



The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

**Creation
of angels**

Great miracle of life

**Where do
the demons live?**

Divine Mercy Pilgrimage

Giving and receiving

**St Jerome - first translator
of the Bible into Latin**





The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.

St Faustina was often consoled and defended by angels who became her best friends. St Faustina's devotion to the holy angels helped her in many situations, including making her confession which was at times difficult for her. (D 175) Confessing one's sins multiplies the grace of healing. When we meet Jesus, present in confession, we develop our friendship with the Son of God, there is no need for us to be afraid. One day Jesus said to Sister Faustina "If it were not for this imperfection you would not have come to me."

We pray the Angelic Chaplet through the intercession of St Michael and the different celestial choirs one by one:

The Seraphim: may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. The Cherubim: may the Lord vouchsafe to grant us grace to leave the ways of wickedness to run in the paths of Christian perfection. The Throne: may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. The Dominions: may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and subdue

our unruly passions. The Powers: may the Lord vouchsafe to protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the devil. The Virtues: may the Lord deliver us from evil and suffer us not to fall into temptation. The Principalities: may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. The Choir of Archangels: may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works, in order that we gain the glory of Paradise. The Choir of Angels: may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted hereafter to eternal glory.

This is a powerful chaplet. I encourage you to call on your guardian angel and St Michael for help and protection for yourselves, for your families and friends.

I assure you of the constant prayer of the priests of the Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel for all the readers and their families. We also pray that this magazine helps us all to be in touch with these spiritual beings, messengers from a loving God.

Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA

The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

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St Jerome (part 1)

In Croatia there is a popular legend known as “The miracle of St Jerome and Sylvanus”, in which the aged saint casts out a demon from a particular woman and discovers a trap set by the cunning Archbishop Sylvanus. The old man in the legend is Jerome, who came from the area of present-day Croatia and lived from 347-420 (the first of these dates is uncertain).

He was born in Strydonium, a location no longer precisely identifiable, probably in Pannonia or Dalmatia, on the fringes of the then declining Roman Empire. In around the year 360, Jerome moved to Rome, where he studied rhetoric, grammar and Ikoine Greek. The son of well-to-do parents, he led a carefree and debauched life.

Upon completing his studies, Jerome moved to Trevir and Acquilea, where he commenced theological studies and met and befriended Rufinus, his later adversary and fierce polemicist. He also journeyed through Asia Minor to Antioch, where, in the years 373-374, in his dreams, he experienced a call to conversion, from which time he devoted himself entirely to theology, in particular to a detailed study of the Bible. He went to the Chalcedon Desert (north-west of Antioch), where, under the supervision of a Jewish Christian convert, he learned Hebrew and rabbinical wisdom. He was ordained in Antioch and



went to Constantinople, where, under the direction of Gregory of Nazianze, he studied the Bible.

Jerome lived in Rome from 382 to 385, where he enjoyed the favour and protection as well as the respect of Pope Damasus. It was he

who persuaded Jerome to take up the work of translating the Bible into Latin and who also made Jerome his own personal secretary. During this second sojourn in the Eternal City, Jerome was surrounded by a circle of wealthy and saintly women

trying to live consecrated lives: Paula, Marcella, Blezylia, Eustochia and others. Jerome took every opportunity of criticising the loose living prevalent in Rome at the time, which extended also to that of priests. Enraged at this, the Roman clerics hatched a plot against him, accusing Jerome of intimate relations with Paula and of causing the death of Blezylia due to excessively severe ascetic practices. A kind of secret ecclesiastical court was formed, which ordered Jerome to quit Rome.

Jerome was sanguine at this, and, not wishing to enter into controversy, having lost the protection of Pope Damasus, (who died in 384), returned to Antioch, where he was soon joined by Paula and Eustochia, who founded two convents and one monastery in Bethlehem, as well as a school next to the monastery, in which Jerome taught. They travelled together to Egypt, where they got to know the outstanding theologian and spiritual master, Blind Didymus of Alexandria, as well as the famous monastic centre of Nitria.

Jerome returned to Palestine in the year 388 and spent the remaining 34 years of his life in a grotto in Bethlehem, which formed part of a monastery founded by Paula. From that time onwards, he devoted himself entirely to his writing. He was an unquestioned spiritual authority to his wealthy friends, who, therefore provided for his keep as well as supplying the necessary funds for the purchase of expensive books. He was also provided with secretaries, copyists and pupils who assisted him in his writings. He produced a prodigious output of work, and, in his old age, lost his sight as a result of having spent many nights working by the light of an oil lamp. After his death, his ashes

were brought back to Rome, where they now lie in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore.

Jerome's opinions on the angelic world were careful and considered. God has two possible means at His disposal to carry-out his purposes in relation to human beings, either personally or through the intervention of the angels (see "Commentary to the Gospel of St Matthew"). There exists, however, an unbridgeable gap between God and the angels. God alone is perfect, while the angels and human beings are equally in need of mercy (see "Homily on the Book of Psalms"), being miserable creatures in relation to God although they are not so in themselves. What we know of the angelic hierarchy from the Bible and the writings of St Paul gives us a general picture but are far from exhaustive on the subject of angelic society, hidden from human eyes. The lowest member of the angelic hierarchy is more perfect than the most perfect human being on earth (compare to "Commentaries to the Gospel of St Matthew" and "Homilies on the Book of Psalms").

God knows all of our actions on earth, and the angels know much of them. Jerome considers the tradition which speaks of the existence of heavenly books in which the angels keep a record of all human actions, to be naive. He thinks that "our consciences were such books". Jerome has no doubt that Jesus Christ is King of all the angels in heaven. Interpreting Genesis, where it speaks of "the sons of God and daughters of man", Jerome explains that the use of this term in the Bible at times points to the angels, while at other times to humans, the righteous descendants of Seth.

A human being is capable of doing an angelic service, while yet not

being an angel. Jerome gives as an example the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. We can say, however, that following death, the human soul being immortal, will attain certain similarities to angelic beings, although they will never actually become angels. In a legend of Paul of Egypt, Jerome writes of the hermit ascending to heaven surrounded by the angels, prophets and apostles (see "Monastic Lives"), but this is intended to imply a symbolic ascent of the soul. Jerome considers every human soul as possessing great dignity, given that each person has been allocated their own personal guardian angel. We can therefore conclude from these commentaries that, for the guardian angels, the care of human souls takes priority, with care for their human bodies being secondary. Jerome also considered that the guardian angels depart from us for a time after we commit sin.

Jerome's explanation of "Jacob's Ladder" departs somewhat from tradition, in that those entering heaven are virtuous people as well as angels, while those descending the ladder are demons and fallen angels.

Splendour of the Seraphim

For Jerome, the most important book of the Bible, as regards knowledge of the angels, is that of Isaiah. In his opinion, this great prophet prophesied the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the body and the Last Judgement, but he warned against literal interpretations. In his extensive "Letter 18", he probingly analyses and clearly describes, the vision of the seraphim surrounding God. It is worth

probing this exegesis further as a useful illustration of the methods Jerome uses to interpret the Bible.

