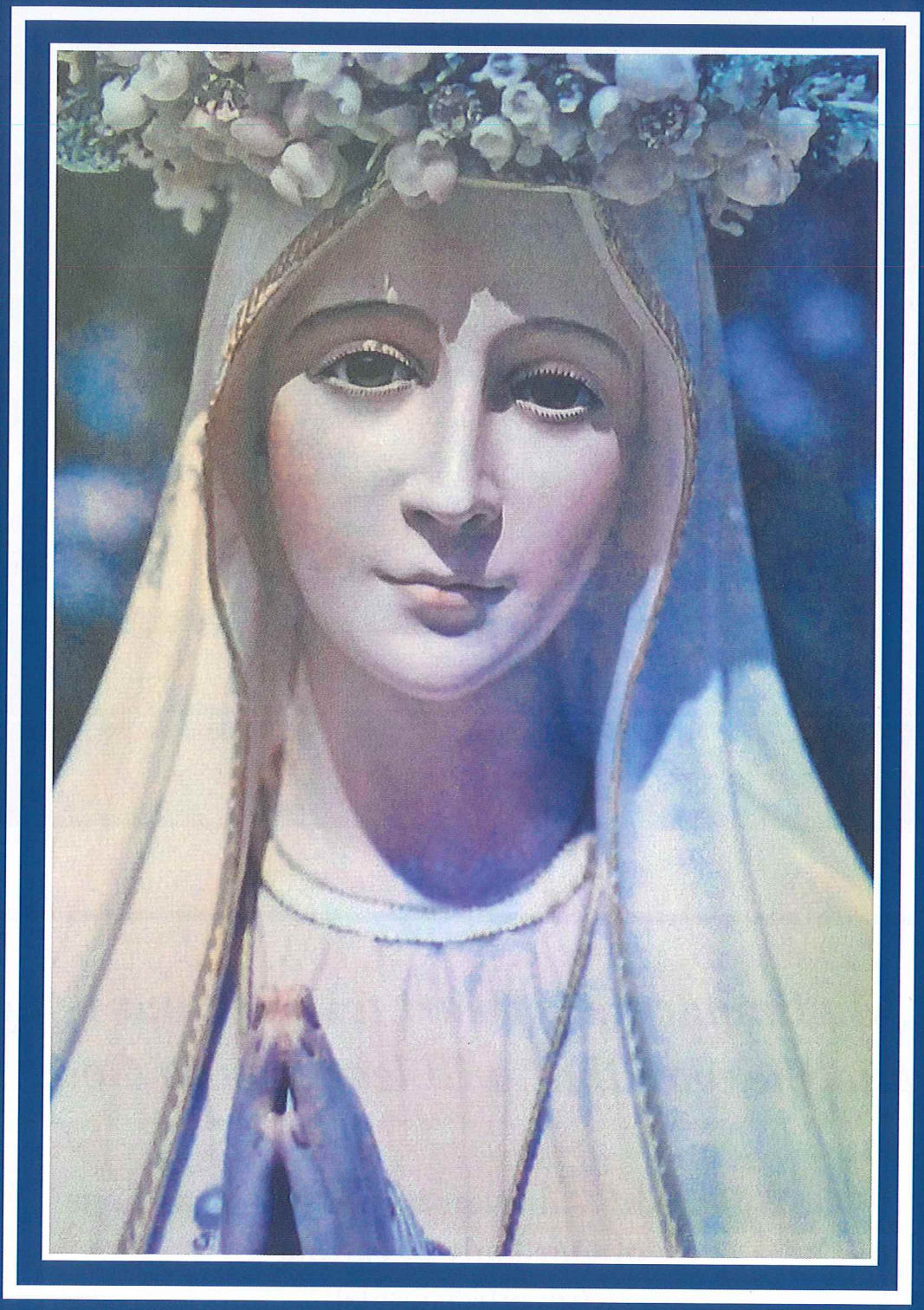
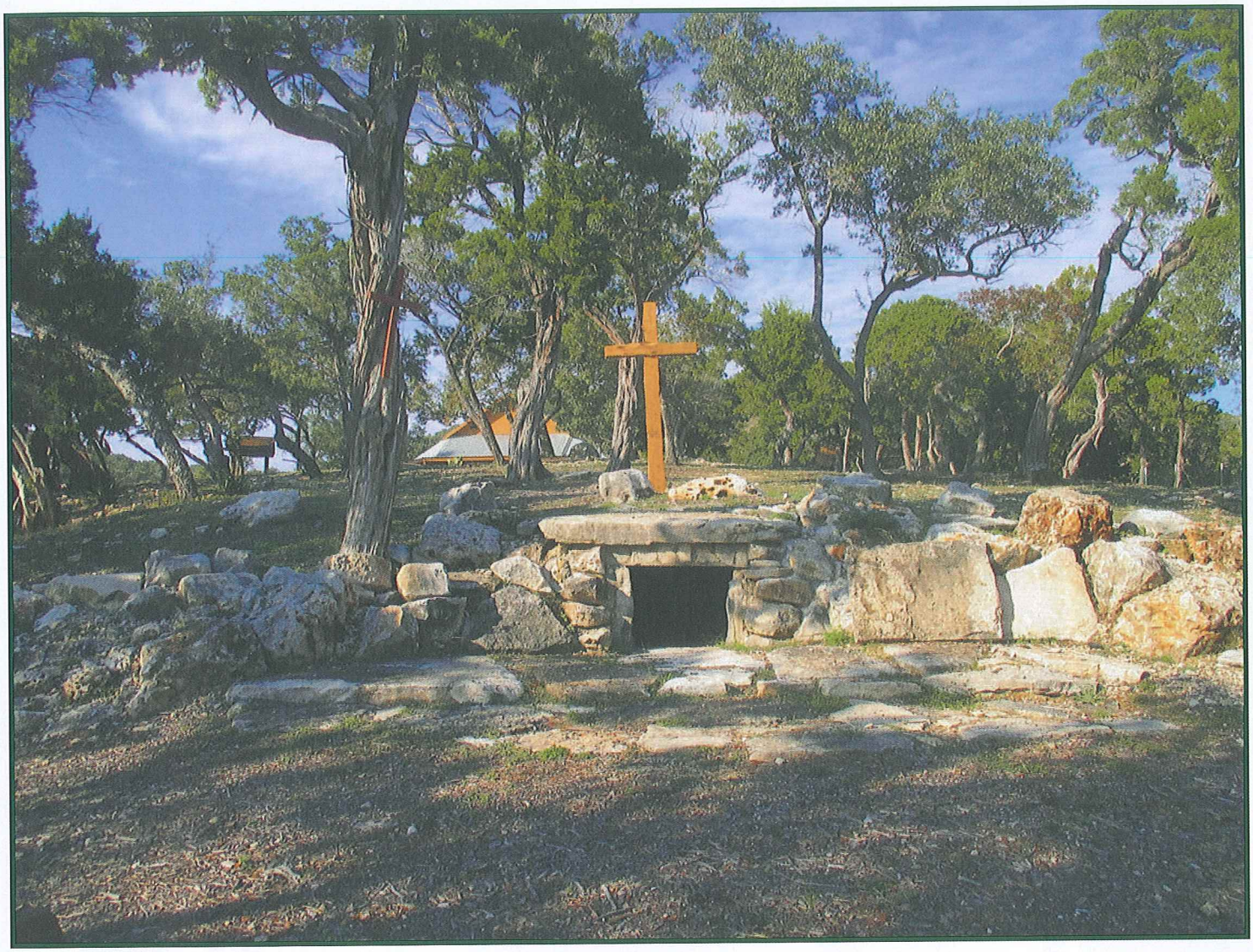
Mission of Divine Mercy - Spring 2017



