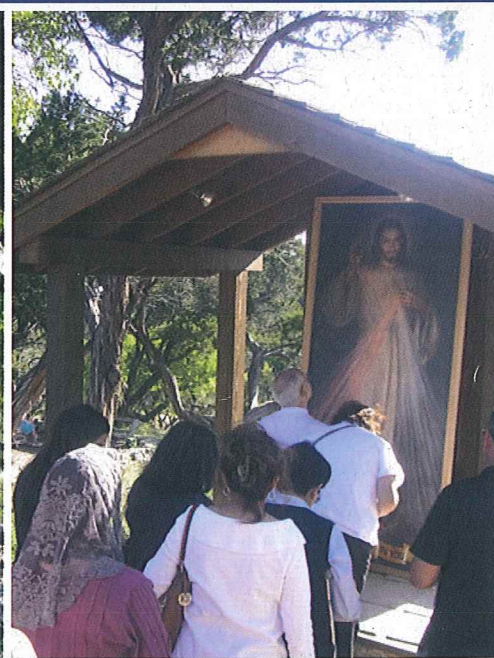
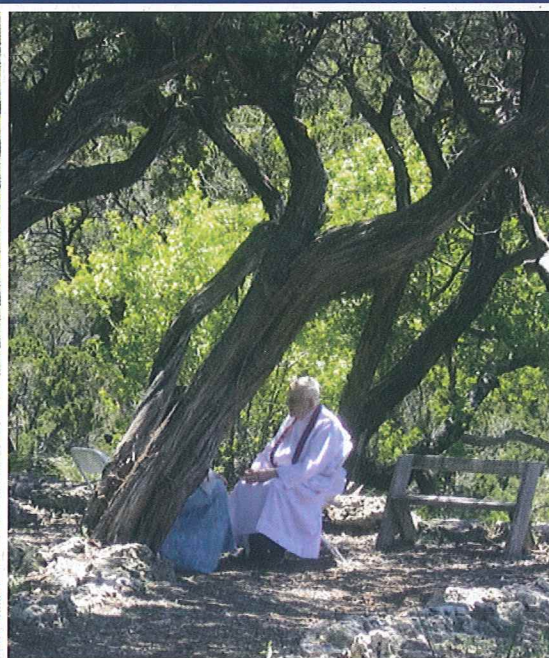
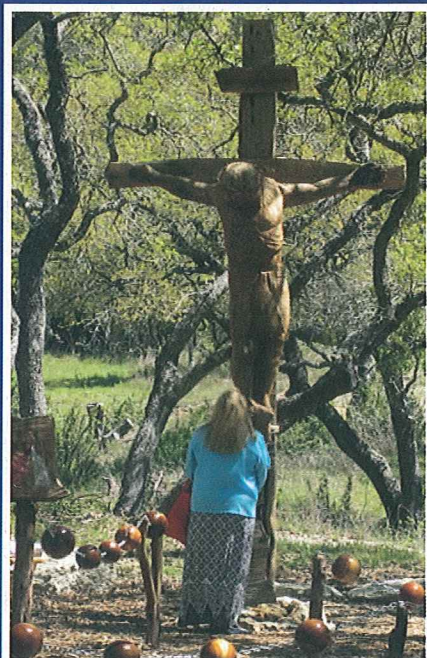


Mission of Divine Mercy

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY 2016





The Elusive Summer Schedule

Our schedule for July will have some changes and is not yet confirmed. There will be a period in July when the Mission is closed so please check our website or weekly meditations for updates.



Our Contact Information:

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FROM FR. JOHN MARY:

Lift Him UP

Jesus asks you to do something for Him. He asks you to lift Him up so that the world will know Him and be saved.

In John's Gospel Jesus calls up an image that might not make sense to us immediately: "... *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.*" (John 3, 13-15)

What follows next is the famous passage from the Gospel of John: "*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*" (John 3, 16)

What incredible love on the part of the Father! What great mercy! How much He must love us and want us with Him that He would send His Son to us! Because the Father knows that Jesus is the only One Who can heal the deep, deep wounds in our world and in our hearts. He is the *only Savior* of our suffering world.



But in order to be saved, we must believe in Him. And for that to happen He must first be lifted up, so that all might see Him, and seeing Him, be drawn to Him.

Think of the example of a football coach at the end of a big game where people are swarming the field. The players lift the coach on their shoulders so that more people can see him and acclaim him.

Jesus, however, was lifted up on the Cross by His enemies who wanted to torture and kill Him, *and to kill the faith of all those who believed in Him*. Enemies and powers who continue even today to mock Him and those who believe in Him. Enemies who seek to remove all trace of Him from our world; from our schools, our government, our public discourse.

Just as the enemies of Jesus in our world today continue to try to mock and discredit Him – so we who are His followers must bear witness to Him.

Please stop and reread that last sentence.

No one today who is alive and breathing can be unaware of the battle being waged by the prince of this world (*Satan and all those under his influence*) against Jesus and His followers. We know that it is becoming more and more difficult – even mortally dangerous – to follow Him.

But as we know, the Cross was not the end for Jesus. The Father lifted Him up from the grave to glory. *"...Raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavens. Far above every principality, authority, power and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He has put all things under His feet."* (Ephesians 1)

Jesus does not need *us* to give Him glory; the Father has already done that. But He has *entrusted* to all of us this great mission of mercy: *To lift Him up in our world so that more and more people can come to know Him and be saved.*



Think about your areas of influence – home, work, school, parish; political and social circles. Think about the daily opportunities – small or not so small – for lifting Him up: From visibly wearing a Crucifix, religious medal or Scapular, to saying grace before a meal; from *not* saying the Lord's Name in anger or contempt, to audibly thanking Him or calling on His help in the many different circumstances of your daily life.

These are just a few examples. But even the thought of them may make you uncomfortable; they may seem difficult, embarrassing or even hypocritical to attempt. And you may think that family, friends and/or co-workers will ridicule you. Or that it may even cost you your job. Yes, this is the world in which we live.



Remember that you don't have to preach on a street corner in order to evangelize or to reflect His Presence in your life. **What you say and what you do, or what you *don't* say and *don't* do,** can be a very effective and powerful witness.