For a start, he decidedly rejects the earlier exegeses of other Church Fathers, who claimed that the two seraphim surrounding God the Father are Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. In various New Testament passages, Christ is shown as the King of Glory surrounded by angels, which is how He also appears in Isaiah's vision. Jerome also explains the nature of the seraphim, as the word "seraphim" means "embers" or "fire", implying that the sacred is



■ Mosaic of a seraphim in the Cathedral of Cefalu (1145-60)

understood as a consuming fire, a love of unfathomable depth which has also the power to wash away all sin. Victorinus understood the twelve wings of both seraphim to refer to the twelve apostles, while Jerome refers to the twelve foundation stones of the mystical altar mentioned by both Ezechiel and the author of the Book of Revelation. The wings covering the faces of the two

seraphim (as Jerome explains) are intended to cover God rather than themselves, as no one can know the whole of the Will of God. The words "They called out to one another" Jerome explains as referring to the correspondence between the Old and New Testaments, as "nothing can be discordant or different". Jerome sets the words "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts" in the context of the tradition of the Psalms, praising the glory and power of God. The words "Lord God of Hosts", "King of Glory", "Lord of Power", "Lord of Armies", differing according to the translation, point unchangingly to the power and might of God. The additional acclamation by the seraphim "Heaven and earth are full of Your Glory", in Jerome's opinion indicates the Saviour, His world-wide mission, and the penetration of the Name of God to the ends of the earth thanks to the work of the apostles. The vision of Isaiah is clothed in smoke, whereby God, the all-consuming fire of love, which, being by nature a light element, spreads rapidly. Moreover, the mysterious and impalpable nature of the smoke signifies the mystery and unfathomable nature of God. The winged nature of the seraphim signifies the fact that they stand before the Divine seat of judgement as well as the fact that they carry out an endless stream of orders, whereby they cleanse sinners of their sins. Isaiah's vision indicates this in the symbolism of the hot coals placed on the tongues of sinners. Jerome points out that angels were typically portrayed in the Old Testament as the fire or wind preceding the coming of the Lord God (see "Homilies on the Book of Psalms"). All this shows Jerome's exegesis to be both penetrating and modern.

Mysterious nature of the angelic world

Jerome warns translators not to attach any significance to gender with regard to the angelic powers (See "Letters 18B"), as even God Himself, rendered in the masculine in most languages, cannot be categorised in terms of gender.

At times Jerome corrects even minor nuances and errors, such as the fact that, even if the description "to sit upon the cherubim" is correct, it would be incorrect to use of the seraphim, as Holy Scripture mentions, the fact that they stand around God.

To sum up, Jerome frequently cites the angels in his biblical commentaries. In the majority of cases, the opinions he expresses are careful and cautious, intended simply to clarify without adding further comment, as in the well-known parable: "At the resurrection they will no longer take wives or husbands but will be like the angels, where Jerome explains that the ability to remain in this virginal state is thanks to the working of the grace and power of Christ" (see "Letters to Eustochium", "Letter CVIII"). Following the resurrection of the body, Christ does not promise mankind any angelic attributes beyond this, other than an angelic way of life and angelic lasting happiness. In common with other Christian writers of his time, Jerome represents the monastic life as being angelic. He devoted very little space in his writings to metaphysical questions relating to angelic society. We find only the comment that the angels, including the fallen angels, are not subject to death.

Herbert Oleschko, Poland

Interested in becoming a Devotional Knight of St Michael?



The Knighthood is overseen by the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel. During a trial period of three months the candidate should follow all the rules of this devotion. After a three month trial period a woman or man can then make a promise between themselves and God privately.

Many Knights read *The Angels Messengers* from a loving God magazine to gain more knowledge on the spirituality of the angels and Divine Mercy.

Devotional Knights are people of quiet prayer, confirmed Catholics, who are open to the Holy Spirit and give themselves to Christ, unite with Him, and help the Church by keeping demons away from Her.

The main duty of the Knights is the continuous effort to be in a state of grace in friendship with God so they can exclaim about Satan: "He has no power over me" (John 14:30).

All Knights must respect the Holy Father, bishops, priests and all the teachings of the Church. An attitude of humility and obedience towards God and the Church should be an obvious feature of every Knight.

Any Catholic man or woman who desires to become a Knight is required to follow the rules of this devotion. The main task of the Knights is to proclaim the victory of Jesus Christ over Satan. The Knights are on a mission to expiate God for the sins of humankind and to obtain the conversion of sinners. They aim to achieve this by reciting the prayer of St Michael the Archangel to defend us in the day of battle (see back of magazine). This simple prayer of exorcism said every day is to keep away evil spirits from oneself, the Church and the whole world, particularly from those that are tempted and possessed by Satan. To help one another Devotional Knights say a prayer for each other every day.

For further information on the Devotional Knight of St Michael please contact me personally by letter or email redakcja.kjb@gmail.com.

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The Promise

I, (your name) a repentant sinner, renounce Satan and resolve to follow Jesus Christ. I express my faith in the Holy Trinity and the Holy Church. After my trial period, today in the presence of God, St Michael and the Holy Angels, I promise to be a Knight of St Michael to the end of my life and to take part in the spiritual battle for the salvation of souls. I entrust myself to St Michael as my Patron and Protector in this devotion.

My weapons are:

- **Daily Bible reading**
- **Daily exorcism prayer to St Michael**
- **Daily angelic chaplet to St Michael**
- **Fast each Friday on bread and water (or a good deed if a fast is impossible)**
- **Monthly Reconciliation**
- **Monthly Eucharistic Adoration**
- **Nine day Novena to St Michael before the feast day on 29th September.**

May God help me to fulfil this devotion. St Michael the Archangel pray for me. Amen.

The Knighthood FAQ

Daily Bible reading. Do we start from the Book of Genesis? What is recommended for the daily Bible reading?

Choose any passage from the New Testament. It is good to start from the Gospel of Matthew or Luke. Read the words and ask God to let the passage speak to you. Pay special attention to anything that strikes you and ask God what He wishes for you to draw from that message.

What is the daily exorcism prayer to St Michael?

The daily exorcism prayer is the prayer by Pope Leo XIII which is on the back page of every magazine and in the new booklet.

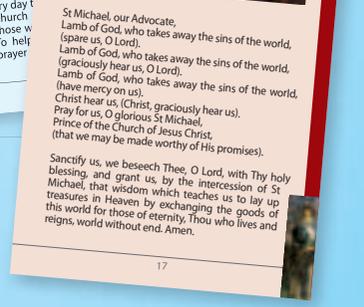
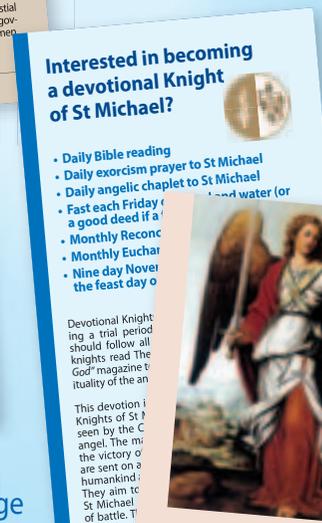
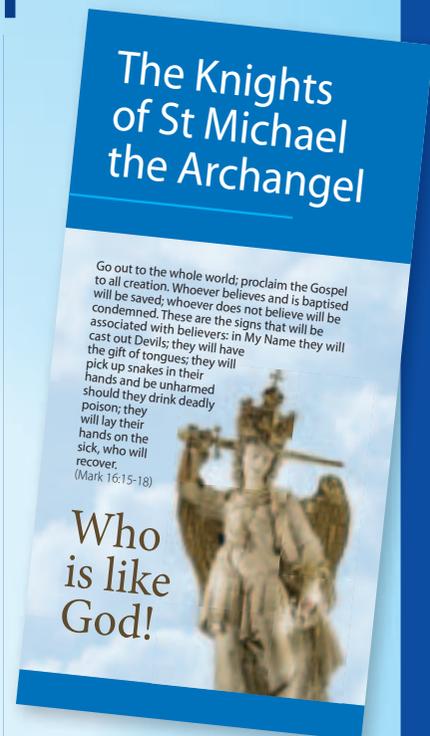
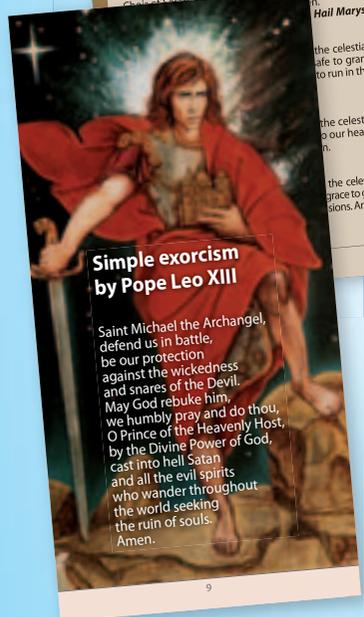
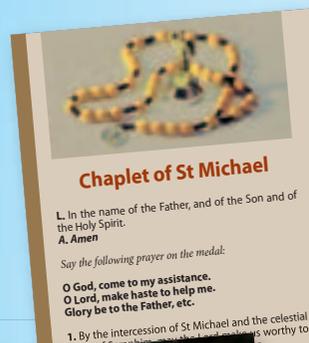
Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host - by the Divine Power of God - cast into hell, Satan and all the evil spirits, who roam throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Monthly Eucharistic Adoration and Reconciliation. Are there special prayers or anything in particular that is to be done during the Eucharistic Adoration?

Depending on the time availability (some people can only spare a short time, others can afford one hour) during the Monthly Eucharistic Adoration one should kneel before the Blessed Sacrament. If you are able to spend one hour this is a personal invitation from Jesus to you, reflect on some suggestions listed below.

New Knighthood booklet of St Michael The Archangel

with angelic chaplet and many prayers to St Michael



£4.00 / €5.00 / \$7.00 + postage

To order write,
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1. Pray the Psalms or the Liturgy of the Hours

Whether you are praising, giving thanks, asking for forgiveness or seeking an answer, you will find an appropriate psalm. The ancient prayer of the Church called the Liturgy of the Hours presents an excellent way to pray through the Book of Psalms throughout the year.

2. Recite the “Jesus Prayer”

Say “Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner”, repeatedly as you quiet your heart and mind.

3. Meditate using Scripture

Choose a passage from the Bible, read the words and ask God to let the passage speak to you. Pay special attention to anything that strikes you and ask God what He wishes for you to draw from that message.

4. Read the life of a saint and pray with him or her

Most holy men and women have had a great devotion to Our Lord in the Eucharist. Therese of Lisieux, Catherine of Siena, Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, Peter Julian Eymard, Dorothy Day. Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Baroness Catherine de Hueck are just a few. Read about them and pray their prayers before the Blessed Sacrament.

5. Pour out your heart to Christ and adore Him

Speak to Jesus, aware that you are in His presence, and tell Him all that comes to your mind. Listen for His response. Pray the prayer that St Francis instructed his brothers to pray whenever they were before the Blessed Sacrament: “I adore You, O Christ, present here and in all the churches of the world, for by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.”

6. Ask for forgiveness and intercede for others

Think of those who have hurt you and request a special blessing for them. Ask God to forgive you for all the times you have neglected or hurt someone else. Bring before the Blessed Sacrament all those who have asked you to pray for them. Ask the Lord to address their concerns.

7. Pray the Rosary

Pope John Paul II reminds us that “is not... the enraptured gaze of Mary as she contemplated the face of the newborn Christ and cradled him in her arms, that unparalleled model of love which should inspire us every time we receive communion?” (The Church and the Eucharist, 55) Ask Mary to join you as you gaze on Christ in the Eucharist and as you pray the Rosary.

8. Sit quietly and just “be” in the presence of God

Think of a visit to the Blessed Sacrament as coming to see your best friend. Sit quietly and enjoy being in each other’s company. Instead of talking to the Lord, try listening to what He wants to tell you

Is there an official enrolment to the Knighthood of St Michael ?

This is a devotion and therefore there is no need for an official enrolment. However if the General Animator of the Knighthood, in this case Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA, is on a mission in a particular country and a group want to make their promise before God then an official enrolment can take place after the Holy Mass with written prior notice given, this has happened in Ireland. Together the people will read the promise from page 8 of the new booklet.

The original 40 Statutes were difficult for a good number of ordinary laypeople with work, family and other commitments; however they very much wanted to become a Knight. Many people were already doing 80% of the requirements, such as daily Bible reading, the daily exorcism prayer to St Michael, the daily angelic chaplet to St Michael, fasting each Friday on bread and water or a good deed if a fast is impossible, monthly reconciliation, monthly Eucharist Adoration and once a year the Nine day Novena to St Michael on 29th Sept. Due to the interest in many people wanting to become Knights of St Michael, the Superior General of CSMA in August 2013 decided to make this a devotion, therefore making it possible for every layperson in any country in the world to become a Devotional Knight of St Michael. In the new booklet on The Devotional Knighthood of St Michael, published in Feb 2014 people can read all about the knighthood.



■ Angel with an olive branch
by Hans Memling, c. 1475-1480

A great miracle of life

Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator made them male and female? And said: For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one flesh (Mt 19, 4-6).

Prayer: *Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, breathe power of new life on married men and women who build a normal home, because You created them man and woman. Convince also those who make themselves gods of life and death, carrying out all sorts of manipulations on the eternal plans of the laws of nature. Awaken, oh God's Spirit, many witnesses of faith among spouses who will hold a new life to their heart, even if it dies in the first days of its foetal life. Only You, Oh Spirit of Life, know who this meditated reflexion is for - united today to the testimony of my close family - to become a source of hope, to touch hearts, to spur to concrete action. Come, Oh Spirit, and breathe power into these words.*

Salvation of souls

I return in my thoughts to my parents' home, to my simple but full of faith parents, to my father and mother who captivated with their normality, simplicity and obedience to what God sees and judges about family. I also think about the fact that God chose me to consecrated life from a normal family so that "being unmarried for

the sake of the kingdom of heaven" I would become more and more fruitful spiritually, caring for the salvation of souls. I feel internal pain when I see the civilisation of death, heading nowhere and witnesses to faith who defend life among suffering simultaneously fill me with hope.

Giver of Life

I wish to include in God's Word the authentic witness of a young married couple – Rafal and Karolina. In difficult situations, they entrusted their path to the prayers of those whom God called to "renounce marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven". Karolina (25), the wife of my nephew Rafal (27) has an incurable disease. In her case, opening herself to a new life is always linked to a great risk of losing her life or even both. Above human diagnosis, however, is the Giver of Life and it is thanks to Him, in great physical fragility and total dependence on God, that a year after their wedding John Paul was born. Doctors were sentencing the child to abortion to save the mother but the parents chose LIFE and left the last sentence to

God. All nine months were one great prayer of the young parents and many, many people including the Michaelite Sisters. Johnny was born on August 25th, 2011, the hospitals and clinics held night vigils... God kept mother and child safe through the intercession of John Paul II and the servant of God Anna Kaworek, the co-founder of the Michaelites, and still protects them.

Stillborn child called Michael

Christmas 2012 I received a text that the newly born Jesus offered Karolina and Rafal another grace of a new life, to which they opened themselves with great trust. This time the Highest's plans were different. Great prayers offered them by good people prepared them for the experience of their life's Passover. After three months of foetal life the child's heart stopped beating. The parents' pain was doubled by the doctors' indifference and arrogant treatment of mother and child. The foetus had fully formed arms and legs. We did everything to obtain the stillborn child's

body to bury it with dignity, giving it a name. A priest led the funeral. Karolina felt that it was a boy, so they named him Michael. When they were praying together by the small coffin on the evening before the funeral Rafal said: 'Now little Michael will watch over our faith...' and Karolina later said that, worried for the child's life, she willed his Baptism in her womb. The parents therefore placed in the coffin a white Baptismal dress over their tiny son, believing that the Lord received him to Heaven. The faith in the Giver of Life helped them through their pain, which doubled when in the morning, on the day of Michael's funeral, they had to go immediately to hospital with Johnny. The Lord took us through a real Passover that day.

Pain remained pain

Mourning remained mourning, pain remained pain, because you cannot escape from it. Most pain was caused, however, by those who did not turn out to be friends of life. A month after Michael's funeral I received a letter from Karolina and Rafal, fragments of which I quote as a testimony today and maybe to strengthen others:

* * *

"We live in a society that denies death. We fight death and we pit ourselves against it. We rush through the period of mourning and in a hurry, yet how unsuccessfully, we seek to return to normality. Fear, longing, mourning, the fear of loneliness, are at present common feelings that accompany us since almost a month. Among this pain and suffering unity, devotion, tenderness and real love also appear. Each of our children teaches us a lot



in life. Johnny teaches us real faith every day, innocent, straight and pure as a child. Michael taught us from the beginning humility and entrusting ourselves to God, he showed that you have to agree to what the good God offers us. Auntie, I do not conceal that at present we are not feeling well, that we feel it is hard, a heavy burden. All those around us repeat that we should forget, reflect and start to live again. We try to emphasise the fact that our life has changed and that it will never be the same again.

This change, however, does not mean a change for the worse... We also cannot forget, and I will say more, Rafal and I do not want to forget. He is our beloved son, our little boy, who will always be among us, in our hearts and our thoughts. In spite of what fate has brought us, although God decided to call him to Himself, we know that he was a great gift from God to us. God called this miraculous life from us, from our married love and from God's love for his people. He called Michael to life and offered him to us

for 13 weeks (three beautiful and full of God's grace months).

We will never enjoy his smile

We thank for each individual day and we give thanks that He allowed us to take our son's tiny body in our arms and hug him. We do not hide or deny that from a human perspective we are saddened that we will never enjoy his smile, that we will not be able to take him into our arms and see how he grows from day to day. We fight thoughts about whether he would look like Johnny, if he would laugh and cry, feel joy at the same things as Johnny. These thoughts and speculations never end, but we look for comfort to God, who is Love and Mercy, who knows what is good for us and our children. That is why we would like in the future to place an epitaph on his grave: 'We do not ask You, Lord, why You took him, but we

thank You that You gave him to us'. Rafal and I realise that our little son died so that he may live.

Lack of understanding

The lack of people's understanding hurts us greatly. After leaving the hospital we were surprised by the attitudes of the staff. But we are most afflicted by the words of people from whom we expected spiritual support. We are paralysed at statements that we organised the funeral of a foetus, not a child (...) Michael is a fully fledged, valued family member and I do not have the right to cover up his life here on earth and his birth for God. We feel without any doubt that rejecting Michael and not treating him like a family member is simultaneously a rejection of us too.

Respect life

Because Michael is part of us. I wonder if Michael would have deserved a proper funeral if he had been 3 years old instead of 3 months into pregnancy. How is it that we, Christians, cannot respect life that God Himself has brought into being? I am convinced that the life of these small beings has the same value as the life of each one of us. Maybe even more, because it is pure and without blemish. Therefore, although people laugh at us, we will always emphasise the importance of this little one's life.

We loudly emphasise that parents have a right to a dignified farewell with their child. The parents of angel children, just like anybody after the loss of a loved one, should have the right to grieve, to cry over their loss.

The parents' pain cannot be denied. Even if the pregnancy lasted 5 days, it was a child. Firstly, I will not be convinced that nothing happened, that it was only a foetus. We lost a child. We will live through this fact to the end. We will not escape to work, to study before what has happened. We did all that was humanly possible to save our child. Maybe this will finally change the mentality of our society.

Give your child a name

We would say to each parent in this situation: cry, feel it, if it brings you relief. Saying farewell, mourning is very important. A funeral helps to part in peace, it brings comfort. If you cannot organise a funeral, attend a Holy Mass. Give your child a name. Even if you did not know its gender. If a person does not say farewell to their child, if he/she does not live through it to the end, be reconciled to it, this event will keep returning.

A great miracle of life

Even when it may seem that you have more or less started to function in the world, there come times when you start to fall apart. We want everyone to realise that Michael, just like Johnny, is and always will be perceived by us as a great miracle of life. A miracle of life offered into our arms by God Himself, and Michael's departure to the Lord's House cannot be reason to belittle this miracle."

Sister **Leonia Przybyło** CSSMA,
Poland

WE THANK GOD FOR THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

Heavenly Father, Your infinite love for us has chosen a blessed angel in heaven and appointed him our guide during this earthly pilgrimage. Accept our thanks for so great a blessing. Grant that we may experience the assistance of our holy protector in all our necessities. And you, holy, loving angel and guide, watch over us with all the tenderness of your angelic heart. Keep us always on the way that leads to heaven, and cease not to pray for us until we have attained our final destiny, eternal salvation. Then we shall love you for all eternity. We shall praise and glorify you unceasingly for all the good you have done for us while here on earth. Especially be a faithful and watchful protector of our children. Take our place, and supply what may be wanting to us through human frailty, short-sightedness, or sinful neglect. Lighten, O you perfect servants of God, our heavy task. Guide our children, that they may become like unto Jesus, may imitate Him faithfully, and persevere till they attain eternal life. Amen.

Giving and Receiving

Every day of our lives we receive beautiful gifts from the Lord. We receive our life, friendship, a means to live, food, shelter, family and for this we must be always grateful. For those who do not have these things they have at least the certain knowledge that they are loved by the Lord and that His coming brought certain hope that one day suffering would end and continued joy would be theirs as it is for all who live by faith. Above all we receive the Lord Himself in Holy Communion – a gift beyond telling.

But at this time it is worthwhile to consider the importance of giving and receiving and why this is important in our lives. We all know of people whose generosity of giving charitably to others has no limits. Such often are the lives of saints greater or lesser. They not only give 'things' but time and love. We know of those who like to give gifts and presents to others. Isn't Christmas the pinnacle of such giving for we rejoice and are glad that this Infant who was born of a woman has come to prepare us for the joy that awaits and to show us how to live. He too gave generously of Himself even to dying for us in a shame filled way. He also gave healing and encouragement, love, patience. The gift of inner healing and health was very evident in so many of his interactions with people.

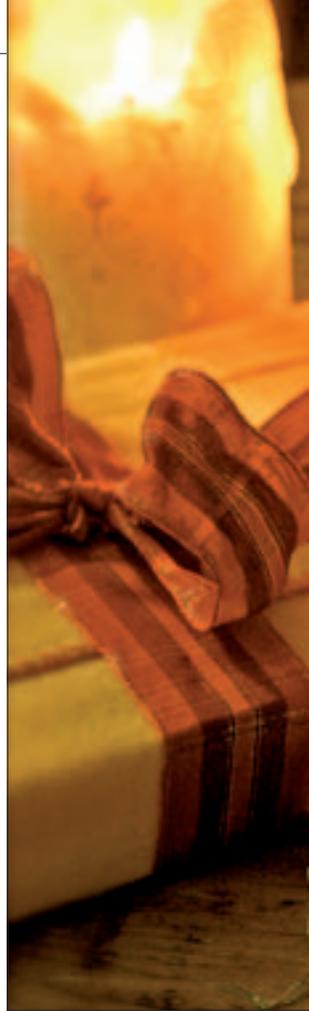
But at this special time it is important to focus on the nature of giving and receiving. During this Advent period we focus on Jesus' coming. The prophets received the gift of speaking of the coming of the Messiah and the call to conversion – and the nature

of His coming. Isaiah clearly comes to mind. Our Lady Mary having received the news, carried her son to Bethlehem to fulfil the promise made by God for a Saviour. Her gift to be a bearer of the Son of God, and her fiat, a gift to us too. His blood relationship to John the Baptist was also a gift to John who led the way for Jesus to give the Good News. The shepherds received the gift of receiving the news, oh such good news of His birth and took the best of what they had to the cave, the stable, a new lamb. Then we have the three wise men, the kings who came with bounty rich to visit the Infant King but went away humbled and wiser for understanding the nature of this child.

Today when commercialism seeks to destroy the gifts of the heart with ever increasing packaging and glitter and an assault on the very purpose of the giving of gifts, to bring thanksgiving and joy, it is perhaps twice as important to reflect on the nature of giving. A truly generous person seeks nothing in return and more often than

not hides his/her generosity. We are not supposed to 'let one hand know what the other one is doing'. Our gifts and alms giving should be private. A gift given in love conveys just this to another. A present from parents tells the child that it is loved and cared for. Some people enjoy and delight in giving gifts but there is always a danger of other motives, a kind of buying of the other person, or a showing off of resources, never the best motives for such action.

Sometimes the smallest of gifts brings pleasure because it is given with love. One of my personal 'best gifts' to me was a – goat, bought for a poor family in Asia. This brought great joy (and humour) for it not only signified that I was loved, but that my desires and dreams were understood and even more, that another would benefit. A truly wonderful gift. Truly generous





presents are like ripples on the sea they spread out and affect others.

Receiving gifts is always a pleasure, yet there is also another aspect which in a way hides the value of gifts. Some people find it very difficult to receive gifts and actually thwart the receiving of gifts. They cannot bear 'the other' being generous, or being valued and loved, or suspecting other motives for such kindness... This too is very sad for this inhibits the generosity of others. We have all got caught up in a 'market exchange', the true purpose of giving has been lost in a kind of 'barter exchange': He/she got me a gift so I have to, or there is pressure to buy bigger or better. None of these attitudes speak of the purpose of gifts, only a humble person can receive graciously. The gifts that come from the Lord are given totally freely and so should our gifts to each other. The truly great gifts

are of *ourselves*, our patience, our love our self-sacrifice to help someone, our attention. Surely the greatest gifts are those that cost nothing except a dying to self and an increase in love. Isn't that what Christmas is all about? The God who has/is everything above reason, above understanding, comes as a small child. And like some, many still today, very poor and without creature comforts save for the love of the Father, and his 'earthly parents'.

One story of a Nativity play in South Africa says much of this exchange, and in some ways the unity of giving and receiving, two ends of generosity, of poverty of spirit. The scene is one of a 'parish' with a very overworked priest who was somewhat reluctant to attend the play, thinking of the mountain of things to be done in Advent before Christmas. However, he went and all seemed as usual. A shepherd, a very quiet Mary, a real baby Jesus, Joseph etc. The shepherds and kings came and went with a sigh of relief. Our kind pastor was about to leave. But in came three rather bedraggled figures. One was in rags, one with a ball and chain, and a third with an afro shirt, grey wig and unkempt. The children's chorus echoed the refrain 'all have a right to baby Jesus'. The kindly Joseph looked at them and picked up the kingly gifts and one by one gave them to the three beggar-like 'men'. To the first he said: 'You are poor you need the gold for food and shelter. I have a trade, we will not go hungry'. To the second he said: 'I do not know how to free you from the chains but the myrrh may help to heal your wounds and broken skin on your ankles'. To the third he said: 'take the frankincense its sweet smell might soothe your troubled spirit and make you feel happy'. But to his surprise the three men replied. The first smiling

said: 'Do not give me the gift, look at me, anyone will think I have stolen it'. The second: 'Do not give me the ointment I am used to these chains, I am strong because of them'. And the third added: 'I am lost I have no faith at all I have lost contact with God. The incense will not bring back the God I have lost'. The 'three men' then said to the Child Jesus: 'You belong to the country not of gold. You belong to our world of want, disease and doubt, let us share what we have'.

The first took off his rags: 'One day,' he said, 'when they strip you and tear off your garment you will need these'. The second: 'One day you will be led out in chains but you will undo the chains of many, take mine'. The third said: 'I bow before you, take my doubts. My sadness and my loss of faith in God. I am unable to carry them alone. They are too heavy. When you grow up you will take them before the throne of God'.

The men then bowed and left as free men. They had found a place where their own problems were taken by a small child. They had given all they had and received greater riches than the gold, frankincense and myrrh, their freedom, their hope, and they felt loved (Nativity edit. from St Joseph's Advocate).

Is this not what the coming of the Messiah, our Saviour is all about?

His presence among us is our greatest 'present' especially in the Host, in our lives and hearts. It is the greatest present of all.

May Christmas bring His Presence to us and His present to us be a peaceful, and a generous and kind heart.

Halina Holman

Taken from "Encouragement" Issue 29
www.thehostapostolate.org

Adoration Prayer by Saint Faustina

I adore You, Lord and Creator, hidden in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I adore You for all the works of Your hands, that reveal to me so much wisdom, goodness and mercy, O Lord. You have spread so much beauty over the earth and it tells me about Your beauty, even though these beautiful things are but a faint reflection of

Your incomprehensible beauty. And although You have hidden Yourself and concealed Your beauty, my eye, enlightened by faith, reaches You and my soul recognises its Creator, its Highest Good, and my heart is completely immersed in prayer of adoration.

My Lord and Creator, Your goodness encourages me to converse with You. Your mercy abolishes the chasm which separates the Creator from the creature. To converse with You, O Lord, is the delight of my heart. In You I find everything that my heart could desire. Here, Your light illumines my mind, enabling it to know You more and more deeply. Here streams of graces flow down

upon my heart. Here my soul draws eternal life. O my Lord and Creator, You alone, beyond all these gifts, give Your own self to me and unite Yourself intimately with Your miserable creature. **(Diary 1692)**

O Christ, let my greatest delight be to see You loved and Your praise and glory proclaimed, especially the honour of Your mercy. O Christ, let me glorify Your goodness and mercy to the last moment of my life, with every drop of my blood and every beat of my heart. Would that I be transformed into a hymn of adoration of You. When I find myself on my deathbed, may the last beat of my heart be a loving hymn glorifying Your unfathomable mercy. Amen. **(Diary 1708)**



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Proclaiming Divine Mercy (part 4)

IV. The parable of the prodigal son

An Analogy

At the very beginning of the New Testament, two voices resound in St Luke's Gospel in unique harmony concerning the mercy of God, a harmony which forcefully echoes the whole Old Testament tradition. They express the semantic elements linked to the differentiated terminology of the ancient books. Mary, entering the house of Zechariah, magnifies the Lord with all her soul for "his mercy", which "from generation to generation" is bestowed on those who fear Him. A little later, as she recalls the election of Israel, she proclaims the mercy which He who has chosen her holds "in remembrance" from all time. Afterwards, in the same house, when John the Baptist is born, his father Zechariah blesses the God of Israel and glorifies Him for performing the mercy promised to our fathers and for remembering His holy covenant.

In the teaching of Christ Himself, this image inherited from the Old Testament becomes at the same time simpler and more profound. This is perhaps most evident in the parable of the prodigal son. Although the word "mercy" does not appear, it

nevertheless expresses the essence of the divine mercy in a particularly clear way. This is due not so much to the terminology, as in the Old Testament books, as to the analogy that enables us to understand more fully the very mystery of mercy, as a profound drama played out between the father's love and the prodigality and sin of the son.

That son, who receives from the father the portion of the inheritance that is due to him and leaves home to squander it in a far country "in loose living", in a certain sense is the man of every period, beginning with the one who was the first to lose the inheritance of grace and original justice. The analogy at this point is very wide ranging. The parable indirectly touches upon every breach of the covenant of love, every loss of grace, every sin. In this analogy there is less emphasis than in the prophetic tradition on the unfaithfulness of the whole people of Israel, although the analogy of the prodigal son may extend to this also. "When he had spent everything", the son "began to be in need", especially as "a great famine arose in that country" to which he had gone after leaving his father's house. And in this situation "he would gladly have fed on" anything, even "the pods that the swine ate", the swine that he herded for "one of the citizens of that country". But even this was refused him.

Man's interior

The analogy turns clearly towards man's interior. The inheritance that the son had received from his father was a quantity of material goods, but more important than these goods was his dignity as a son in his father's house. The situation in which he found himself when he lost the material goods should have made him aware of the loss of that dignity. He had not thought about it previously, when he had asked his father to give him the part of the inheritance that was due to him, in order to go away. He seems not to be conscious of it even now, when he says to himself: "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger". He measures himself by the standard of the goods that he has lost, that he no longer "possesses", while the hired servants of his father's house "possess" them. These words express above all his attitude to material goods; nevertheless under their surface is concealed the tragedy of lost dignity, the awareness of squandered sonship.

It is at this point that he makes the decision: "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.'" These are words

that reveal more deeply the essential problem. Through the complex material situation in which the prodigal son found himself because of his folly, because of sin, the sense of lost dignity had matured. When he decides to return to his father's house, to ask his father to be received no longer by virtue of his right as a son, but as an employee, at first sight he seems to be acting by reason of the hunger and poverty that he had fallen into; this motive, however, is permeated by an awareness of a deeper loss: to be a hired servant in his own father's house is certainly a great humiliation and source of shame. Nevertheless, the prodigal son is ready to undergo that humiliation and shame. He realises that he no longer has any right except to be an employee in his father's house. His decision is taken in full consciousness of what he has deserved and of what he can still have a right to in accordance with the norms of justice. Precisely this reasoning demonstrates that, at the centre of the prodigal son's consciousness, the sense of lost dignity is emerging, the sense of that dignity that springs from the relationship of the son with the father. And it is with this decision that he sets out.

In the parable of the prodigal son, the term "justice" is not used even once; just as in the original text the term "mercy" is not used either. Nevertheless, the relationship between justice and love, that is manifested as mercy, is inscribed with great exactness in the content of the Gospel parable. It becomes more evident that love is transformed into mercy when it is necessary to go beyond the precise norm of justice-precise and often too narrow. The prodigal son, having wasted the property he received from his father, deserves, after his return,

to earn his living by working in his father's house as a hired servant and possibly, little by little, to build up a certain provision of material goods, though perhaps never as much as the amount he had squandered. This would be demanded by the order of justice, especially as the son had not only squandered the part of the inheritance belonging to him but had also hurt and offended his father by his whole conduct. Since this conduct had in his own eyes deprived him of his dignity as a son, it could not be a matter of indifference to his father. It was bound to make him suffer. It was also bound to implicate him in some way. And yet, after all, it was his own son who was involved, and such a relationship could never be altered or destroyed by any sort of behaviour. The prodigal son is aware of this and it is precisely this awareness that shows him clearly the dignity which he has lost and which makes him honestly evaluate the position that he could still expect in his father's house.

Particular Concentration on Human Dignity

This exact picture of the prodigal son's state of mind enables us to understand exactly what the mercy of God consists in. There is no doubt that in this simple but penetrating analogy the figure of the father reveals to us God as Father. The conduct of the father in the parable and his whole behaviour, which manifests his internal attitude, enables us to rediscover the individual threads of the Old Testament vision of mercy in a synthesis which is totally new, full of

simplicity and depth. The father of the prodigal son is faithful to his fatherhood, faithful to the love that he had always lavished on his son. This fidelity is expressed in the parable not only by his immediate readiness to welcome him home when he returns after having squandered his inheritance; it is expressed even more fully by that joy, that merrymaking for the squanderer after his return, merrymaking which is so generous that it provokes the opposition and hatred of the elder brother, who had never gone far away from his father and had never abandoned the home.

The father's fidelity to himself, a trait already known by the Old Testament term *hesed* - is at the same time expressed in a manner particularly charged with affection. We read, in fact, that when the father saw the prodigal son returning home "he had compassion, ran to meet him, threw his arms around his neck and kissed him". He certainly does this under the influence of a deep affection, and this also explains his generosity towards his son, that generosity which so angers the elder son. Nevertheless, the causes of this emotion are to be sought at a deeper level. Notice, the father is aware that a fundamental good has been saved: the good of his son's humanity. Although the son has squandered the inheritance, nevertheless his humanity is saved. Indeed, it has been, in a way, found again. The father's words to the elder son reveal this: "It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead and is alive; he was lost and is found". In the same chapter fifteen of Luke's Gospel, we read the parable of the sheep that was found and then the parable of the coin that was found. Each time there is an emphasis on the same joy that is present in the case of



■ The Return of Prodigal Son, Neapolitan School c. 1630

the prodigal son. The father's fidelity to himself is totally concentrated upon the humanity of the lost son, upon his dignity. This explains above all his joyous emotion at the moment of the son's return home.

Going on, one can therefore say that the love for the son, the love that springs from the very essence of fatherhood, in a way obliges the father to be concerned about his son's dignity. This concern is the measure of his love, the love of which Saint Paul was to write: "Love is patient and kind...love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful...but rejoices in the right...hopes all things, endures all things" and "love never ends". Mercy - as Christ has presented it in the parable of the prodigal son - has the interior form of the love that in the New Testament is called *agape*. This love is able to reach down to every prodigal son, to every human misery, and above all to every form of moral misery, to sin. When this happens, the person who is the object of mercy does not feel humiliated, but rather found again and "restored to value". The father first and foremost

expresses to him his joy that he has been "found again" and that he has "returned to life. This joy indicates a good that has remained intact: even if he is a prodigal, a son does not cease to be truly his father's son; it also indicates a good that has been found again, which in the case of the prodigal son was his return to the truth about himself.

What took place in the relationship between the father and the son in Christ's parable is not to be evaluated "from the outside". Our prejudices about mercy are mostly the result of appraising them only from the outside. At times it happens that by following this method of evaluation we see in mercy above all a relationship of inequality between the one offering it and the one receiving it. And, in consequence, we are quick to deduce that mercy belittles the receiver, that it offends the dignity of man. The parable of the prodigal son shows that the reality is different: the relationship of mercy is based on the common experience of that good which is man, on the common experience of the dignity

that is proper to him. This common experience makes the prodigal son begin to see himself and his actions in their full truth (this vision in truth is a genuine form of humility); on the other hand, for this very reason he becomes a particular good for his father: the father sees so clearly the good which has been achieved thanks to a mysterious radiation of truth and love, that he seems to forget all the evil which the son had committed.

A simple way

The parable of the prodigal son expresses in a simple but profound way the reality of conversion. Conversion is the most concrete expression of the working of love and of the presence of mercy in the human world. The true and proper meaning of mercy does not consist only in looking, however penetratingly and compassionately, at moral, physical or material evil: mercy is manifested in its true and proper aspect when it restores to value, promotes and draws good from all the forms of evil existing in the world and in man. Understood in this way, mercy constitutes the fundamental content of the messianic message of Christ and the constitutive power of His mission. His disciples and followers understood and practiced mercy in the same way. Mercy never ceased to reveal itself, in their hearts and in their actions, as an especially creative proof of the love which does not allow itself to be "conquered by evil", but overcomes "evil with good". The genuine face of mercy has to be ever revealed anew. In spite of many prejudices, mercy seems particularly necessary for our times.

Taken from www.vatican.va

Divine Mercy Pilgrimage (part 1)

Led by Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

Following in the footsteps of St Faustina in the places associated with the foundations and beginnings of the Divine Mercy devotion and apostolate in Warsaw and Vilnius, June 10th - 17th 2014

“Although my path is very thorny, I do not fear to go ahead... even if all things conspire against me, and the horizon grows dark... still, fully at peace, I will trust in Your Mercy, O my God, and my hope will not be disappointed” (Diary, 1195).

A new adventure began on June 10th for a pilgrimage group of Divine Mercy devotees to the hitherto unknown pastures of the very origins of the Divine Mercy image, devotion and apostolate of Jesus, Divine Mercy. Previously we had been to Krakow, the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Poland and had drunk deeply from its wellsprings.

Nothing could have prepared us for the depths of grace which we received as we journeyed through its very beginnings and foundations. We walked and travelled in the very footsteps of St Maria Faustina of the Most Blessed Sacrament. There was a sense that she was truly with us.

As I flew into Warsaw and looked down from the clouds, a thought came

to my mind as I remembered and beheld the great suffering of the people of Warsaw during World War II. Under the Nazis and then the Soviets; suffering - the cost of the grace of Divine Mercy, which will usher in the second Coming of Christ. “You will prepare the world for My final coming” (Diary, 429).

My great intention for this pilgrimage was to pray for my family, but also for the plight of the peoples of Ukraine and Nigeria and especially for the peoples and churches of Syria and Iraq whose suffering intensified anew as this pilgrimage began. It was certainly a time to invoke God’s Mercy for the whole world. For Divine Mercy is not just devotion for personal and private use. It is the means of intercession par excellence, which God has given us for our tragic and suffering world at this time.

When we see the plight of suffering peoples, nations and the ever-increasing persecution of Christians and our beloved Church, do we really believe that on our knees imploring Divine Mercy that we can change things and the destiny of peoples with God’s help through the saving power of His



■ The first Divine Mercy Image, painted by Eugeniusz Kazimirowski in 1934 according to instructions of St Faustina

beloved Son Jesus, Divine Mercy? “For Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy” (Diary, 699).

Our pilgrimage began with Mass in the Church of St John the Baptist with Fr Peter telling us that Jesus had personally invited each one of us onto this pilgrimage and that we were in His hands and under the protection of the Mother of Mercy and beloved St Faustina, St John Paul II, Blessed Michael Sopocko and the angels. This pilgrimage was to involve periods of travel on the coach, which meant that we had plenty of opportunity to pray in intercession for the world as a group and to meditate on the message of Divine Mercy with the help of extracts from ‘The Diary of St Faustina’. We also had the joy of listening to in-depth talks and reflections given by Fr Peter who was once the Chaplain to the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Warsaw for four years.

Birthplace of St Faustina

Our first place of pilgrimage was Glogowiec, the birthplace of St Faustina (Helena Kowalska) and home to her parish church in Swinice Warckie where she was baptised. She was born on August 25th, 1905, the third of ten children born to a poor family. We were privileged here to have Holy Mass and a talk given by one of the sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. I am always deeply moved to behold the baptismal font of a saint and it prompts me to renew my baptismal promises and to ask anew for the grace to remain faithful until death to Jesus and his Church.

Seeing the simple house where the Kowalska family lived and the bed where St Faustina was born touched us deeply. Each of us had a personal moment of prayer by this bed. It struck me in that moment to ponder that parents never know when they conceive and give birth the great destiny and vocation that their children may be called to by the Lord.

In July 1924 St Faustina found herself in Warsaw as she began to follow the special designs, which God had upon her life. Her parish priest sent her to Ostrowek, where St Faustina spent one year as a domestic servant to earn enough money to pay for the 'dowry' which the convent she was to enter required. The Lipszyc family employed her to look after their house and four children. She was greatly loved and Mrs Lipszyc recollected: 'I remember her healthy, joyful laughter. She used to sing a lot and when I think of her, it reminds me of a song which she sang most often: "Hidden Jesus". The only photo of St Faustina before she entered the convent, which still exists, was taken here.

On August 1st, 1925, St Faustina was accepted by the Convent of Our Lady of Mercy in Zytnia Street, Warsaw and was accepted as a postulant on April 30th 1926. We were blessed to have Mass in the chapel of this convent where Saint Faustina began her religious life.

St Faustina was in time sent in 1930 to the convent in Plock, which

is where she had her first vision of Jesus as the King of Divine Mercy and where he asked her to paint the image. She worked in the bakery shop, in the kitchen and sometimes in the bakery itself. At times she would be sent to work at the nearby convent-owned farm at Biala. It was here in this convent that the apostolate of St Faustina as the secretary and apostle of Divine Mercy began that was to extend in outreach to the whole world.

St Faustina says in her Diary (47). In the evening, when I was in my cell, I saw the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand was raised in the gesture of blessing; the other was touching the garment at the breast. From beneath the garment, slightly drawn aside at the breast, there were emanating two large rays, one red, the other pale. In silence I kept my gaze fixed on the Lord; my soul was struck with awe, but also with great joy. After a while, Jesus said to me: "Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: 'Jesus, I trust in You'. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and (then) throughout the world. I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over its enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I Myself will defend it as My own glory" (Diary, 48).

St Faustina's confessor initially thought the Lord meant for her to paint an image of God in her own soul. The Lord was quick to make his true designs known when He said: "My image already is in your soul. I desire that there be a Feast of Mercy. I want this image, which you will paint with a brush, to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter; that Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy" (Diary, 49).

At this Shrine of Divine Mercy we had time to pray before the Blessed



■ The Kowalski family's home in Glogowiec, where St Faustina was born and brought up

Sacrament and to ponder Jesus's message of Divine Mercy to St Faustina and to reflect more deeply the call of Divine Mercy upon our own lives for these times. We were yet to discover the road of suffering and Calvary that St Faustina was to undergo to bring to fruition the Lord's requests.

On June 12th we began our journey from Warsaw in Poland to Vilnius in Lithuania, the city of Our Lady of Mercy of Ostra Brama and home to where the image of Divine Mercy was first painted and displayed and where Saint Faustina wrote her diary. Vilnius during the days of St Faustina's time was part of Poland.

The people of Vilnius have venerated Our Lady of Ostra Brama known as the Mother of Mercy and Gate of the Dawn since the 16th century. In the 18th century the image was officially declared miraculous and in 1735 her feast was solemnly celebrated for the first time. It was crowned in the name of the Pope in 1927. Thousands of healings have been testified to by the thanksgiving gifts, which adorn the walls. It is known all over the world and Saint John Paul II visited the shrine on 4th September 1993. There is a replica of this icon in St Paul's Basilica in Rome and it was to Our Lady of Mercy that Pope John Paul went to pray after his election as pope. The only parts of the ancient walls of Vilnius, which still stand, house this shrine to the Mother of God. Etched into the wall is the invocation "*Mother of Mercy we call on your Defence*". The shrine overlooks the main entrance into the city of Vilnius and Our Lady is honoured as the protectress and defender of Vilnius. Every year there is an annual pilgrimage from the Gate of the Dawn to the Shrine of the Mother of Trakai, the patroness of all Lithuania. Many pilgrims walk barefoot as a testimony



■ Mother of Mercy in Ostra Brama, Vilnius, Lithuania

of prayer, penance and intercession. It is no wonder that the Lord chose Vilnius, the city so faithful in devotion to the Mother of Mercy to present to the world the unfathomable depths of His Divine Mercy.

Under the direction of Jesus

Our first visit in Vilnius was to the place where the Divine Mercy image was first painted by Eugeniusz Kazimirowski under the personal direction of Jesus through St Faustina and Bl. Michael Sopocko, her confessor and Mother Irena Krzyzanowska, her superior. Every Saturday for six months St Faustina was permitted under obedience to attend the painting sessions. The studio was some distance from the convent. Today the studio is the chapel in the Convent of the Congregation of the Sisters of Merciful Jesus founded by Bl. Michael Sopocko. We were privileged to have Mass here to have time to reflect upon the enormity of the grace, which emanated from here and then throughout the entire world. I received a strong prompt whilst here to buy two

large copies of the image, one for suffering Syria and one for suffering Iraq. These two images have now been sent to Damascus and Baghdad respectively. Only Divine Mercy can save these countries and their peoples now.

The Kazimirowski image of Divine Mercy was painted in 1934. It has the exact dimensions of the Turin Shroud, which is miraculous in itself! It was painted as an icon... with the redemptive suffering and penance of both St Faustina and her confessor. St Faustina said, "Once the Mother of God came to visit me. She was sad. Her eyes were cast down... 'You are going to experience certain sufferings because of an illness and the doctors; you will also suffer much because of the image, but do not be afraid of anything.' The next day I fell ill and suffered a great deal... But my soul was ready for the sufferings. Suffering is a constant companion of my life" (**Diary, 316**).

Let us reflect upon the words, which Jesus gave about the painting of the image.

"Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: 'Jesus, I trust in You'" (**Diary, 47**).

"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**).

When St Faustina first saw the Painting she was bitterly disappointed and wept as she lamented to Jesus in saying, "Who will paint You as beautiful as You are?" (313) Jesus reassured her saying, "Not in the beauty of the colour, nor of the brush lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace" (**Diary, 313**).

To be continue in the next issue.

Antonia Moffat
Hertfordshire, England

Walking in the footsteps of St Faustina. English speaking Divine Mercy Pilgrimage to Poland and Lithuania lead by Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

9th – 16th June 2015

Warsaw, