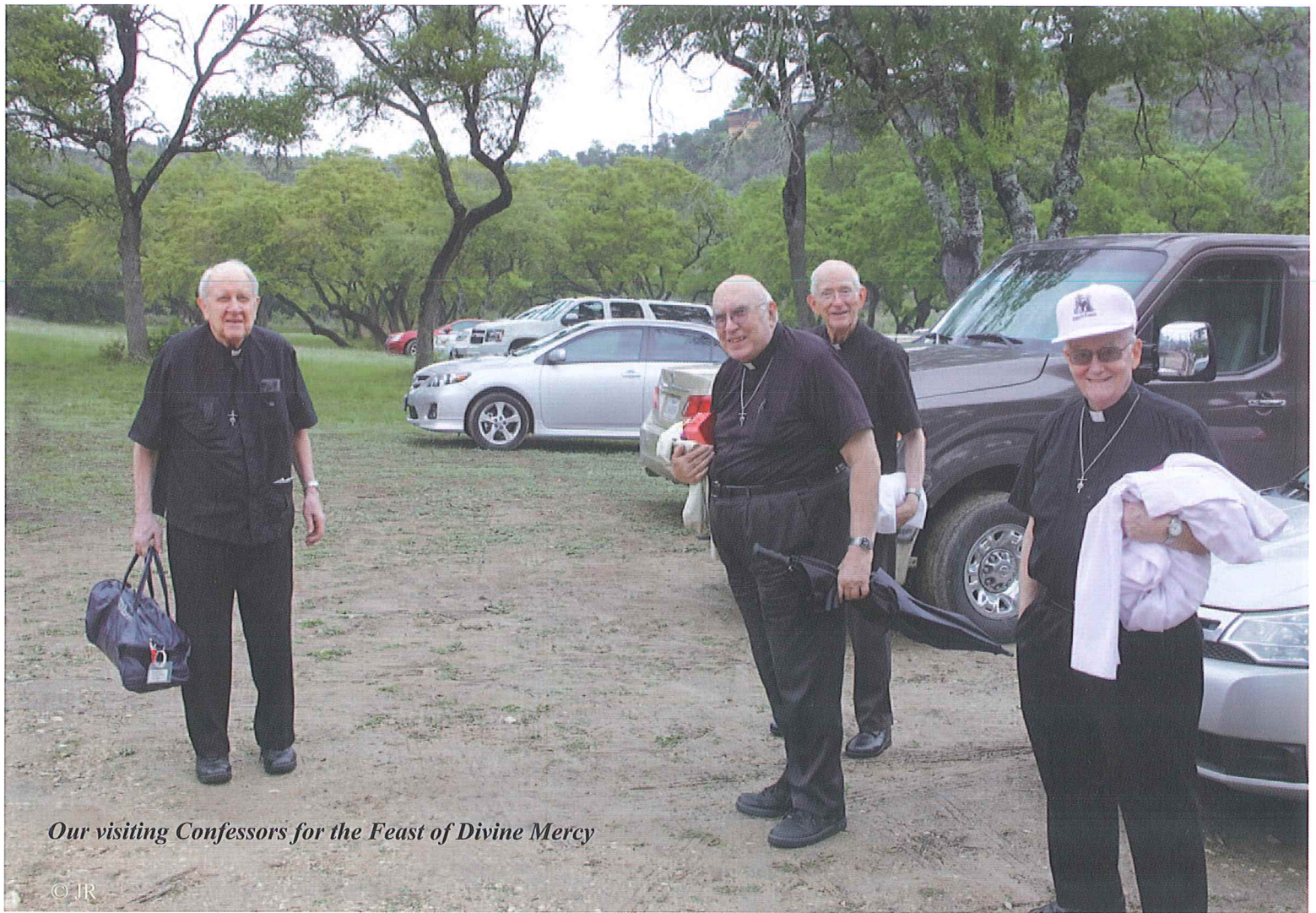
All photos on these two pages © FP

How Will Our Center Be Used?

