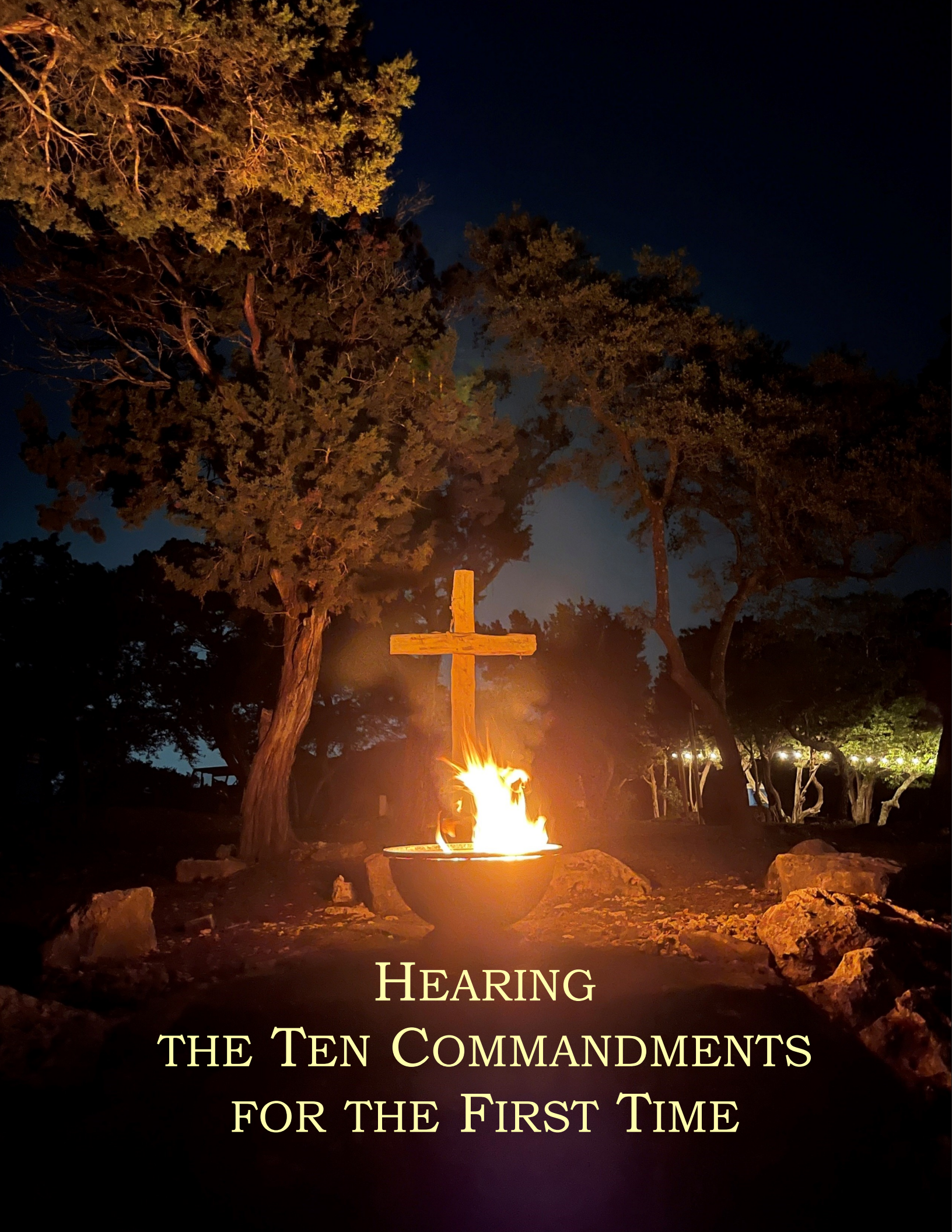


Paschaltide 2023

“This is the night
that with a pillar of fire
banished the darkness of sin.”

the Exultet



HEARING
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
FOR THE FIRST TIME

“God didn’t give Moses The Ten Suggestions.”

Many people, if they think about the Commandments at all, have decided that they no longer apply to our modern world. There are even those who teach that Jesus did away with them when He spoke of the importance of loving God and your neighbor as the greatest commandments. But those who teach that are forgetting what else Jesus had to say:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 5: 17-19)

The Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai were written on stone as a sign of their *everlasting* presence.

Two thousand years ago, but many centuries after God’s action on Mount Sinai, the dust of humanity threatened to obscure these Gifts from God. Jesus came and cleansed them with His Blood and with Mary’s tears so that they would once again be luminous, a radiant light to guide His children.

Today, the dust is once again collecting. Our current culture wants to forget the Commandments. To call them quaint, old fashioned, dangerous, or even harmful, and in any event, no longer applicable to our sophisticated, technologically advanced world. But the Commandments contain TRUTH UPON TRUTH. They remain clear indicators of God’s Will for us. And it is by ignoring this Truth, these gifts to humanity, that individuals and nations bring *unnecessary* suffering upon themselves and upon our world.

Instead of ignoring the Ten Commandments and treating them as irrelevant, we need to look at them with fresh eyes. God’s Presence is in every one of the Commandments, and each one of them is a building block in the founda-

tion of the true relationship He wishes to build with us. *We need to hear them as a dialogue between ourselves and the Father.*

Listen to each Commandment as if God is presenting them to YOU for the very first time, and He really wants YOU to understand His reasoning in offering it.

I am the Lord your God; you shall not have strange gods before Me.

I ask you to recognize ME as your God, as the ONLY GOD. To acknowledge and receive this Truth within yourselves. I AM GOD. There is NO other. I recognize you. I receive you as MY PEOPLE, as MY CHILDREN. I AM THE ONE WHO IS, and it is I, and only I, who bring each of you into existence. I ask you to love Me with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, because this is how I LOVE YOU. And in this love is the fulfillment of all JOY. And I want this joy for you.

You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.

I ask you to respect, honor and love MY NAME, for it is through this NAME that Grace and salvation come to you. Because it is a sign of My Love for you, of My closeness to you, that I share My Name with you. My Name and My Presence are one.

Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.

I ask that you “keep the Sabbath,” that you honor My Feasts – the remembrance of what I have done for you – as I always have each of you before My eyes, in My Heart. Heaven has not changed or eliminated them; they remain in force, they will always remain in force.

Honor your father and your mother.

I ask that you honor your earthly father and mother, to honor legitimate authorities, AS JESUS DID in His earthly life, because in this respect and obedience you show respect and obedience to Me, to the order I established, as an image of the order and love that is present in Our Mystery, in Heaven.

You shall not kill.

I ask that you respect the life given to others, that you imitate Me, Who Am the giver of

Life. Everything I do, My children, is to GIVE YOU LIFE, the everlasting, holy, beautiful Life in My Kingdom.

You shall not commit adultery.

I ask that you not soil your souls and your bodies with fornication and adultery, that you may be like ME – WHO AM ALWAYS FAITHFUL TO YOU; that your love for Me and for others may be untainted – as MY LOVE FOR YOU IS PURE. In this Commandment there is a reiteration of the first one. FIDELITY TO ME. ONLY TO ME.

You shall not steal.

I ask that you not steal – tangible, intangible, spiritual – for I HAVE GIVEN ALL TO YOU. I have shared with you ALL, that is MYSELF. And I give to each what is necessary for their missions. There is no need to steal, My children. In this act is hidden a lack of trust, of disobedience, of selfishness. An antithesis to that which I have given you as an example.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

I ask that you speak the Truth, for I AM TRUTH. I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO WILL ALWAYS SPEAK THE TRUTH TO YOU.

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

I ask that you not covet anything but My Love. Nothing is worth more than My Love. If you have My Love, what else do you need? The enemy coveted My Place, and see how much evil and harm have come from that.

Do you see that God's Love is behind each of these Commandments? Do you see that HE IS IN each of them? That each is a sign of His Love, of His Presence in you? They are not idle antiquities; they are living pulses of His Heart that are meant to call to your heart, drawing you closer to Him, helping you to imitate Him, to respond to His Love, to reciprocate, and to cooperate with Him.

In our world that is suffering so much mental, emotional, spiritual, and moral confusion, God's words provide clarity – if we would only listen.



The Story Behind the Large Cross on Tepeyac Hill



By Deacon Bob Gorman

In the late Spring of 2010, having missed the annual deacon retreat, I spent the better part of three days doing a private retreat at the Mission of Divine Mercy. I did so with the approval of Father Jim Rutkowski, who served as the priest director of the Archdiocese of San Antonio diaconate program.

While on this retreat, which was a silent and solitary one, I spent about an hour in the cool of the oratory with Jesus present in the tabernacle. It was quiet and dark inside. For a time I kept my arms outstretched and prayed silently. Praying thus, a vision was given to me of the Crucified Christ, on the Cross, on a hill looking down over a valley and the hills beyond. A great throng of pilgrims were making their way toward Him to kneel at the foot of His cross and to unite themselves to His Sacrifice. I had no idea about how to interpret this vision. It seemed to be given to me rather than merely a product of my imagination, though I could not be sure. I mentioned it to Father John Mary during the time scheduled for spiritual direction. Father thought it was significant and that I should write it down.

I should have done so at the time, but I didn't do so until seven years later on October 7, 2017, the feast day of Our Lady of the Rosary. On that day I prayed several mysteries of the Rosary before attending Saturday morning Mass at the

Mission. During Mass, my attention was drawn to the newly roofed Teocalli, visible through the windows on the left side of St. Joseph's Chapel. I recalled that Peter, MDM's president, had noticed that the triangular tree line on the hill behind the Teocalli mimicked the shape and angle of the sanctuary roof. Then, before Communion I recalled my vision from seven years earlier, the vision of Christ on the Cross on a hill overlooking streams of pilgrims approaching Him across distant hills and up through a valley. And the inspiration occurred to me that perhaps a cross, or even a crucifix, should be placed at the apex of the tree line on the hill.

After I received Communion, I decided to pray about whether I should even mention this to anyone, and if so to whom. As I prayed, Sister Amapola's name occurred to me as a possibility. But I wanted a sign. Father had taken his seat shortly before I began praying about this and during the long silence that usually follows Communion at Father John Mary's Masses, I received an instruction to pray the Our Father, three Hail Mary's, a Glory Be, and the Sign of the Cross. If I finished too long before or after Father announced our return to prayer, I would refrain from announcing the idea, but if I finished just before Father spoke, I should take it as a sign to speak to Sister. Exactly as I finished the Sign of the Cross, Father intoned, "Let us Pray!"

So, I spoke to Sister right after Mass to share what I had experienced. Her cryptic comment at the time was something like, "That's very interesting."

I entrusted this to God and to the Community. In December of 2020, my kids whom I had told about this vision decided for my birthday present to make some donations to the Mission dedicated to realizing the construction of the cross. In April 2021, I corresponded with Father John Mary, recalling aspects of the 2010 vision, and my experience in St. Joseph's Chapel seven years later. During that summer the Community prayerfully discerned what should be done. Since the Teocalli already had a beautiful crucifix, the Community decided that the new cross would be a large version of the MDM Emblem, with the Wounded Sacred Heart, with its Living Flame, on a glorious Cross of Light. That made perfect sense to me and my family.

Anyone who knows the Mission at all, knows that projects rarely proceed at warp speed, but they do happen in God's good time. Currently, via the temporary cross that can be seen on the hill above the Teocalli, final determinations are being made about the best dimensions and materials to be used. My family and I are excited to see the final result. Jesus, we trust in You! ♦

Crew erects temporary Cross



Triduum Schedule 2023

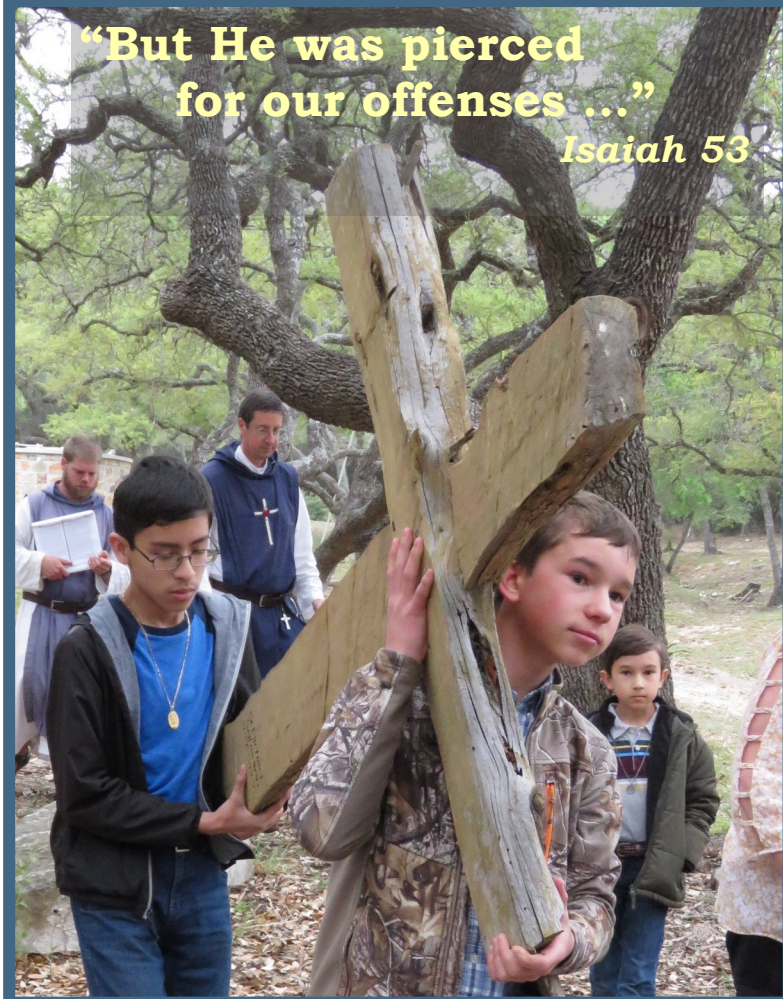
A photograph of the interior of a church during a service. The church has a high, vaulted wooden ceiling with exposed beams and several large, dark wooden pews. The altar area is illuminated by warm lights, and a priest in white vestments is visible at the altar. The congregation is seated in the pews, facing the altar.

Holy Thursday—April 6, 2023
7:30 pm Mass of the Institution of the Eucharist
Followed by Eucharistic Vigil until 10 pm

A photograph of a large group of people kneeling in prayer outdoors. They are gathered in a grassy area with many large, mature trees. The people are dressed in casual clothing, and some are wearing hats. A person in the foreground is wearing a blue vest with the word "STAFF" on the back. The scene is peaceful and solemn.

Good Friday—April 7, 2023
9:00 am Walking Way of the Cross

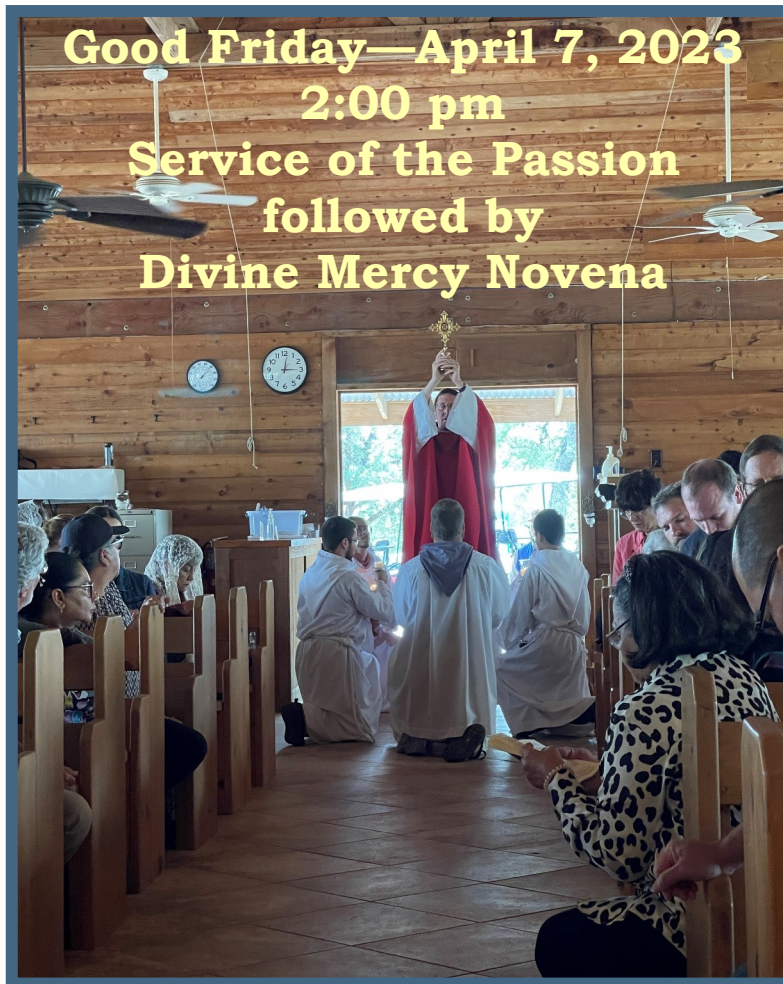
**"But He was pierced
for our offenses ..."**
Isaiah 53



**"O Love, O Charity
beyond all telling ..."**
the Exultet



**Good Friday—April 7, 2023
2:00 pm
Service of the Passion
followed by
Divine Mercy Novena**



**Holy Saturday—April 8, 2023
9:00 am
Rosary of Our Lady of Sorrows
and Divine Mercy Novena**



**Easter Sunday -April 9, 2023
6:00 am Solemn Easter Vigil**

Light breakfast and fellowship after Mass



***“Jump on
this Freedom Train,
Sinners!”***

(Story Pg 12)



**Divine Mercy Sunday
April 16, 2023**



There are Great Feasts, great avenues of grace like Christmas and Easter, that have come down to us since the beginning of Christianity; and which Christians have celebrated ever since. Then there are newer feasts that joined the Calendar as the Church grew through millennia—like the Feasts of Corpus Christi, the Sacred Heart, and the Immaculate Conception. They also were embraced as new avenues of grace; and were received with eager faith and gratitude.

How then are we to view this newest Feast, this Feast of Divine Mercy Sunday, given to us by the Eternal Father in the Papacy of St. John Paul; given to us in 2000 AD as a Solemnity of the Universal Church?

Is it of less importance because it's the new kid on the block?

Or does it have a Signature Grace and Importance for these times and for us - the wounded and scattered Children of these Latter Days? And do our souls need to direct an immediate laser focus at the Message, the Promise, the Mercy that is contained in this Revelation?

As you read this, is the Lord calling you to enter through this Feast into the Wound in His Heart, into the Peace of His Mercy? Shouldn't you make sure that none of the enemy's time-worn distractions pre-empt this Divine Appointment? ♦



THE TREASURY OF DIVINE MERCY

IMAGE: "I desire that this Image be venerated, first in your Chapel, and then throughout the world." (Diary #47)

INVOCATION: "I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this Image with the signature: "Jesus, I trust in You." (Diary #327)

HOURLY OF MERCY: "At 3 o'clock, implore My Mercy, especially for sinners; and, if only for an instant, immerse yourself in My Passion, particularly in My abandonment at the moment of agony. This is the Hour of great Mercy for the whole world." (Diary #1320)

CHAPLET: "Through the Chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My Will." (Diary #1731)

NOVENA OF DIVINE MERCY: "By this Novena I will grant every possible grace to souls." (Diary #796)

FEAST OF DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY: "Ask of My faithful servant, [Father Sopocho] that, on this day, he tell the whole world of My great Mercy; that whoever approaches the Fount of Life on this day will be granted complete remission of sins and punishment." (Diary #300)

ST. FAUSTINA: "Apostle of My Mercy, proclaim to the whole world My unfathomable mercy." (Diary #1142)

DIARY OF ST. FAUSTINA: The Repository of the Treasury of Divine Mercy. ♦

“Jump on this Freedom Train, Sinners!”