"Are you suffering a great deal?
Don't lose heart. I will never forsake you...."

Our Lady at Fatima June 13, 1917



"...My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God."

The Hundredth Anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima

(see article inside)

NOTE: Our cover photo of the Pilgrim Statue of Fatima was a photo given to us by Margaret Mary Mathiesen+. Margaret Mary, may you rest in peace united to the Immaculate and Sorrowful Heart of Our Mother Whom you loved so faithfully during your journey Home.

From Fr. John Mary

The Thief's Surprise

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with Him. And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. Luke 23:32-33

Tradition tells us that one of these criminals is called Dismas. He plays a small, but significant role in the Passion account in Luke's Gospel. But because we've heard this Gospel passage so often, we may not realize how surprising are Dismas's words.

We meet Dismas in the very last hours of his life. We can believe that this is not the way he wanted his life to end. But he had taken advantage of many people. Had hurt many. A wasted life. And now it was ending in hopelessness.

Put yourself in the place of Dismas. Perhaps there are some sad, hard experiences in your life that may make it easier to imagine this.

Condemned. Crucified. Pain. Shame. Humiliation. There would be no way down from this cross except through death.

No, this was not the way that he wanted it to end. But no one was asking what he wanted. He had made his choices, and now he had no choice. Now he would die alone, attached to a cross.

Someone else.

But he was not completely alone. Next to him was Jesus of Nazareth. Dismas had heard a little about Him. But he certainly hadn't expected to find Him here.

Dismas knew that many people used to want to be close to this famous Jesus. Now almost nobody did. But Dismas, at this moment of his life, finds himself in the company of this Jesus. Close to Him because neither of them can go anywhere. Dismas with Jesus! It was almost funny.

But nothing is funny at that moment. There is only hatred, fear and pain. And Jesus is suffering even more than Dismas himself. Hated more. Treated worse. Experiencing an all-consuming agony.

"Father, forgive them…

Dismas hears Jesus say,

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Forgive? *Forgive?!* This Jesus is different…

And that Woman must be His Mother. You can tell. She's dying too….

"JESUS, REMEMBER ME"

Dismas observes Jesus and His Mother and then Dismas utters one of the most surprising declarations in the Gospels:

"Jesus, remember me, when You come into Your Kingdom."

In the midst of the pain and turmoil of that moment, what could possibly lead him to make such a statement? A statement that is surprising in so many ways.

"Your Kingdom"? Some king! He's dying weak, helpless and rejected. Abandoned even by His disciples. The only ones calling Him a king at that moment are doing so as a mockery: *"If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!"*

Yet somehow this thief senses that Jesus really is a King. In the overwhelming ugliness of this event how does Dismas sense that?