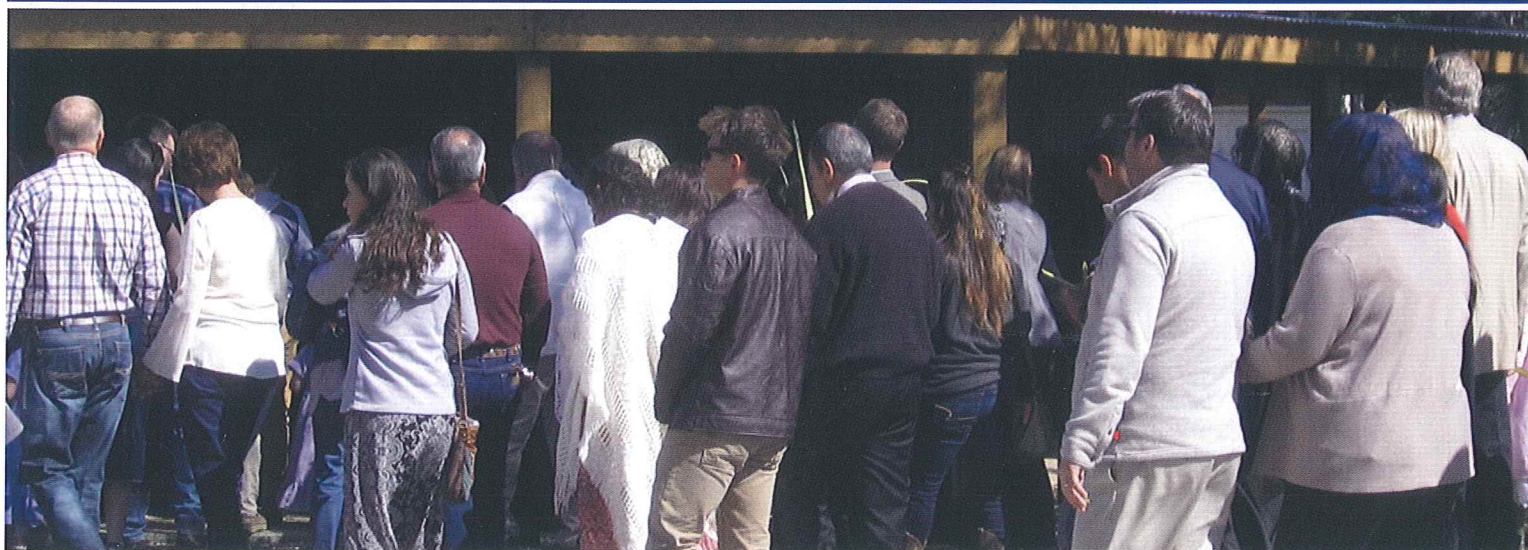
And that witness can be a lifeline for others, drawing them into the Heart of Jesus.

SO LIFT HIM UP IN YOUR DAILY LIFE.

Your world desperately needs that grace and testimony. ♦

+ + +

"...So must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life."



"I Am a Clean Slate"

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY 2016

Each event at the Mission brings its own blessings, but this past Divine Mercy Sunday was definitely a day set apart. It seemed that God Himself was putting His own emphasis on this Jubilee Year of Mercy. From the beautifully mild sunny weather and the 500 + congregation, to the long but constantly moving lines for Confession, the sublimely beautiful celebration of the Mass and the delicious barbecue finale ----it was a *particularly* blessed day in which all could feel that the floodgates of His Mercy were opened!

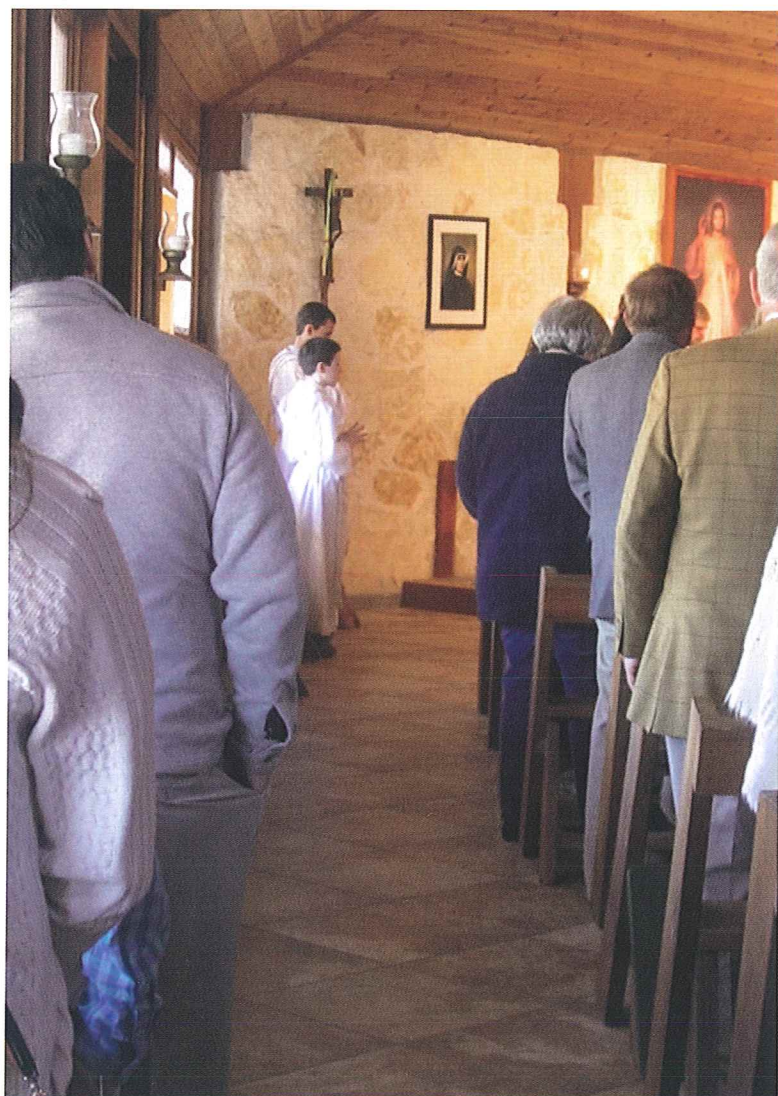
So it was not really a surprise when a good friend of ours, who had come early that

day to pray, said: *"I looked up and saw rays in the sky, red and white ones like those coming from the Heart of Jesus in the Divine Mercy Image; and they were spreading out over the Mission and the whole valley."*

Over the years we have experimented with different schedules for Divine Mercy Sunday as we try to find a schedule that allows people to experience this Feast more fully. This year we moved the Mass to 3PM, but opened the gates at 11:30 to offer several opportunities to pray, confess and venerate.

One prayer opportunity that was added this year centered around the new outdoor Ro-





sary. The Chaplet of Divine Mercy was recited there every half hour before the Mass. Some people walked the circumference of the Rosary, touching each bead with each new prayer while others stood quietly to the side, gazing at the Crucifix.

Many people made their way immediately up to the outdoor confessionals where four Priests, three of whom were retired Priests from San Antonio, were kept busy until the final Confession was heard at 6:30 pm. This set the record for the number of confessions heard in one day at the Mission!

Another prayer opportunity was Eucharistic Adoration in St. Joseph's Chapel beginning at noon and continuing until Benediction at 2:45. Many who were preparing for, or had been to Confession, said how much they appreciated being able to come before the Real Presence.

People also had the opportunity to venerate the Image of Divine Mercy throughout the day, either in the Chapel or at a second



for those who fully participated in Divine Mercy Sunday: not just the forgiveness of sin, but also the forgiveness of the *punishment due for sin*. It only takes a little meditation on this Promise to realize what an almost unbelievably generous gift this is on the part of God the Father.

A little further thought makes one realize just how important it is to make the world aware of this Promise and the Message of His Mercy; not for God's sake, but for the sake of souls.

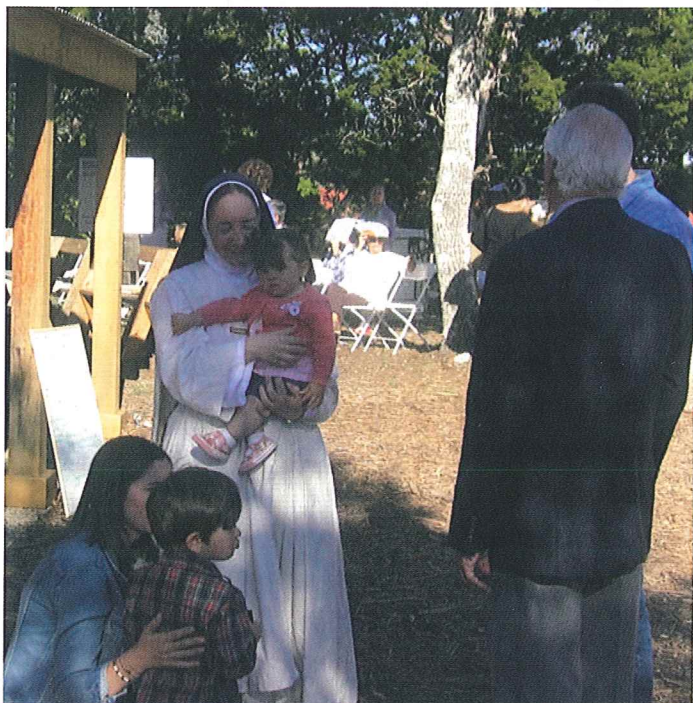
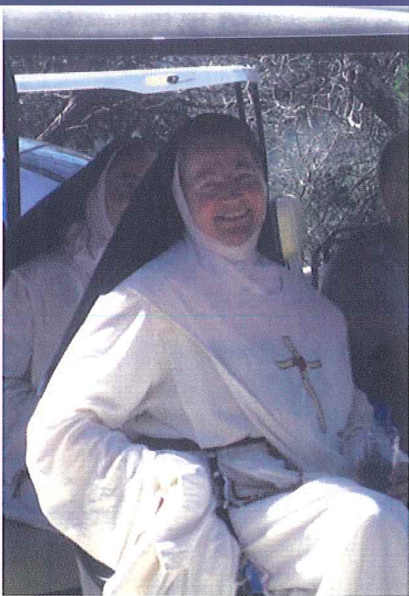
station set up outside, just for Divine Mercy Sunday. This second Image is a new life-size replica that will be housed in a permanent outdoor shrine at the Mission.

Holy Mass began at 3 PM. Our simple, open-air chapel, with a normal seating capacity of 200, was expanded with the addition of tents to accommodate the over 500 people. Many were familiar faces; but others had simply heard about the Mission, or found us online and were here for the first time.

During his homily, Fr. John Mary emphasized the amazing Promise made by God

Late in the afternoon, as people concluded their prayer and veneration, they made their way down the hill, following the aroma of barbecue, to enjoy a delicious meal in the company of their fellow sinner-saints ☺! The O'Callaghan Divine Mercy Center was at full capacity and people spilled outside, filling up picnic tables, steps, walls and whatever flat surface could be found. Children ran around releasing their pent-up energy. Little girls in colorful dresses looked like butterflies flitting over the ground. And the little boys---well they looked like little boys! Outside on the Center's front porch, a line formed with people who wished to speak with





and receive a blessing from Fr. John Mary.

The day concluded with the ringing of the Mission bell at 7PM.

Leaving the Mission after having made her first Confession in many, many years, a woman commented on how blessed the day had been for her.

"I am," she said in parting, "a clean slate, and it feels wonderful." ♦

"...THE FEAST OF MERCY EMERGED FROM MY VERY DEPTHS OF TENDERNESS.... ON THAT DAY ARE OPEN ALL THE DIVINE FLOOD-GATES THROUGH WHICH GRACES FLOW."

(Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary # 699)

+ Monsignor Eugene O'Callaghan +

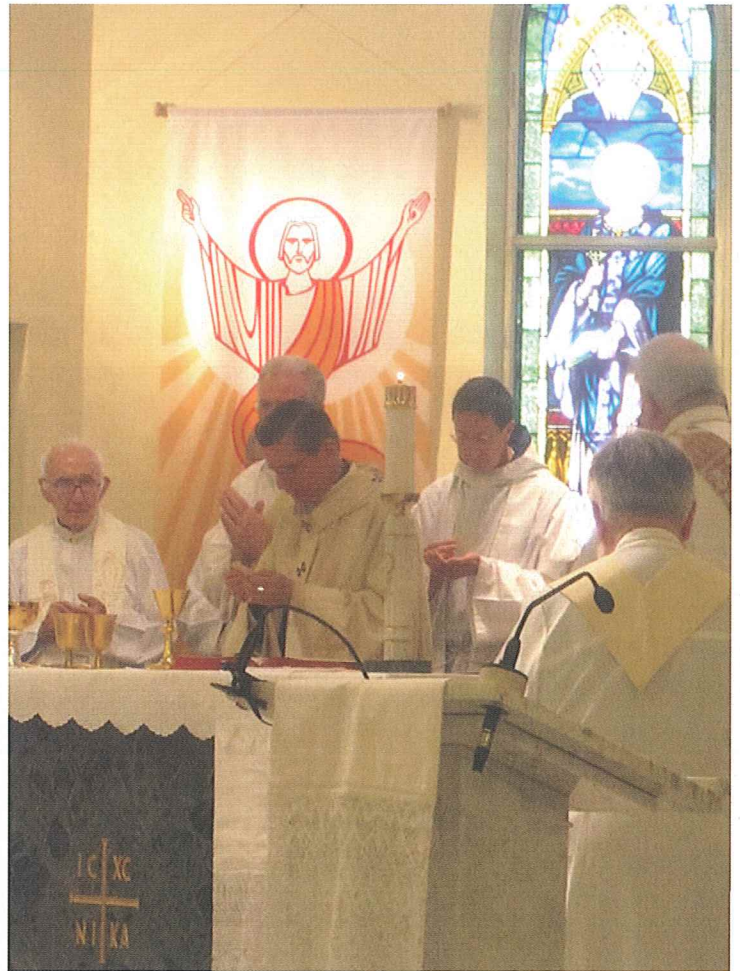
You are a Priest Forever....

By Mother Magdalene

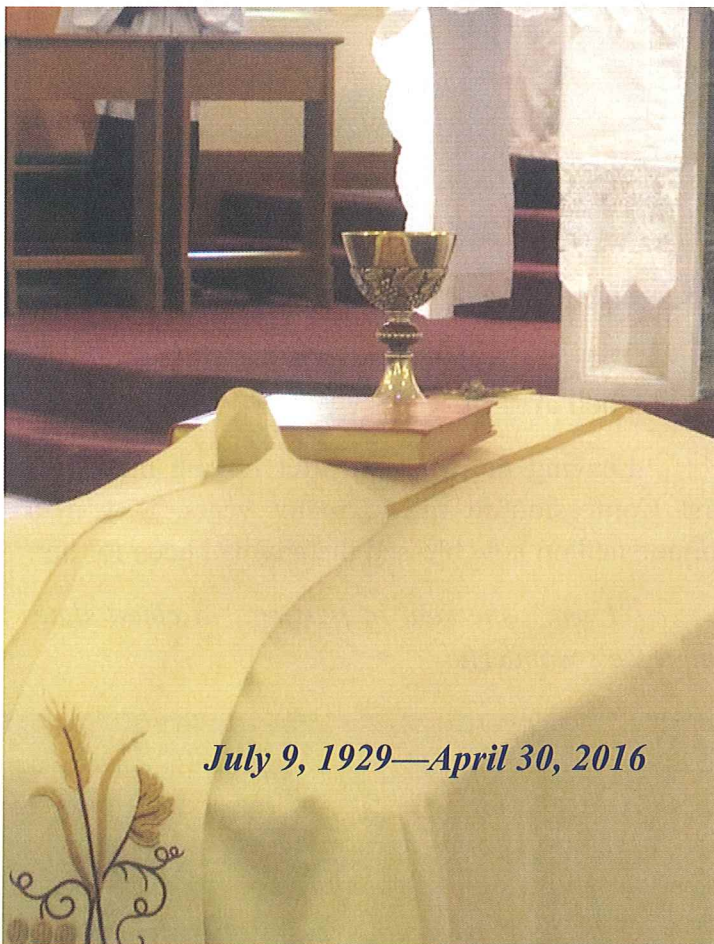
On Saturday, April 30th, Monsignor Eugene O'Callaghan passed peacefully from death to Eternal Life.

Any grace that has flowed out from this Mission into the Texas hill country and beyond during these last fifteen years has been made possible, humanly speaking, by the welcome given to us by Monsignor O'Callaghan; and by his willingness to support and encourage the apostolate of this frail new religious community.

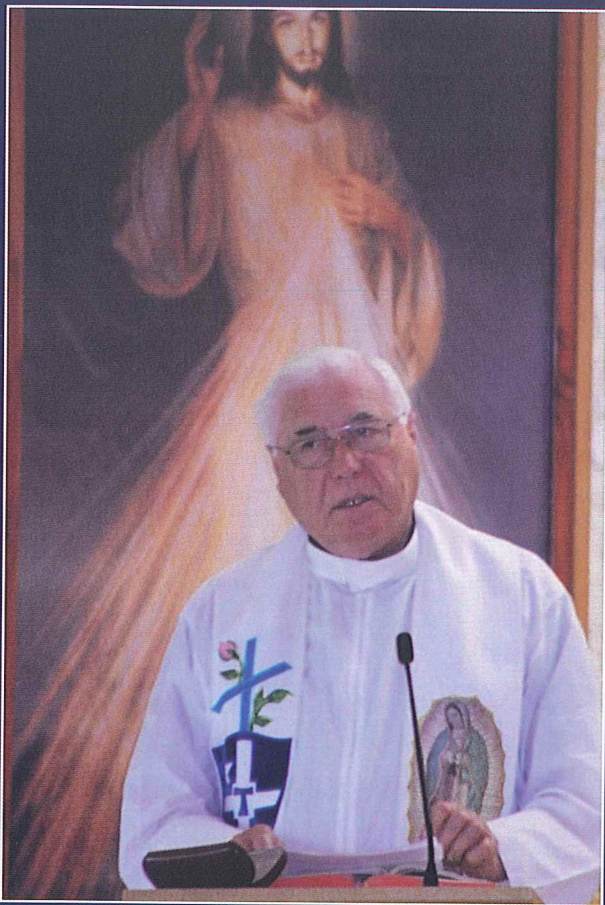
What do you say about a Priest who bore faithfully the Cross of Priesthood through the unexpectedly demoralizing, confusing, and increasingly anti-Christian milieu of the last half century, until he himself was laid to rest? We thought the Lord Himself said it best in the following passage from St. Faustina:



*"He is a priest after My own Heart;
his efforts are pleasing to Me....
Through him I spread comfort
to suffering and careworn souls.
Through him it pleased Me
to proclaim the worship of My Mercy.
And through this work of Mercy
more souls will come close to Me
than otherwise would have,
even if he had kept giving absolution
day and night for the rest of his life,
because by so doing, he would have
labored only for as long as he lived;
whereas, thanks to this work of Mercy,
he will be laboring till the end of the world."
(Diary #1256)*



July 9, 1929—April 30, 2016



***"I have given my life
for Jesus
in the Holy Eucharist."***



We also give profound thanks to Mary Kay Williams and Family for the unstinting and heroic effort they made to receive and care for Monsignor over the last several years as he became increasingly frail. Now, Mary Kay, Monsignor can return that care!

A Monsignor O'Callaghan Story

She said that at that time – in the early nineties – she and her husband could barely be considered lukewarm Catholics. And she had never had a personal conversation with Msgr. O'Callaghan. But they did usually make it to Sunday Mass at Sts. Peter and Paul.

On this particular Sunday morning, however, as she moved forward for Communion, she carried a secret sorrow – not a sin but an emotional experience - that seemed to crush any joy in her life. As she stepped forward to receive Communion from Monsignor he paused, then put his hand gently against her face and said, "I understand...." Then he gave her the Host.

"I was amazed; completely stunned! How could he know?" She returned, she said, to her pew with tears spilling down her cheek. But comforted; somehow consoled.

This past Good Friday, over two decades later, she was at the Mission. She had wept over the sufferings of Jesus as she participated in the outdoor Stations of the Cross. Now she was seated outside St. Joseph's Chapel, waiting in the long line for Confession. Suddenly, though she hadn't been thinking of it at all, that long ago experience was again present to her; but present with an interior illumination of grace. And she heard Jesus say, "It was I Who touched your face."

"The Priest, by virtue of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, acts in persona Christi...."

(CCC, #1548)



The brand new Mission of Divine Mercy with Mons. O'Callaghan outside Sts. Peter & Paul Church early in 2002.

AS WE CONCLUDE OUR YEAR OF THE BRANDONS...

As we conclude our Year of the Brandons, each of the two men is seeking to follow the direction to which the Lord calls him.

Brandon Wittkop finished his year in the SGI Program this May with a special blessing after Sunday Mass. He has returned to work while he pursues a possible vocation as a missionary. He still usually makes it to the Mission for weekend Masses, for which we are grateful.

Happily we are retaining one of the Brandons. Brandon Hand became a postulant in January, and continues to discern a call to the Mission. On Sunday, June 5th, after the 11am Mass, Brandon will receive the habit, receive the title of Brother with his new religious name, and will become a Novice. [See the testimony of his healing on the next page.]

We have been grateful this year for the presence of both of these young men and for their earnest search for the Father's Will in their lives. ♦

Maria Felicitas takes a photo of our Community dinner at the Sisters house before Brandon Wittkop's departure.



"You are healed in body and soul"

When Brandon had a powerful experience of healing during the Eucharistic Blessing at the Encounter With Jesus Retreat, Fr. John Mary asked him to write it down.

Journal Entry 2/13/2016

By Brandon Hand

Tonight on the Encounter with Jesus retreat, my life was completely changed. This evening we spent time in Eucharistic adoration. Then something I've never been a part of took place.

Fr. John Mary read out of the Gospel of Mark about the woman who touched His cloak, and she was immediately healed. As Fr. John Mary read this, the Lord said to me, "This is for you," referring to the Bible verse. I told the Lord that if it be His Will, I would like to be healed. The Lord told me, "No, you will be healed tonight". I told the Lord whatever He wanted to heal according to His Will He could, and that I believed He could do it. The Lord instead told me that tonight I would be healed. At first I was taken aback by this, but I agreed with the Lord and I told Him that if that was His Will then I believed it would be done.

When Fr. John Mary invited people to come forward to be blessed with the Monstrance holding the Most Blessed Sacrament, the Lord told me to go last, and to pray for everyone else that they have the Faith to be healed. So as everyone was getting blessed, I went last. In the meantime,

as the Lord told me, I prayed for the others that they may be healed.



Once it was my turn to be blessed, it was just wow. Jesus told me to look directly at Him while being blessed, so I did for as long as I could. In that time frame the Lord told me, "You are healed in both body and soul. Go in peace." I bowed my head after this, and continued to pray.

When the blessing was over, I got up and started to return to my seat. As I did so, I noticed my left foot arch was warm and solid. I've had a collapsed left arch since my junior year in high school as a result of power lifting. Now there is a perfect arch where an arch didn't exist before. That's miracle #1. Miracle #2 is when I prostrated myself to thank the Lord for my healing, I felt like I was hearing loud annoying sounds out of my right ear. My right ear's hearing has been damaged since my 8th grade year of middle school. Since that time I couldn't hear things very well with that ear, everything was always muffled. Now my hearing is crystal clear, and I'm hearing everything! I haven't left adoration yet, so I'm sure as I go out in the coming days I'll discover my

wrist is healed, my left leg isn't short anymore, just anything body and soul I know has to be healed. I chose to believe in the Voice of Truth ☺. God is Good ☺.

Above is the original journal entry I wrote on the evening when I was healed by Our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not want to take away from the above journal entry, because I feel nothing tells the experience better than the original. But what I do want to do is give some updated information on what has happened since.

As mentioned above, I had a flat left arch resulting from power lifting back in high school. I had been wearing custom orthotics to fix this problem, and instantly after the healing my custom orthotics didn't fit anymore.

As mentioned above, it's been hard for me to hear out of my right ear since around my 8th grade year in middle school. I damaged it listening to heavy rock/metal music with the volume turned all the way up. Resulting in muffled hearing that made it hard for me to understand and hear things correctly.

After I walked away from Adoration, I noticed I was walking crooked, in other words walking more to one side. I was born with my left leg being shorter than my right, so my custom orthotics had to be made to make up this height difference. After the healing, I took off the height difference and now walk evenly as if I still had the custom orthotics on. These are the same custom orthotics used to remedy the collapsed left arch.

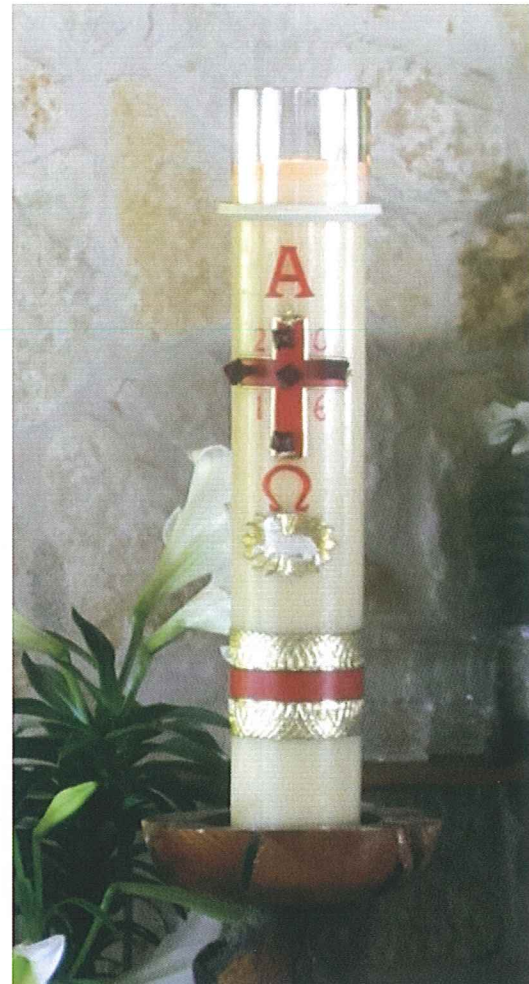
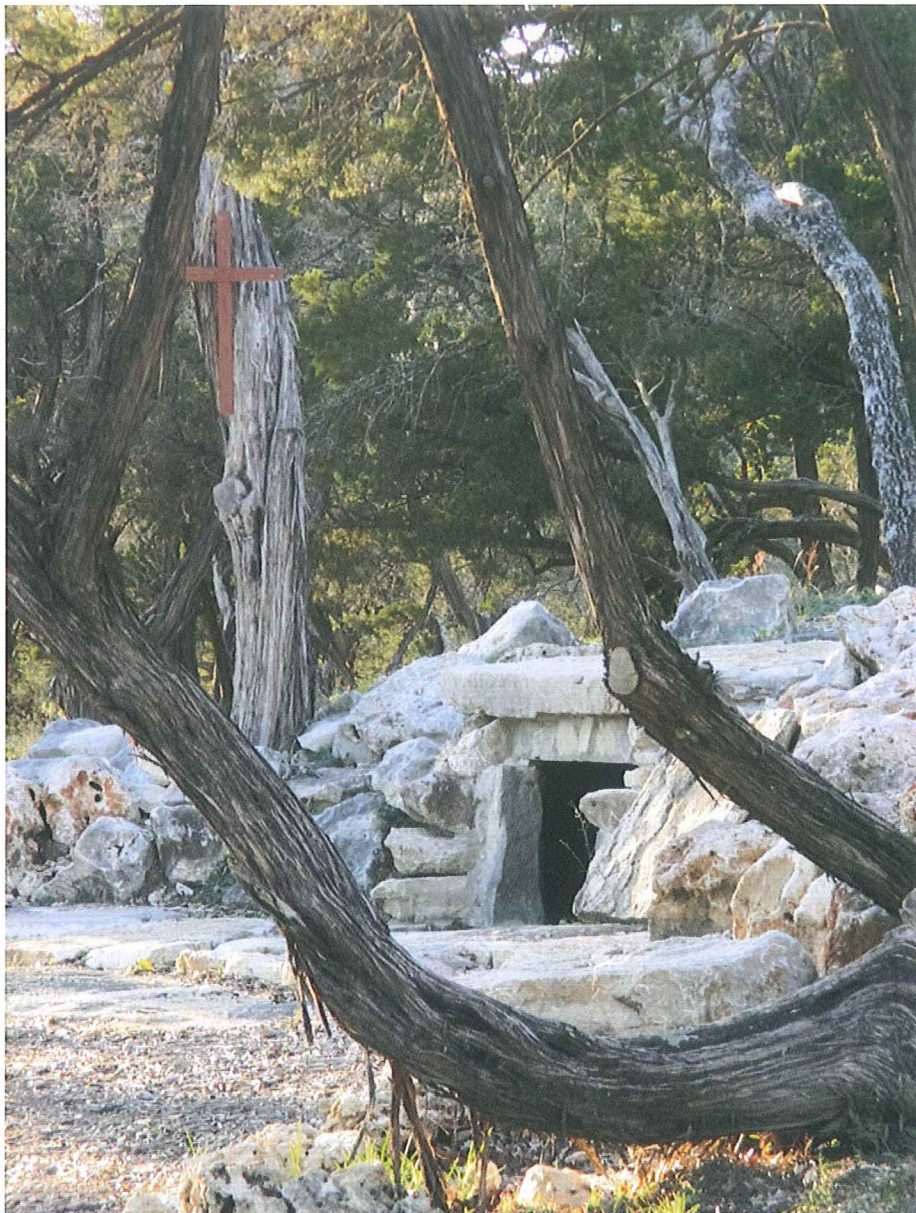
As I went to bed that night, I was about to take my allergy pill. I took an allergy panel test recently, and it said I'm allergic to like 22 out of 27 allergens present in the area. In particular, I'm extremely

allergic to cedar, like Fr. John Mary. As I reached for the medicine, I felt the Lord tell me, **"You don't need to take those anymore, you are healed both Body and Soul."** So that night I stopped. In addition I had been taking allergy shots to get rid of my allergies, and I stopped those at the same time. Everything is normal now.

My right wrist is healed as well. Over a year ago, I was bench-pressing when my wrist/hand popped in many different places all at the same time. Resulting in nearly complete loss of function in my right wrist. Initially the doctors didn't think I would be able to use it again. After treatment, it was at least usable, but I could barely pick up a glass of water. Eventually I went to a hand specialist in San Antonio. After checking my wrist out, he had no clue what was wrong with it. So at that point I left it at as I messed up, and I would have to deal with this mistake the rest of my life.

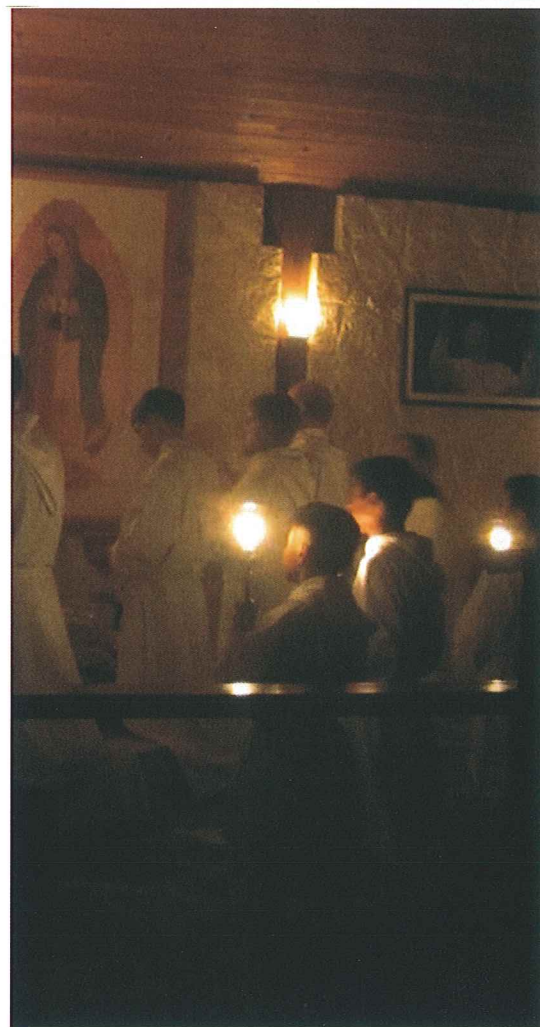
Fast forward almost a year later to before the retreat, and now I could use my wrist. But when it came to lifting or moving sizable objects, my wrist would seem to lose all its strength, pop, and then my strength would come back. And I knew that if I did anything extensive with weight, I would be in danger of injuring my wrist all over again. One day, after the retreat, when we were doing our exercise routine as a community, Br. Mikael asked if I would be willing to do pull ups, and I said that I would give it a try. Before the healing, I vowed to never do pull ups again because I hurt my right wrist beyond natural repair. But I went ahead and did the pull ups, trusting my wrist was healed. After exercise was over, I did about 30 pull ups and my wrist didn't hurt afterwards.

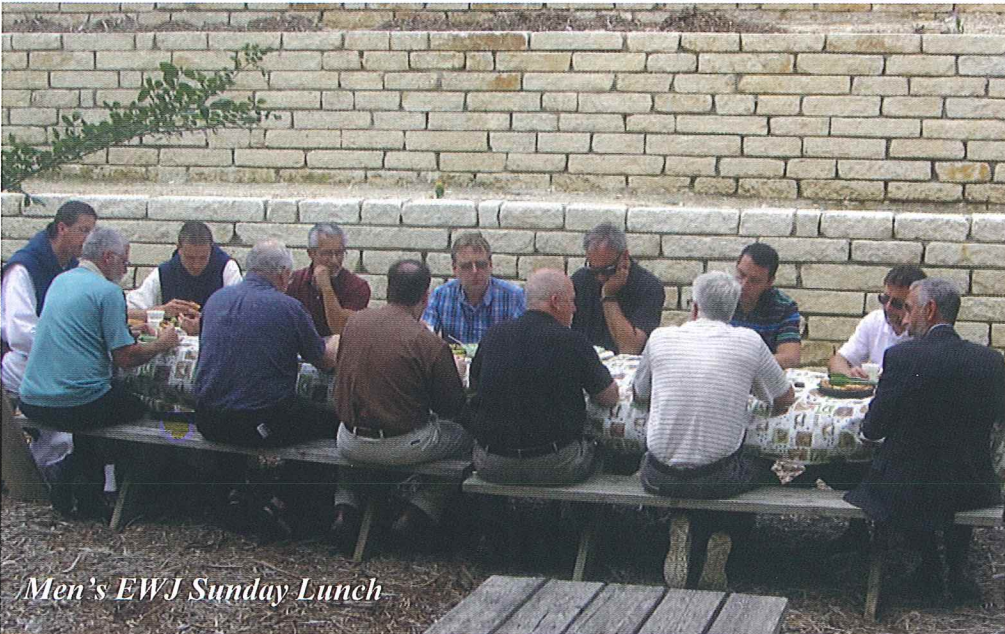
Last, but most important, I believe the Lord when He said that I was healed in my soul. I believe this to be that my soul was washed of its sin, and that anything



hindering me from being in union with God was removed. Of all that was healed, this is truly the most important. Because a person can be healed of everything, but if the soul is not one of them then I could still end up in the ring of fire.