A friend of the Mission gave us permission to share her personal experience of finding Divine Mercy. ~ Mother Magdalene

Her life changed overnight when she was nineteen.

She had been innocent; a practicing Catholic and a high achiever. She was attending college on an academic scholarship and wanted to become an attorney.

At a party one night a young man slipped some angel dust, an hallucinogenic, in her drink and then sexually assaulted her. The trauma of that night changed the person she was and the plans she had made.

She almost flunked out of school. She lost her scholarship and gave up her dream of becoming an attorney. For the next thirty years she ‘self-medicated’ with alcohol and drugs, becoming addicted to both; she would survive a brief, hellish marriage and drift into Eastern religions and New Age practices.

Eventually, she did manage to rise in her profession, and was active in her community, but carried within her a terrible pain and darkness.

Because both she and the man who had attacked her lived in the same town, twice she recognized him on the street. When this occurred, she confronted him, publicly calling him out for his attack on her. But afterwards she would find herself reliving the trauma of the original assault.

Then came the day in 2017 when she was renovating her kitchen, and one of the workmen who showed up turned out to be her old attacker. He recognized her and made a crude comment. Fleeing to the yard until the work was finished, she found herself unable to re-enter the kitchen. Her delight in the new renovation was gone, ruined.

“At that point I felt catatonic.” She got drunk and found herself crashing to her knees again and again as she methodically

destroyed all the cardboard boxes in her garage; and in the process doing serious damage to her knees.

TURNING POINT

In October 2017, her mother emailed her a photo of thousands of Polish women, Rosaries in hand, praying for the protection of the eastern border of Poland. Moved by that photo she bought a Rosary off of Etsy and began researching Polish saints. Stumbling upon Saint Faustina she discovered the Revelation of Divine Mercy and began to pray the Chaplet.

“Once I discovered the Chaplet, I would pray it every day. Even if I was drunk off my keister I would stop and pray the Chaplet.”

“Then, I had a powerful experience one night when I was struggling with addiction and very depressed and lonely. I had a vivid dream of Saint Faustina and was overwhelmed by the sense of being completely loved. When I woke up I called my friend and told him I needed to go to Mass. So, he picked me up and took me to Mass that Sunday at the Mission. It was my first time there, and my first Mass in decades. I was deeply moved, but still bound by my addictions.”

Divine Mercy Sunday was coming, and she was determined to make it back to the Mission. She was also determined to complete the great Novena of Divine Mercy which she managed to do despite her struggles.

And so on Divine Mercy Sunday of 2018 – MDM’s first Divine Mercy celebration at the new Teocalli – she returned to the Mission and found herself in line for Confession with Father John Mary.

“It reminded me of the time when as a girl I had to go get a wisdom tooth removed. I was sick with fear getting into the dental chair. But before I knew it the dentist had popped it out and all the pain was gone.

*“I went into the confessional crying and poured it all out. **When I left, I was a brand new person.**”*

Since confessions were being heard at St. Joseph’s, vans were shuttling people over



to the Teocalli for Mass. When she climbed aboard, a Nun—Sr. Amapola— happened to sit down next to her and talked with her during the short ride. She was deeply comforted by Sr. Amapola's presence. It seemed like one more sign of God's Mercy.

That day—that Feast— became a Watershed Event in her life. The *Divine Mercy, Forgiveness, and Love* that she herself experienced during Confession and Mass engendered another important grace; **for the first time in thirty years she found herself able to forgive her attacker.** And the Lord had her demonstrate that a few days later.

Turning into the next aisle at a local supermarket she saw her old enemy there picking up groceries. She went directly over to him and said, *"You know who I am, and you know what you did to me, but in the Name of Jesus Christ, I forgive you."*

When she got home, she went into her kitchen and dropped to her knees and prayed, *"Thank you, Holy Spirit, for allowing me to forgive him."* When she got up her

knees were healed.

"Divine Mercy Sunday was just so powerful for me, and it has become my favorite day of the year. I really look forward to it. I think of it as this great opportunity for those who feel they're at the end of their rope. I want to tell them: 'Jump on this freedom train, Sinners!'"