And how can you ask someone who doesn't even know you – *and you're a thief* – someone who is dying in torment, to *remember you?* Why should they? Have you done anything for them? Are you at all worthy?

And not only that, but Dismas also believes that *Jesus is about to enter into His kingdom!* Is Dismas delirious? Can't he see that Jesus is dying in agony!

The other thief *railed at Jesus, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!"* But what is Dismas asking for? He has been a thief, living for this world. But now he is hoping for something else. He is not asking to be taken down from the cross. Or to escape death. He is asking for something else. Maybe he's not even sure what this is. But it is something beyond death. And it comes from Jesus.

What led Dismas to this act of faith?

This seems to me one of the greatest witnesses to Jesus and His Mercy in all of history. Even as He is being crucified, dying by a torture which would rip away any mask of "niceness," there was something so Good and Merciful about Jesus that it allowed – compelled – Dismas to dare to ask this. To trust in His Mercy.

"TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE."

And Jesus responds to him!

"Today you will be with Me in Paradise."

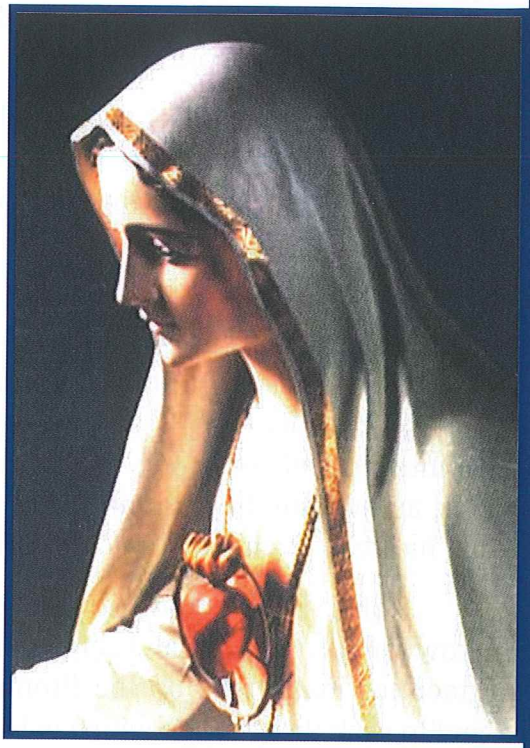
And it's not just the words. It's the way He said it. What was in His eyes.

That is enough for Dismas. He doesn't ask for any proof. He believes. He believes that somehow this wretched, Crucified One is about to enter Paradise!

And that today he, Dismas, will be there, too. ◆

FATIMA: The Hundredth Anniversary

In the summer of 1914 the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, became the catalyst for a horrendous military conflagration that spread throughout all of Europe. Young men of 19th century sensibilities boarded boats and trains or rode bravely off on horseback to do battle. They left their homes, fully expecting to be back by Christmas. Instead they found themselves plunging into the abyss of horror that would become World War I and would debut modern technological warfare.



The first fatality was Christendom itself. The world as men knew it was forever changed.

On May 5, 1917 - having exhausted all the diplomatic channels at his disposal, and having been repeatedly rebuffed as a mediator by the leaders of the belligerent nations - Pope Benedict XV prayed an impassioned prayer to the Blessed Mother, begging Her to come to the aid of Her despairing children.

Eight days later, on May 13th, a beautiful young Woman appeared to three shepherd children outside the village of Fatima, Portugal. And She revealed to them the way to obtain world peace....

Lucia, Bl. Francisco and Bl. Jacinta

This year, as the Church marks the hundredth anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima, we might do well to re-visit – or to become acquainted with - the extraordinary story that is Fatima.

There are the initial apparitions of the Angel of Portugal to the children in 1916; the six landmark apparitions of Our Lady Herself in 1917 that culminated in the spectacular Miracle of the Sun witnessed by an estimated 100,000 people; the heroic sanctity of the three visionaries themselves; the messages, requests, and predictions of Our Lady; and the history of the 20th century which could be seen as revealing the horrific consequences of ignoring Our Lady's admonitions.

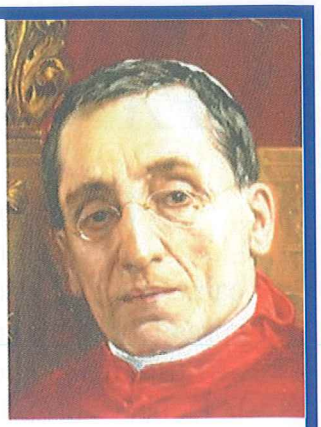
At Fatima, Our Blessed Mother identified Herself as Our Lady of the

Rosary. Essentially She said that the Lord asked for the propagation of devotion to Her Immaculate Heart and to Her Rosary so that *our hearts* might be turned to the Father, and peace might be restored to our world.

She specifically requested the formal Consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart; and that we offer Communions of Reparation on five consecutive First Saturdays of the month.

Sadly, one hundred blood-soaked years later, we have a world that is the witness of unspeakable atrocities. Battles not only rage across continents and countries; they rage within families, and within the heart and soul of the individual himself. Even our Church is not immune.

This Lent could we not pray that this providential Centennial bring with it a special grace to finally take up the Promise of Fatima; and to seek that Refuge which is Her Heart. ◆



Pope Benedict XV's Prayer on May 5, 1917

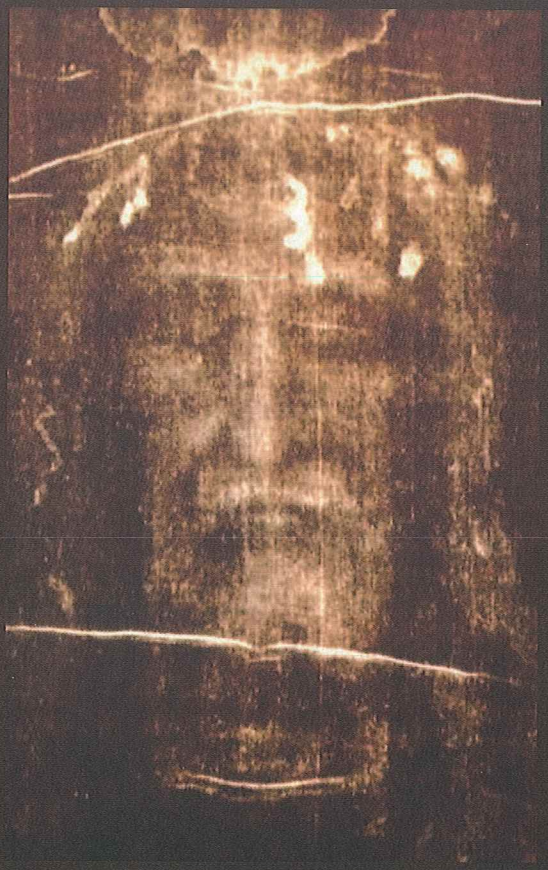
To Mary, then,
Who is the Mother of Mercy
and omnipotent by grace,
let loving and devout appeal go up from every corner of the earth, from noble temples and tiniest chapels, from royal palaces and mansions of the rich as from the poorest hut, from blood-drenched plains and seas.
Let it bear to Her the anguished cry of mothers and wives, the wailing of innocent little ones, the sighs of every generous heart:
that Her most tender and benign solicitude may be moved and the peace we ask for be obtained for our agitated world.

"Jesus wants to use you to make Me known and loved. He wishes to establish the devotion to My Immaculate Heart throughout the world. I promise salvation to whoever embraces it; these souls will be dear to God, like flowers put by Me to adorn His throne." Our Lady to Lucia, June 13, 1917

Actual photo of crowd during the Miracle of the Sun, October 13th, 1917.

Triduum Retreat

"Come, My little children.
Follow Me on the road to Calvary.
Watch with Me in the Garden of Gethsemane.
Hang with Me on the Cross.
Live the Silence of the Father
during those nine hours, those two days.
Live the Sorrow of the Blessed Mother,
My Mother.
Wait with Her. Hope with Her.
Receive Me when I come to you
in Holy Communion early Sunday morning,
reborn in your heart as I was to all the world
that morning in the Garden.
Follow along the path of the Paschal Mystery
of the Death and Resurrection,
of Suffering and Hope.
Join Me on this retreat. I wait for you."



This is a very simple retreat that begins the evening of Holy Thursday and concludes Easter Sunday morning. **There are no talks.** Each individual is invited to live with us the liturgical services of these days (see the Holy Week Schedule on the next page) and to spend the rest of the time in silence, meditating on the mysteries of these hours with the help of the Holy Scriptures and *The Gospel as Revealed to Me* by Maria Valtorta. (For more information on this please see our website.)

Unfortunately, we cannot offer lodging. In the past, people coming from far away have stayed at local hotels.

These same liturgical events are open to all the public and we invite everyone to participate in them. That which is made available only to our retreatants is listed below:

Every day:

- Use of a copy of the Bible and the *Gospel as Revealed to Me* (volume 10).
- The conference room of the OCC is reserved just for retreatants.

Holy Thursday evening:

- Dinner and introduction/orientation for the retreat.

Good Friday:

- Light lunch
- The Mission closes at 5 PM but remains open to retreatants until 7 PM.

Holy Saturday:

- Mission closes at 12 PM but remains open to retreatants until 6 PM.

Easter Sunday:

- Final retreat session with Fr. John Mary after the public breakfast gathering.

Cost: $30

To register: Please visit our website **www.missionofdivinemercy.com** or call Mariano and Sarah Granados at (830) 302-9707

Holy Week Schedule

Holy Thursday

- **Solemn Mass 7:30** PM
- **Procession and Eucharistic Vigil**
  Ends at 10:30 PM