The purpose of the Mission is not to offer facilities, but to share a spirit. We are responsible for keeping MDM's focus on the particular ministries that we feel the Lord is asking us to provide, because it is so easy to lose that focus amidst many different requests. The O'Callaghan Divine Mercy Center will serve almost exclusively for MDM sponsored retreats, events and apostolic activities. It is part of the Community's home, and not a facility to be rented out for other events. We know that the more we protect the sacred purpose of the Mission the more spiritually fruitful it will be for all those who come here. That is why, regretfully, we can't accommodate the diverse requests for the use of MDM's facilities.

Happily the completion of the Center represents a huge step forward in our preparation to make the *Encounter with Jesus* retreats available once again. ♦





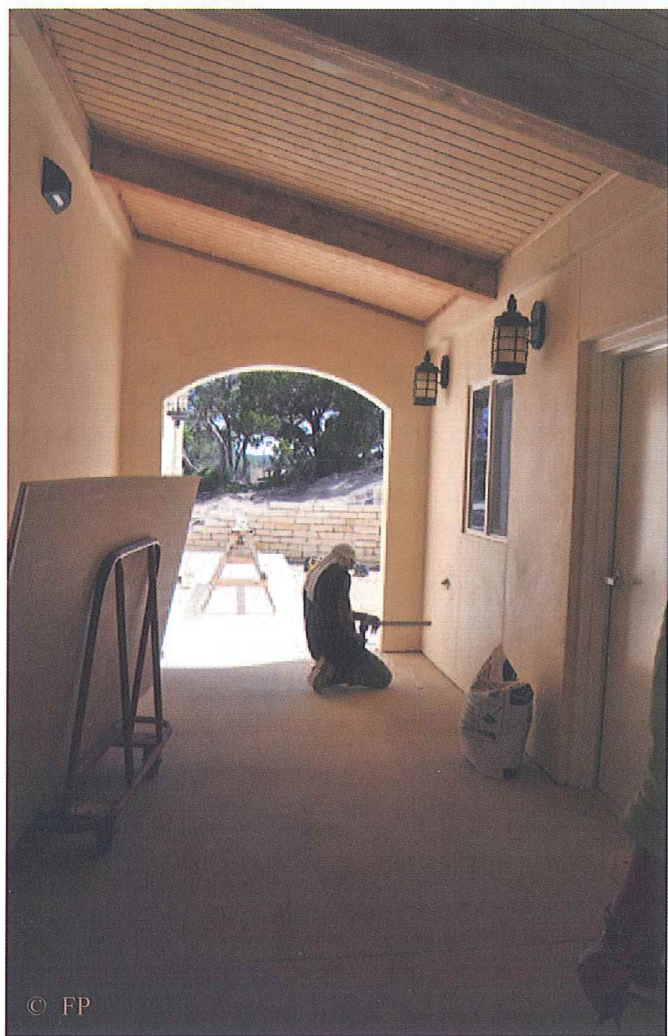
Our visiting Confessors for the Feast of Divine Mercy

© J.R.



*Fr. Edward O'Connor
of Notre Dame*





A TOUR OF THE O'CALLAGHAN DIVINE MERCY CENTER

For those who can't visit the Mission and see the O'Callaghan Center for themselves, here is a little tour.

Situated below St. Joseph's Chapel and adjacent to St. Michael's Hall, the O'Callaghan Center is a one-story building that houses a large central hall with a cathedral ceiling. Two exterior arched walkways, reminiscent of cloister walks, help to shade the building's interior space.

Main Hall — The large central space will be used primarily as a dining area. However, on occasions like the Dedication when a large crowd is expected, it can be used as a conference space.

Serving Area and Kitchen — At the east end of the Center is a commercial kitchen and pantry joined to the main hall by a serving area.

Restrooms — In addition to those within the Center, there are two restrooms accessed from outside the building and available even when the Center is locked

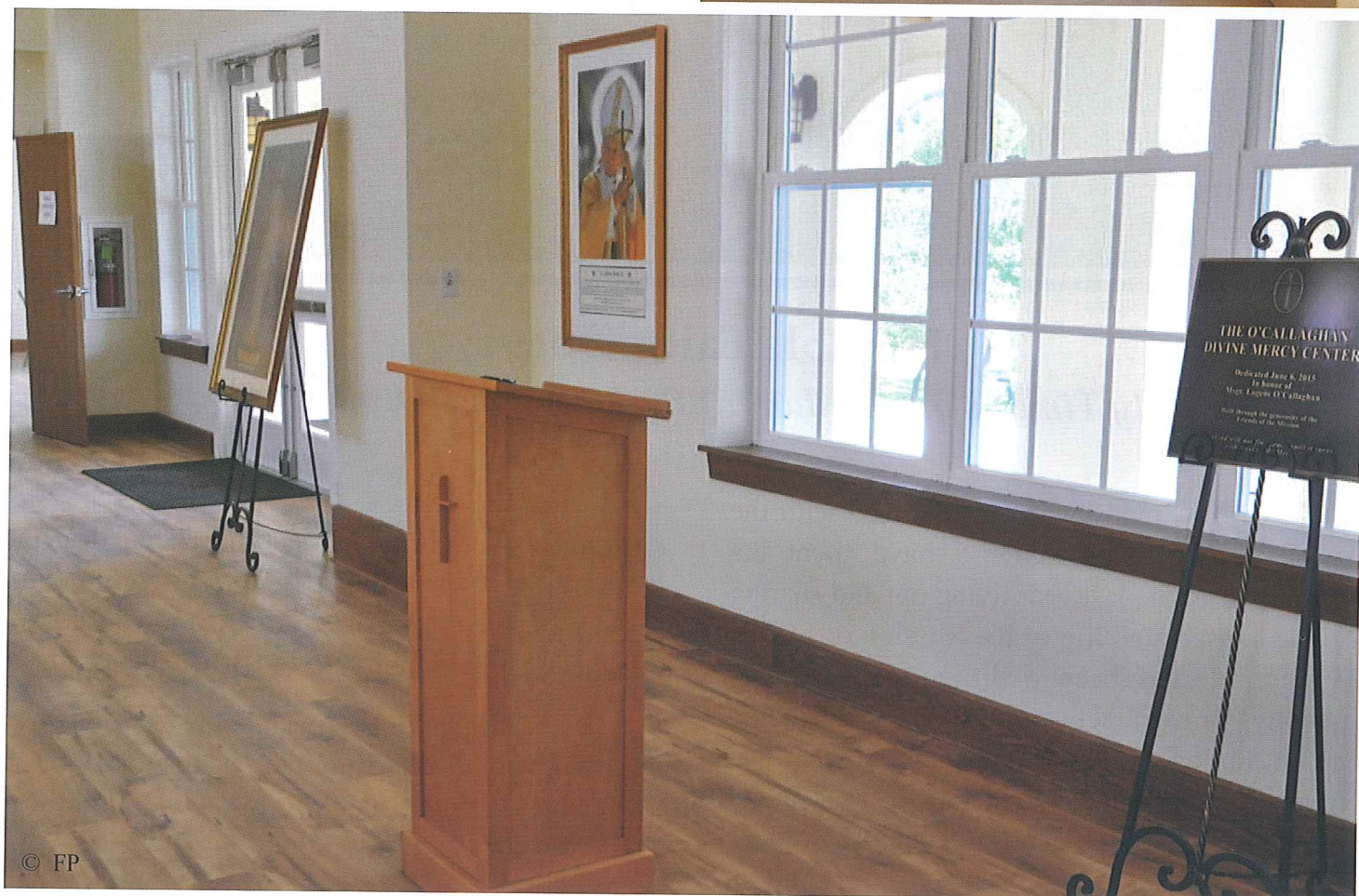
Small Conference Room — Located just off the main hall and featuring a handsome stone fireplace.

Large Conference Room — At the west end of the main hall is the large conference room which can be closed off from the dining room by a large folding wall.

Bookstore — The bookstore, is at the far west end of the Center.

Office — Future office space accessed from the covered sidewalk.

Storage Room — Accessed from the covered sidewalk. ♦



**New Candidates participate in the
Amici Christi Retreat
Divine Mercy Weekend 2015**



In the last couple of years membership in Amici Christi has grown significantly. This growth necessitated a separate picture of those new candidates in formation whom we happily present here.

Humble Faith Obeys: *My Time as a Postulant at the Mission of Divine Mercy*

By Dustin Bates

As many who are involved with the Mission know, I have spent the better part of the last year living out and sharing in the consecrated life of the Mission of Divine Mercy. It has been a difficult and, consequently, an extremely rewarding time. I could go on for pages and pages explaining what that time was like, but I would rather speak about the most important and fundamental way in

which I have been formed and changed in the past year. What follows is a brief description of why I came, how I have grown, and why I have decided to leave the Mission of Divine Mercy.

I originally approached the Mission, asking if I could enter into the postulancy—not on a whim—but because I sensed the Lord was

(Continued on page 16)

Special Jubilee Year of Mercy Announced

December 8, 2015—November 20, 2016

“Mankind will not find peace until it turns with trust to My mercy.”

Trust. Mercy. Peace. This quote from the revelations of Jesus to St. Faustina is one that we turn to consistently because we feel that it provides a solution to the problems of our world — *a solution that is accessible to everyone.*

That is why we feel that the completion of our Divine Mercy Center, just in time for the Jubilee Year of Mercy announced by Pope Francis and the Vatican, is yet another sign of God’s providence. As this Portal of Grace opens for the world, we want to place the Mission more and more completely at His disposal, so that He may pour out His Mercy on all who arrive here.

One way we hope to make this possible in the coming year is by offering once again the *Encounter With Jesus* Retreats. More information will follow. ♦

“I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the Fount of My Mercy.”



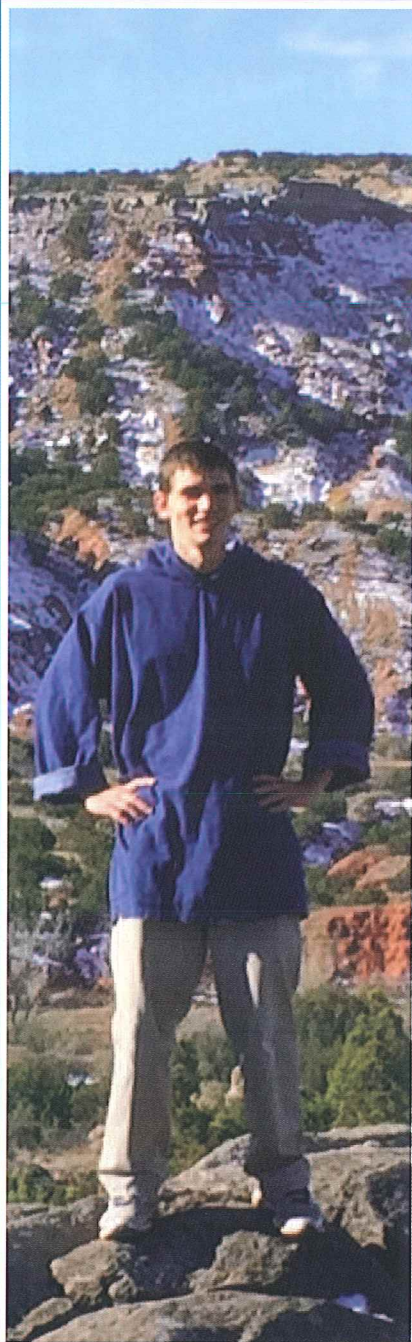
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asking this of me. It was a decision I made over the course of nearly ten years. One thing I can be fairly sure about even now is that living with the Mission is what God was asking me to do. I have no regrets, and I am thankful that the Mission was willing to let me share their life.

When meeting with Father John Mary for formation sessions he would often try to impress upon me a simple statement, "humble faith obeys." These are three words that sum up my time at the Mission. Life at the Mission was not always easy, not because the Mission did anything to make it difficult, but because in the quieter moments of prayer and meditation one thing became very clear, just how short of perfection I fall. It was at times as if God had picked up a mirror and had me look into it to see who I really was. The sight was not always a pleasant one, but it was one I needed to see. It was a dying to self, and the beginning of a stubborn soul being formed in a humble faith.

Every action and activity of my life at the Mission was a simple subjection to what God was asking. From setting the table to bowing my head in prayer, everything was a formation in the school of humility, faith and obedience. As I think about the world in which I now live, and the chaotic irrational environment that often surrounds me and everyone else from every angle, I am more convinced the answer to the world's problems is Father's simple statement, "Humble faith obeys." As I leave the Mission I know it will be a lifelong endeavor for me to truly live these three simple words out in my own life. Even now I have only begun the attempt.

My decision to leave the mission, like my decision to come, was not a hasty one. It was a matter of discernment over many months. I have made this decision only after being fairly certain that God was ask-



In the Spirit of Mother Angelica...

"Keep Us Between the Gas Bill and the Mortgage"

Even when a large share of our energy is going into fundraising for special projects, our day-to-day operational costs don't disappear. So while we are very grateful for every gift that helps us to pay for the new O'Callaghan Center, we are equally grateful for those regular monthly gifts that help us to pay the Community's medical bills, car insurance, gravel for road repair, printing costs for the newsletter, or the grocery bills for Saturday breakfast under the tent.

Every size gift is helpful, but regular monthly gifts are particularly helpful. **A regular monthly contribution – as small as \$25, or as large as you wish to make it – is really valuable to us in planning our monthly budgets.**

Many of our donors prefer to set up an automatic monthly withdrawal from their bank account. If you wish, Jackie, our bookkeeper, can arrange this for you with a simple phone call to her at 830-905-4515. ♦

ing me to do so. In short, I came in obedience to God and I have left in obedience to God. I am very thankful for this past year, and for the people I have had a chance to spend it with. I fear I should be hard pressed to find such clear living examples of humility and faith as I have found in members of the Mission of Divine Mercy. I am humbled and honored to have had this time with these incredible men and women.

I will be leaving in the next month for Phoenix, AZ, where I will continue to try to follow God in what He is asking of me as a teacher at Ville De Marie Academy, a classical Catholic school. I feel that God has truly led me in this next decision, though as I leave I will miss all those I have had the great joy of knowing and working with over the past year. To the Mission of Divine Mercy and all who are affiliated with it I want to offer a sincere thanks and my gratitude for all your prayers, fellowship, and good-will. You will all be in my prayers and I ask that you remember me in yours. ♦



Mary Kay Williams and Monsignor admire the portrait that hangs in the main Hall of the Center. We are extremely grateful to Gracie Pfeiffer, of Pfeiffer Pphotography, who generously donated her time, professional skill, and energy to produce that handsome portrait. ♦



While Dustin was a postulant with MDM this past year, our other guest Jim Bergan, was participating in the St. Gabriel's Institute. The SGI is a separate program that MDM developed to provide a time of spiritual formation for young men to help them discern God's Will for their lives.

Jim completed his year with SGI on the Feast of Pentecost and has accepted work in San Antonio, instead of returning to Baton Rouge, in order to stay close to the Mission.