In the five years since that Divine Mercy Sunday much has changed in her life. She continues her professional work and is active in her local community. But returning to Jesus and to her Catholic Faith has given her a new perspective on, and impetus for, all that she does. Bit by bit many things have been transformed in her life: relationships have healed, her health has improved (three years free of addiction), and Saints, Angels and Novenas are now a part of her daily reality.

And there is one other material, but not unimportant, consequence of her conversion; she has more disposable income. *"Alcohol and weed swallow up a lotta cash!"*

The spiritual struggles and challenges continue each day, but she lives her days with the Holy Family running interference for her. And she never passes up an opportunity for sharing the message of Divine Mercy with others.

"Jump on this Freedom Train, Sinners!" ♦



**Sr. Amapola
At Easter Vigil**



Peter with our contractor Kevin Butschek



SISTERS' CONVENT

From the Desk of Peter

I want to make you aware of the latest news on the Sisters' convent. While there is not a lot to photograph in the way of progress, some very important advances have been checked off the list. These advances are nitty-gritty essentials and include getting lots of permits signed.

A familiar saying when it comes to building here at the Mission is "It always comes down to the septic!" Not being on a city sewage system, and having to contend with a solid rock substrate, siting the septic system is always a critical element when we are locating a new building. The good news is that a convenient location for the system has been determined for the convent and the engineering design has been accepted. It may not be a glamorous subject, but it is a great advancement to our project!

We have also been working with Pedernal Electric Co-op for bringing electricity to the site, as well as Legacy H/A for sizing the appropriate AC system. Meanwhile, our builder Kevin Butschek is busy getting quotes from all his sub-contractors.

We're getting there! Please continue to keep this project in your prayers. ♦

**Mother Magdalene enjoying
Breakfast served by
Sandra Ceron after Easter
Vigil**



HEARING FROM THE EWJ RETREATANTS

At the end of every *Encounter With Jesus* retreat we ask the retreatants to fill out an “In-Put” sheet. They are asked about ways the retreats can be improved or if there is anything they would like to share about their experience. We also ask whether they give us permission to share their responses. Here are some excerpts from our latest retreats.

I felt that Jesus was walking with me and teaching me even if I didn't explicitly hear Him.

I have inoperable cancer. This retreat gave me time to think, to reflect and to pray for acceptance and patient endurance.

I appreciated the invitation to think of any sins that I have held onto from my past. I did bring these to Confession for the first time on this retreat.

Amazing, truly amazing. God lives everywhere, but here the team provides an environment that opens hearts for Him to do his work.

The talks emphasize the meaning for many of our Catholic practices which so often we don't understand fully.

I've been on a lot of retreats and this one really sticks out. I was given the freedom of being an adult, but also felt so loved and taken care of like a child.

The talks were excellent and at least half of them I felt were written especially for me!

I didn't think that I would “feel” anything in Adoration, but, man, did the Lord kick me in the face! I almost felt bad for feeling so much. But I learned that it is okay to take all the graces that the Lord gives, but to not rely on those because there is also a time of purification.

In my life I had never been this long with Jesus in silence. Thank you. The peace that God gives us in this place is marvelous.

I knew that I needed to get away and was eager to make a silent retreat. But I didn't realize quite how much the constant noise around us makes it difficult for God to speak to us. I want to add more silence to my day.

It was my first Confession made with complete contrition and sincerity of heart and truth. I have never experienced such love, mercy, and heartfelt wise counsel in my entire life.

I came here for healing and the Lord revealed deeper wounds than I had anticipated. But He delivered me and brought me profound healing. I found what I was looking for.

I honestly felt the love of God through the service of the religious, the volunteers, even the food! I felt so cared for and was blown away by how well organized everything was.

Loved the access to nature, morning hike, the hidden prayer locations, and the small group size.

I came heavy with wounds, worries and stress. I leave having released my pain and with greater assurance that God is with me in the coming struggles. ♦





Mission of Divine Mercy
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**“Come away to a quiet place and
rest awhile.” Mk 6:31**

Contact Us: 830-302-2238, mdm@missionofdivinemeracy.org,
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