Good Friday

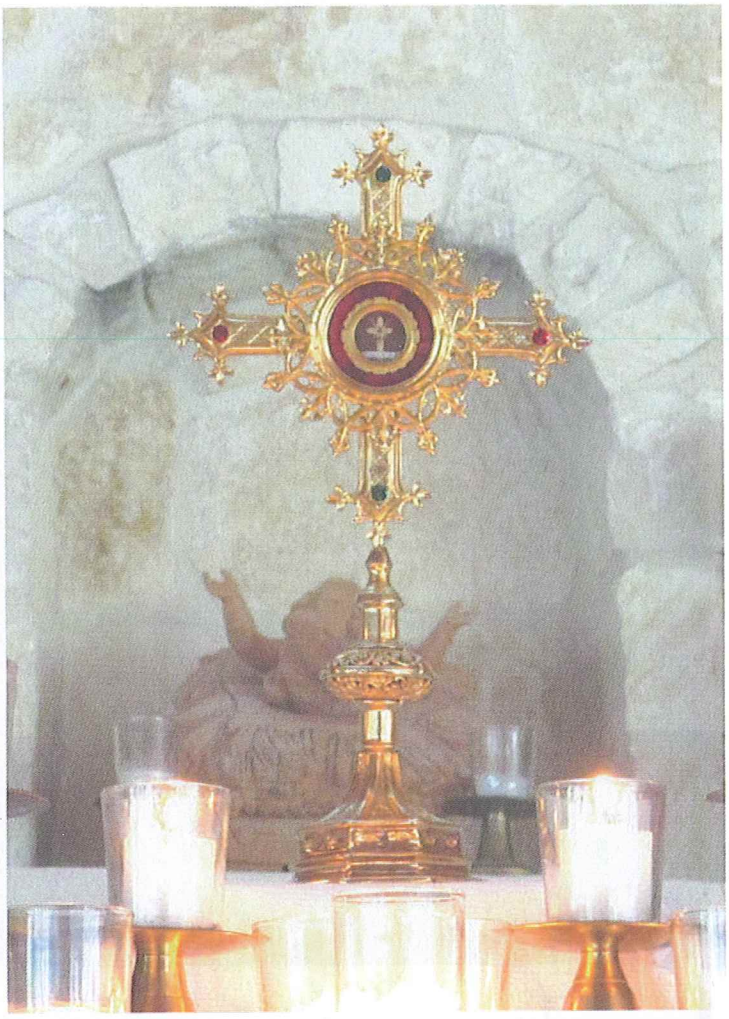
- **Way of the Cross 9:00** AM
- **Veneration of the Relic of the True Cross**
  After the Way of the Cross
- **Confessions**
  Beginning after the Way of the Cross until 4:00 PM
- **Service of the Passion 2:00** PM
- **Divine Mercy Novena**
  Immediately after Service of the Passion
- **Mission closes to public 5:00** PM

Holy Saturday

- **Rosary and Meditation 9:00** AM
- **Confessions 9:00 -11:00** AM
- **Divine Mercy Novena 10:00** AM
- **St. Joseph's Chapel closes 11:00** AM
- **Mission closes to public 12:00** PM

Easter Sunday

- **Easter Vigil 6:00** AM
- **Reception 8:00** AM
- **Mission closes 12:00** PM



Divine Mercy Alert! April 23

"I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day...

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

THE SOUL THAT WILL GO TO CONFESSION AND RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION SHALL OBTAIN COMPLETE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND PUNISHMENT."

The promise of Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 699

STOP! DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU JUST READ IN THE PASSAGE ABOVE!

Maybe you have heard this Promise before, or maybe you are reading it for the first time.

I have been aware of this Promise for many years, but last year as I prepared for Divine Mercy Sunday I found myself asking, "Can this really be true? Am I understanding this correctly? By participating fully in Divine Mercy Sunday, by fulfilling these conditions, will God truly not only forgive my sins, as He does in every good Confession, but will He also wipe away the punishment due for those sins? "

It was as if I was hearing the Promise for the first time — *and it seemed unbelievable to me.*

Do you remember, when you were being instructed by your teachers, about the Sacrament of Penance? Likely you were told that in Confession, your sins were forgiven, but you still had to pay the price for your sin. My teacher used the example of someone stealing an apple from the store. If you came back and apologized, you would be forgiven, but justice demanded that you make restitution. If you could not return the apple, you would have to sweep the floor.

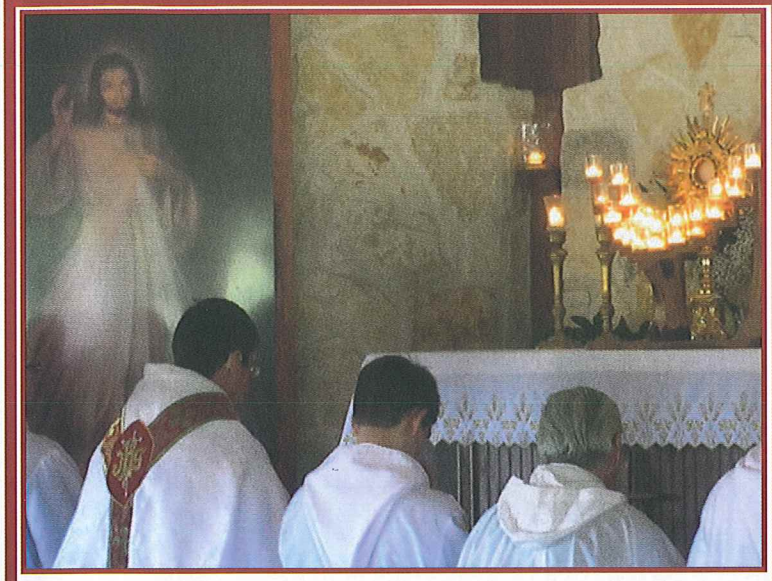
There is forgiveness; there is also justice.