I believe I was healed because of 3 main reasons. The first being it was God's Will. The second being I had Faith; I believed what the Lord said could be done. The Third being I obeyed, and did what He told me to do. Because the reality is, I'm just a sinful human being like the rest of the world. So God's Will, Faith, and obedience is what allowed this to happen. I truly believe that if it is God's Will, you have faith, and obey Him, that similar things can happen to any of us. ♦





Men's EWJ Sunday Lunch



"If anyone is thirsting, let him come to Me..."



EWJ Retreats

Fall 2016

AUGUST

11-14 Women (*English*)

18 - 21 Men (*English*)

SEPTEMBER

1 - 4 Women (*English*)

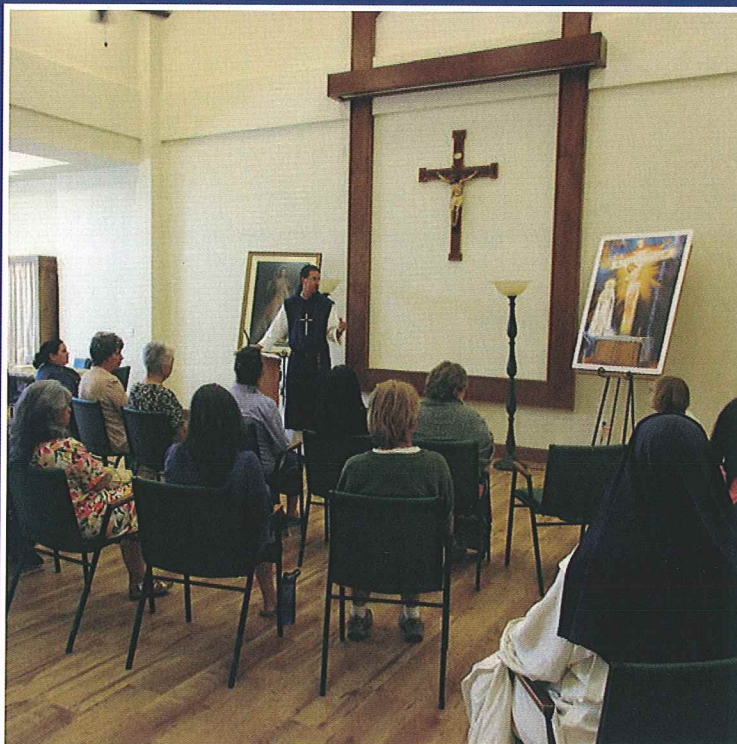
8 - 11 Women (*Spanish*)

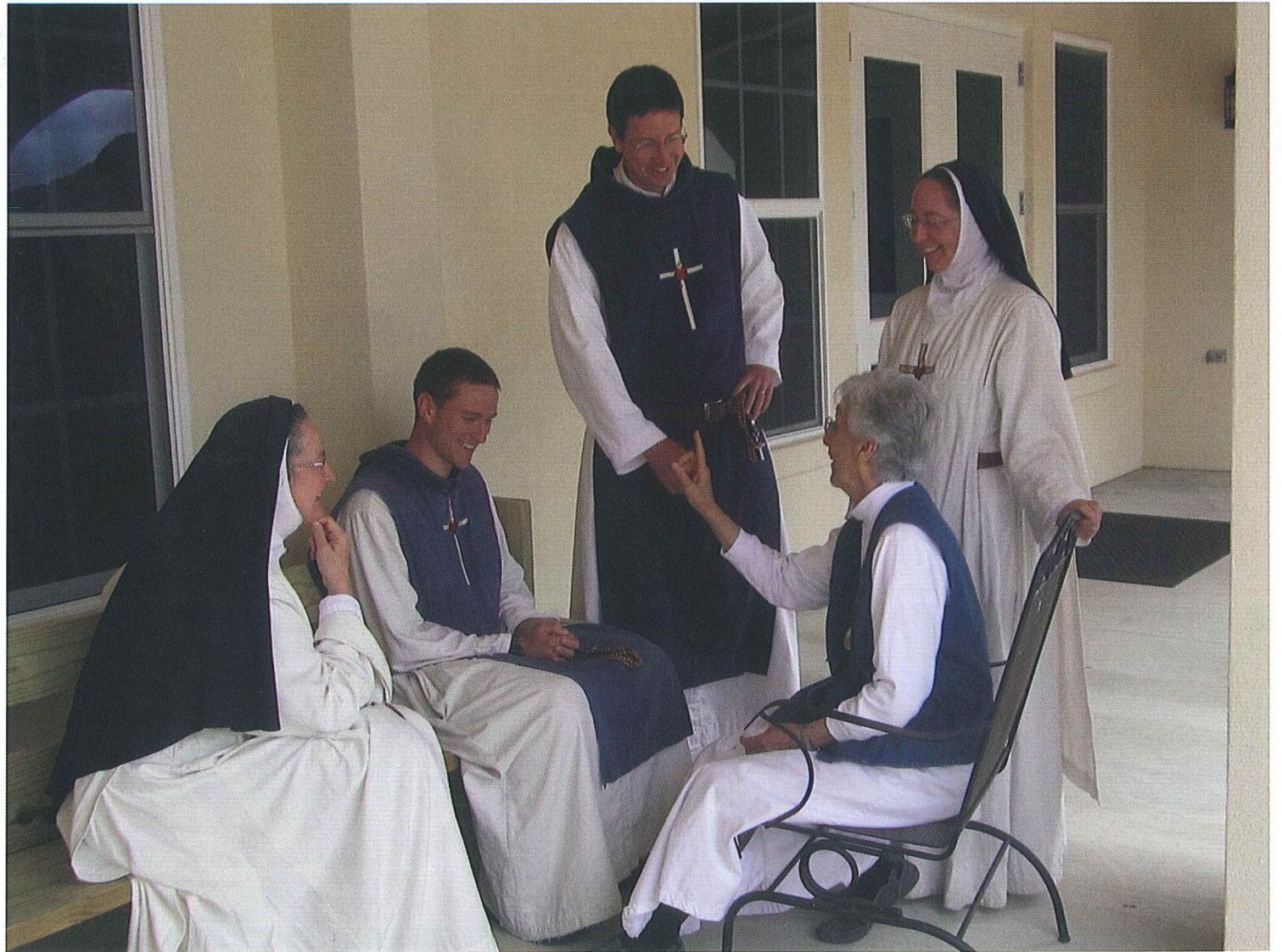
OCTOBER

6 - 9 Women (*English*)

27 - 30 Men (*Spanish*)

If you are interested in attending an *Encounter With Jesus* retreat please see our website or call Mariano & Sarah Granados at (830) 302-9707 for more information and to register.





THE THRILL IS NOT GONE!

I am speaking of the feeling I get each time I go into the O'Callaghan Divine Mercy Center---, whether it is for a staff meeting, a meal after Sunday Mass, or during one of our Encounter With Jesus retreats---I always have a sense of amazement and gratitude that this building actually exists and is paid for! Members of the Community have shared similar feelings. It means that our apostolic activities are moving forward.

NEXT....

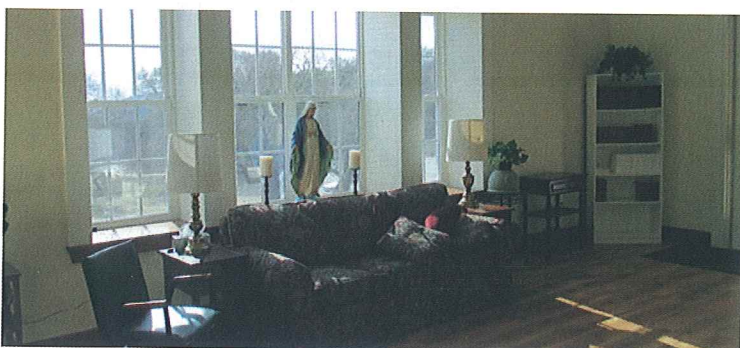
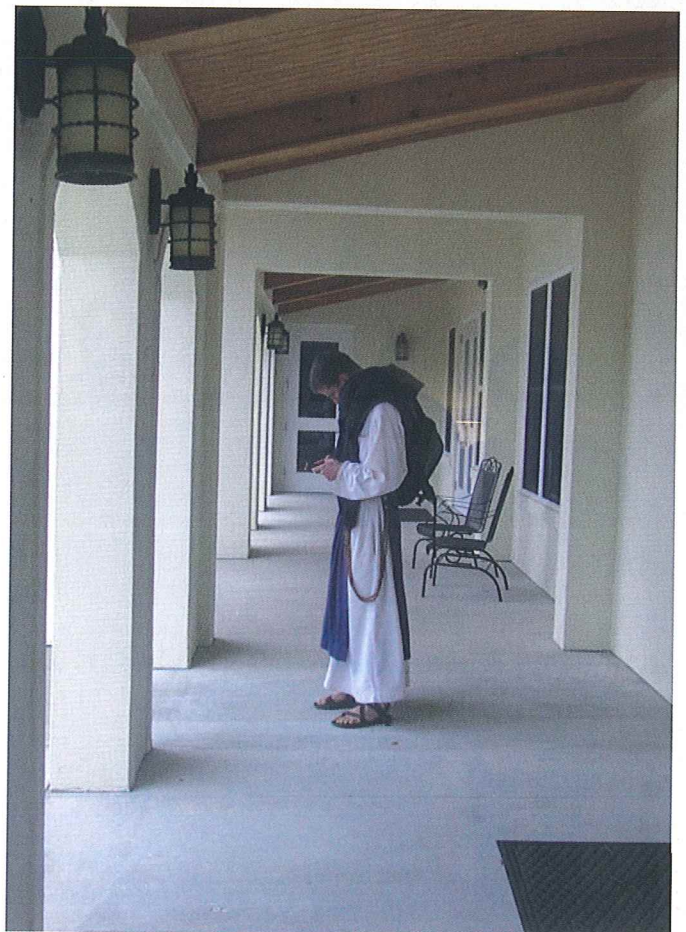
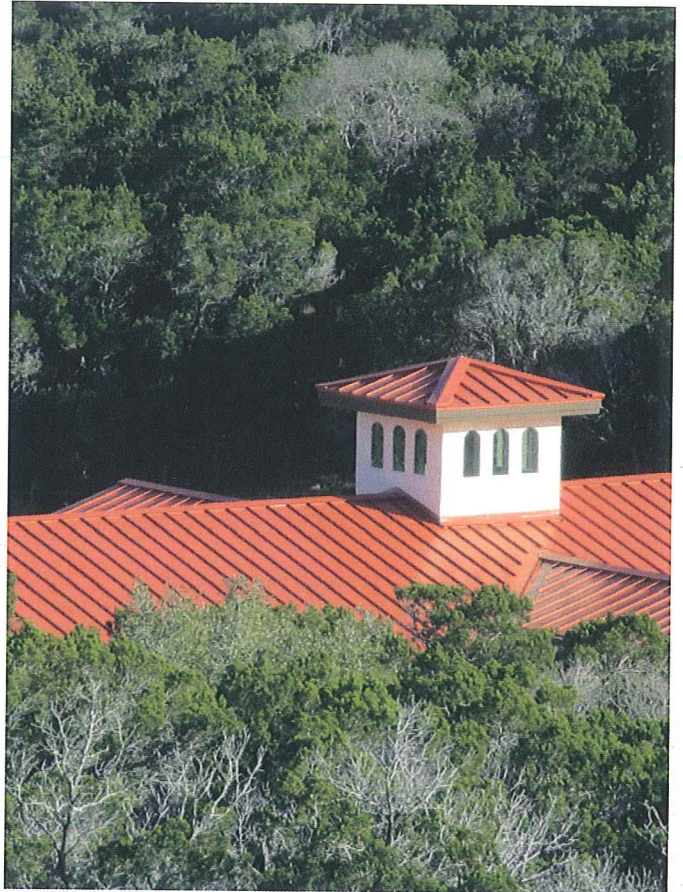
Now I look up at Tepeyac Hill (named for the site at which Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to St. Juan Diego) and know that it represents our next Everest to conquer. Tepeyac Hill which is across the parking lot from the O'Callaghan Center, is to be the site of **some new rustic cottages** which will provide additional overnight accommodations for our retreatants, and allow us to open the retreats to more people than the 21 we can currently sleep.

You will be hearing more about this building campaign in the near future. And like the O'Callaghan Center, it will require extensive fund raising, grant writing, and perhaps a few near-miraculous bequests.

IN THE MEANTIME...

Our operating budget is definitely feeling the pinch. Summer is always a slower time financially for us, but the bills keep needing to be paid. Please remember the Mission when you are thinking of making a charitable gift. Using our return envelope to make your gift also lets us know that you read and appreciate this newsletter. All gifts, unless otherwise specified, will go towards the support of the Community's apostolate and the operations needed to keep our gates open.

JESUS, WE TRUST IN YOU!





Mission of Divine Mercy
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A large group of approximately 40 people, mostly older adults, are posed for a group photo outdoors. They are standing on a bed of dry leaves in front of a wooden gazebo. The background consists of large, leafy trees under a clear blue sky. The group is arranged in several rows, with some individuals kneeling or sitting in the front. They are dressed in casual to semi-formal attire, including jackets, sweaters, and blouses.

Amici Christi Commitments

On the Saturday before Divine Mercy Sunday we had the renewal of Amici Christi members' yearly Commitment; the first Commitment of those who have been preparing for it these last two years; and the reception of new candidates into the novitiate period of formation