♦ *Hiking through Palo Duro Canyon, during the Brothers' trip last Fall.*

June 26, 2015. As we prepare to go to press we have just received word of the Supreme Court decision with regard to ‘gay marriage.’ In light of this extremely grave decision, we include the statement of Archbishop Kurtz, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF
CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Supreme Court Decision on Marriage “A Tragic Error” Says President of Catholic Bishops’ Conference

June 26, 2015

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Supreme Court decision, June 26, interpreting the U.S. Constitution to require all states to license and recognize same-sex “marriage” “is a tragic error that harms the common good and most vulnerable among us,” said Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

The full statement follows:

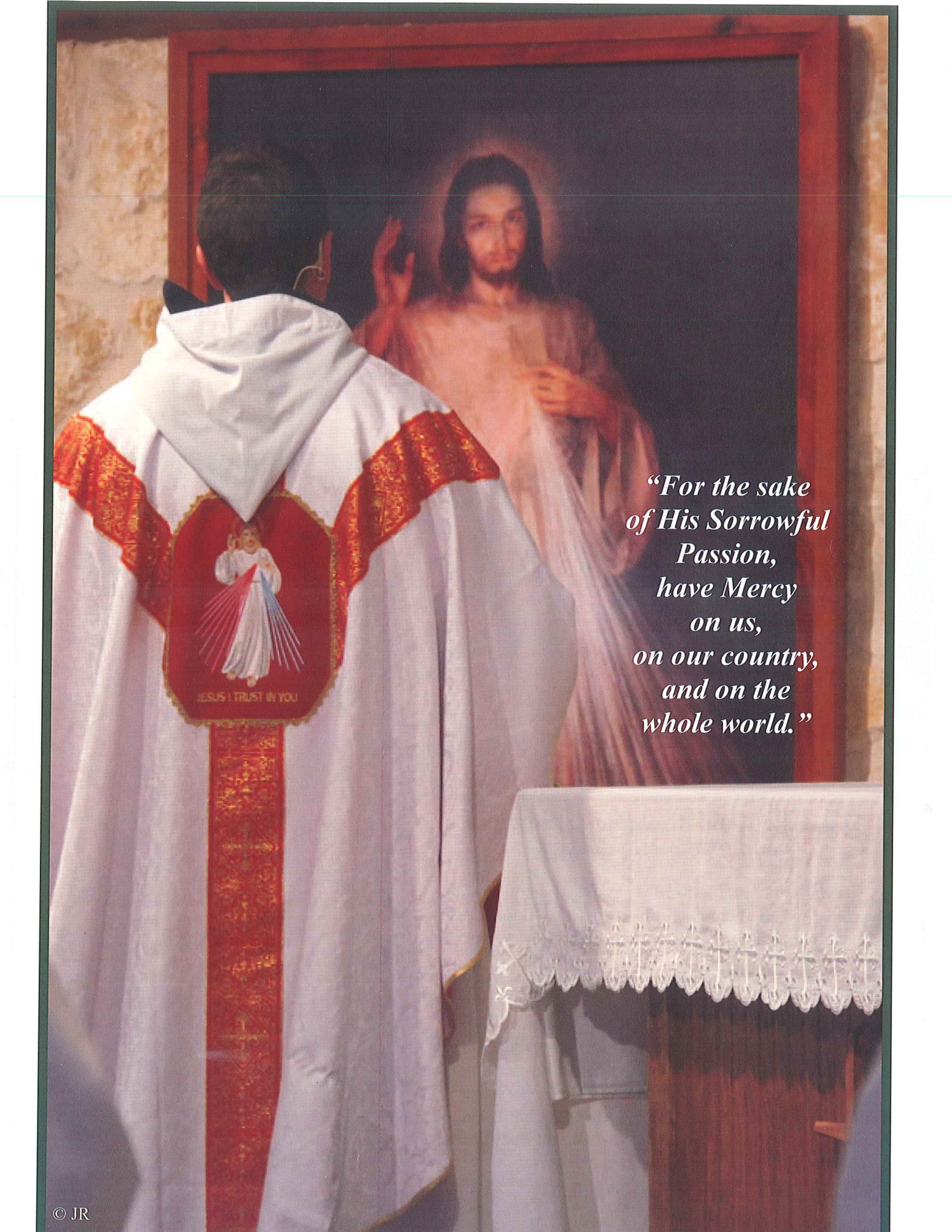
Regardless of what a narrow majority of the Supreme Court may declare at this moment in history, the nature of the human person and marriage remains unchanged and unchangeable. Just as *Roe v. Wade* did not settle the question of abortion over forty years ago, *Obergefell v. Hodges* does not settle the question of marriage today. Neither decision is rooted in the truth, and as a result, both will eventually fail. Today the Court is wrong again. It is profoundly immoral and unjust for the government to declare that two people of the same sex can constitute a marriage.

The unique meaning of marriage as the union of one man and one woman is inscribed in our bodies as male and female. The protection of this meaning is a critical dimension of the “integral ecology” that Pope Francis has called us to promote. Mandating marriage redefinition across the country is a tragic error that harms the common good and most vulnerable among us, especially children. The law has a duty to support every child’s basic right to be raised, where possible, by his or her married mother and father in a stable home.

Jesus Christ, with great love, taught unambiguously that from the beginning marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman. As Catholic bishops, we follow our Lord and will continue to teach and to act according to this truth.

I encourage Catholics to move forward with faith, hope, and love: faith in the unchanging truth about marriage, rooted in the immutable nature of the human person and confirmed by divine revelation; hope that these truths will once again prevail in our society, not only by their logic, but by their great beauty and manifest service to the common good; and love for all our neighbors, even those who hate us or would punish us for our faith and moral convictions.

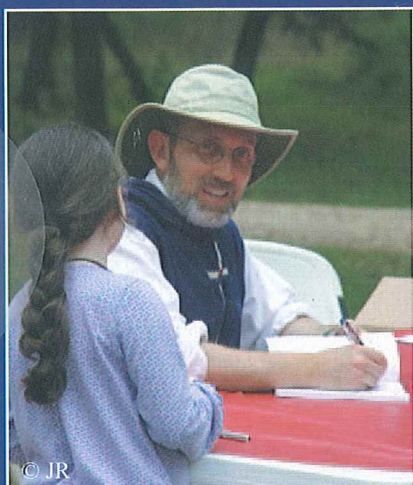
Lastly, I call upon all people of good will to join us in proclaiming the goodness, truth, and beauty of marriage as rightly understood for millennia, and I ask all in positions of power and authority to respect the God-given freedom to seek, live by, and bear witness to the truth .



*“For the sake
of His Sorrowful
Passion,
have Mercy
on us,
on our country,
and on the
whole world.”*



Mission of Divine Mercy
P.O. Box 1759
Canyon Lake, TX 78133



Fr. Moses, also known as “Indiana Moses” for his daring adventures and exploits, is seen here autographing his book, *DIVINA MISERICORDIA: How God Radically Changed My Life*, for a young reader. His book is available for sale at the Mission and on-line at Amazon and Barnes & Noble. ♦

You Asked For It...*Sunday Homilies* *Available on Our Website*

Many who come to Mass at the Mission on Sundays have asked for copies of our priests' homilies. In response to these requests, we are beginning to post in audio form the homilies from our 10 AM Sunday Masses. They are available on our website: missionofdivinemeracy.com.

To access the homilies, go to the header row on our home page and click on the BLOGS tab. In the dropdown box you will see “Homilies.” Each Sunday's homily should be available by Monday or Tuesday. Previous homilies will remain available and can be accessed by clicking on the “Older Posts” arrow. ♦

Summer Schedule

PLEASE NOTE:

July 20—August 3
MISSION WILL BE CLOSED
Except for:

10:00 a.m. Sunday Masses on July 25th
and August 2nd
(Mass in honor of God the Father)

No TLM Masses
on these two Sundays.

During July to give our faithful kitchen crew and choir a well deserved break, there will be NO REFRESHMENTS or MEALS after the Saturday and Sunday Masses, and the music at Mass will be minimal.

Weekday Community Mass and Prayer Schedule

Now that the construction is finished, we will be changing our daily Mass and Adoration times. We hope to make the change in August. We do not yet have the exact times, so please check our website for updates.