But God is saying: *Yes, My time of Justice will come, BUT FIRST, because I love you so much, I am giving you this unbelievably generous gift, this special time of My Mercy.*

Believe Him.

Do not let this life-changing promise go unclaimed by you. Participate in Divine Mercy Sunday this year, whether at your parish, the Mission of Divine Mercy, or any Catholic church that is celebrating this great Feast that occurs on the first Sunday after Easter. ◆

Divine Mercy Sunday
at the Mission



Mission opens 12:00 PM

Confessions
12:15-2:30 PM

Eucharistic Adoration
12:00 -2:45 PM

Chaplet
2:45 :00 PM

Solemn Mass
3:00 PM

Veneration of the Image
After Mass

Reception
After Mass

Please respect our request for modest dress

The Promise Made by Jesus vs. The Indulgence Instituted by St. John Paul II

Our Lord's Promise to St. Faustina is part of a private revelation that has been accepted by the Church. But St. John Paul, during his papacy, also created a Plenary Indulgence of Divine Mercy. While Catholics are not obligated to believe in private revelations, they are obligated to believe by faith that if they fulfill the conditions of an Indulgence, that they will certainly receive what the Pope has promised: **full remission of the temporal punishment due to their forgiven sins.**

This explains why the Holy See "institutionalized" the Promise in the form of an Indulgence. Like creating the Feast of Mercy itself, it was inspired by a private revelation, but made effective by the authority of the Church.

Conditions For Achieving the Indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday*

- A sacramental confession
- Eucharistic communion
- Prayers for the Pope's intentions
- Take part in the prayers and devotions held in honor of Divine Mercy, or, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the Tabernacle, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. "Merciful Jesus, I trust in You.")

* It is appropriate, but not necessary, that the sacramental Confession and especially Holy Communion and the prayer for the Pope's intentions take place on the same day that the indulgenced work is performed; but it is sufficient that these sacred rites and prayers be carried out within several days (about 20) before or after the indulgenced act. Prayer for the Pope's intentions is left to the choice of the faithful, but an "Our Father" and a "Hail Mary" are suggested.

— Information gathered from EWTN website

An EWJ Experience

I have been in a sort of desert for some time. So, before coming on this retreat, I asked the Blessed Mother if, she would obtain for me the grace of some small (or large!) consolation while on this retreat.

During private Adoration in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel on Friday, I was kneeling in front of the altar, praying the Sorrowful mysteries. While praying the fifth Mystery, the Crucifixion, I could see within me the Pieta. Mary was lovingly holding Jesus, her broken son, in her arms. With a glance, she invited me to Him. I was overcome, and with each Hail Mary I began to kiss His wounds. Concluding the Rosary, I prostrated myself before Him in my heart while she still held Him.

Then He was seated on His throne and still prostrating before Him I said, "Jesus you know I love You, but how can I be more pleasing to You?" Quickly the response came to my heart, audible to me only. He said, "You ARE pleasing to Me, little one."

I was blown away and for a minute thought I was just telling myself that, but I realized that I never refer to myself or anyone else as "little one." I treasure this beyond measure. ◆

For more information or to register for an *Encounter With Jesus* retreat, please visit our website **www.missionofdivinemercy.org** or call Mariano & Sarah Granados at (830) 302-9707.

Upcoming
Encounter With Jesus
Retreat dates:

MAY
11-14 Women *(English)*
25-28 Women *(Spanish)*

JUNE
8-11 Men *(English)*

We invite you
to leave behind for a while
the noise, the agitation,
the superficial.
And enter into the "desert",
the silence where
***HE** awaits you.*

Haven't I Always Taken Care of You?

The following is an excerpt of a letter that we received from a recent EWJ retreatant. It was accompanied by a check for $5000.

Dear Fr. John Mary,

When you tell retreatants to go to Adoration during the wee hours of the morning, amazing things can happen. I was telling Jesus how thankful I was to Him for this wonderful Holy Ground, so faithful to the heritage of the Catholic church. He started nudging me to make a donation.

I said "OK Lord, I'll send two thousand." Jesus said to me, "How about 10%?" I said, "Lord, what about my retirement, especially if you take my husband home to You? How will I survive financially?" Jesus said to me, "Haven't I always taken care of you? How is this any different?"

So here is what Jesus asked, and I give it to you joyfully. It is part of the inheritance my Dad left me after he died of Alzheimer's disease. Please keep him in your prayers. ...

An EWJ Retreatant

Letters like this, arriving unexpectedly in the morning mail, go a long way toward keeping us going--- both financially and spiritually.

Often we at the Mission find ourselves asking God --- "How will we survive financially?"

And then He says, "Haven't I always taken care of you?"

"Yes, Lord, you have. You have given us the love and support of many, many good people. Some who are old friends, some who are new or even unknown to us."

The Lord continues to take care of us, but He does it through YOU! We need YOUR support.

It takes a lot of money to keep this Mission going day in and day out. But what the Lord is accomplishing here is---as the commercial says---priceless.

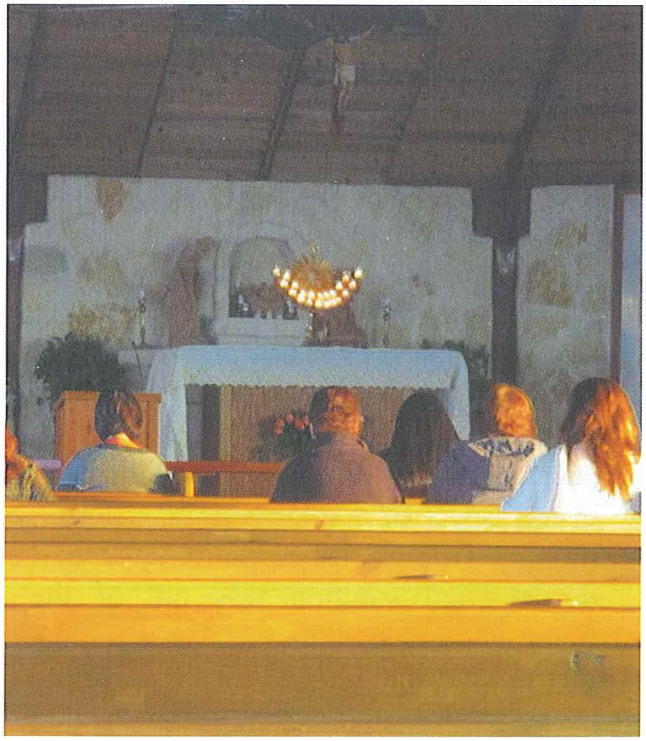
Please ask the Lord in prayer if He wants you to help support the Mission. ◆

Interested in Joining Amici Christi?

There are two initial requirements for anyone who has a sincere interest in joining *Amici Christi*, the lay branch of MDM. The requirements are:

- First, complete an *Encounter With Jesus* retreat.
- Then attend the September 16th, 2017 mandatory meeting.

For information about *Amici Christi* and upcoming *Encounter With Jesus* retreats, please see our website: **www.missionofdivinemercy.com** or call our office at 830-905-4515.



CAPTURING THE SUN : Solar Power at the Mission

By Bill Roderique

You may have seen, or will soon start to see solar panels going up around the Mission. That's right, MDM is going Green! Well, sort of! We will soon (in God's time) have eight 7.3 KW solar power generation systems up and running. Padre Pio (a.k.a. Dave's workshop) is the first Mission building to be receiving solar power, and our most recently installed well is also powered by solar.

When fully installed, this system will have the potential to save up to 40% of our current electric bill.

This project was made possible by an unexpected gift, given specifically for this purpose. The donor wishes to remain anonymous, but he says he felt that the Lord was leading him to give the money for this specific purpose.

As I shared at a recent Amici Christi meeting, every step of the MDM Solar Project has been an act of trust in the Lord!

Following my discernment to join MDM last Easter, Fr. John Mary asked me to look into what it would take to provide solar power for MDM. This task was to be a part of the preparedness effort, which was already well underway. My engineering background and natural interest in solar power were well suited to the task. Also, I had to wait until at least August to join MDM, so I had some free time on my hands.

I spent the next 6 months becoming an "expert" in solar power; at least as much of an expert as one can become in that short a period of time. I enlisted the aid of consultants, had several vendors competing on bids and studied every aspect of a solar energy system. As the months wore on, it became obvious that a vendor-supplied solution was out of the question. The lowest bids were near $300,000 and that did not include batteries (one of the costliest parts of the system)! One vendor gave a quote of $1.2 million to supply the entire system, including batteries. Without knowing the particulars of MDM's finances, I assumed that these prices would be more than they were interested in spending.

MDM finances! It was a good thing that I was approaching this project without knowing that there wasn't really any money in the budget for such a project. It was true that Fr. John Mary had only asked me to research the possibility. However, if I had known that there was no budget, I would not have taken the steps that I did, and would probably have come up with a very poor solution. As it was, this ignorance allowed me some freedom to explore the possibilities without concern for the cost. When I learned that we had no money to build a solar power system, I admit to feeling a little deflated. Now what, I thought?

Trust in the Lord! I decided to investigate the price of just purchasing the hardware and trusting that the Lord would provide the money, the expertise and the labor to install it. (minor de-

tails!) Little did I know that I was to become the expertise and at least part of the labor.

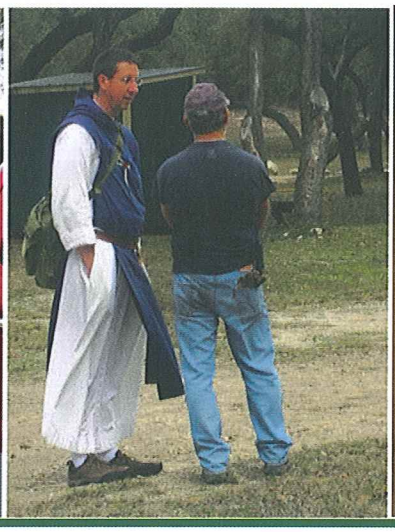
About this time, an anonymous donor, who knew about our interest in solar power, offered MDM a targeted donation of up to $150,000 to purchase the solar equipment. Trust in the Lord! We took this as a strong indication to pursue the solar initiative!

After many internet hours and phone calls, I was able to find a source that offered me a terrific price on all of the equipment, with the exception of the batteries. Purchasing batteries in the USA would push the system cost above the budget. One vendor, offered to redirect a container full of batteries coming from China to MDM. A light bulb went off! Why pay this vendor to be a middle man if we are purchasing their entire shipment of batteries? Why not go directly to the battery manufacturers in China and buy our own container full of batteries?! Turns out the savings was drastic and would fit within our budget. Of course, I had never imported anything in my life and had no idea of the complexity of US customs or the details/costs associated with actually shipping something from China. Trust in the Lord!

Long story short, the batteries arrived Feb 11th. There were 192 batteries weighing 130lbs each that had to be unloaded from the shipping container in 2 hours or else MDM would have to pay the trucking company $85/hr after that. I had no idea where we would find the volunteers or equipment to unload these batteries in that short period of time! Trust in the Lord! Saturday came and so did the volunteers and equipment. It was an exceptional outpouring of charity on behalf of all who showed up.

We are now in the process of setting up all of this equipment. The final cost, after all the unknowns are accounted for, will be almost exactly $150,000.

TRUST IN THE LORD!



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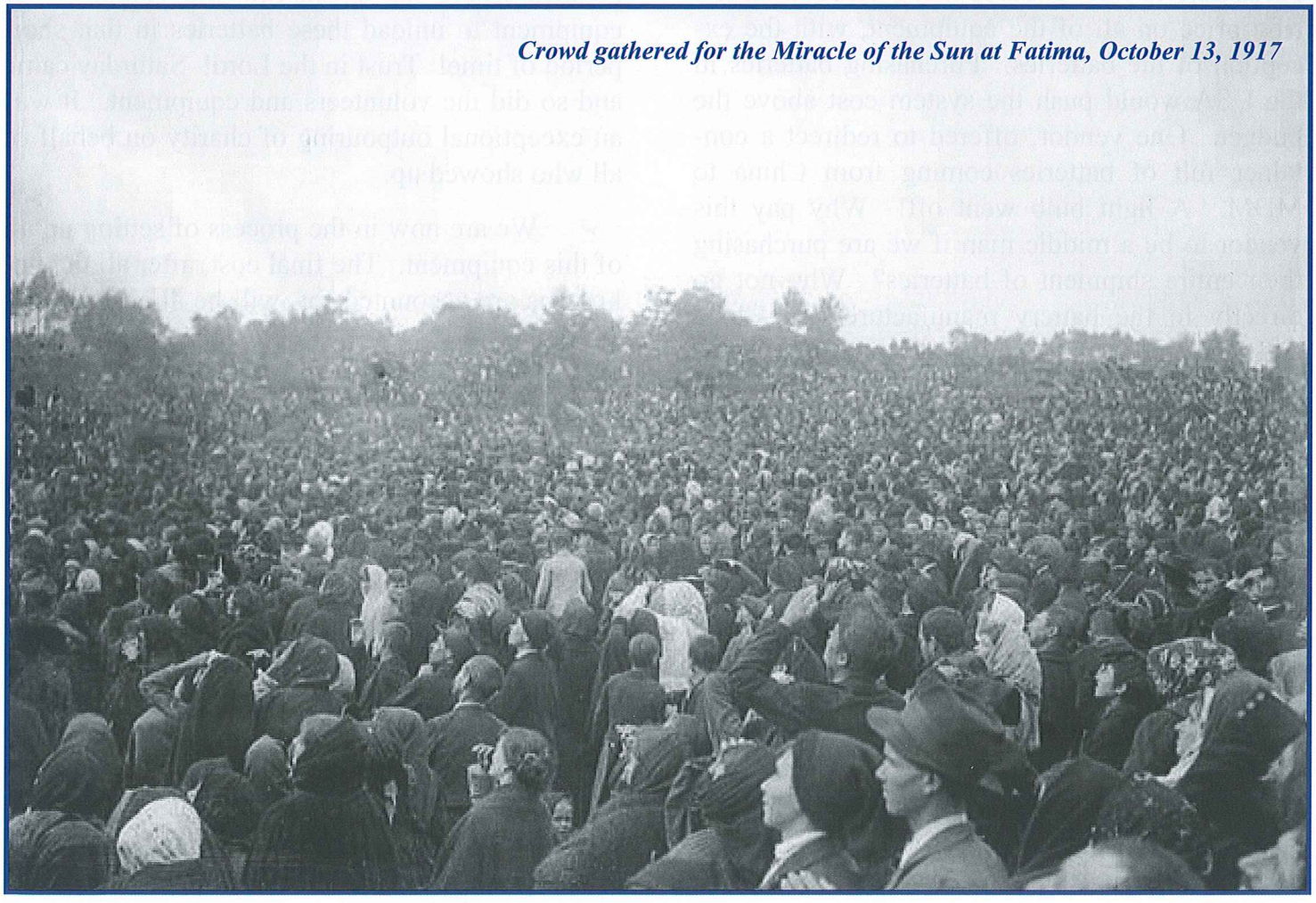

Crowd gathered for the Miracle of the Sun at Fatima, October 13, 1917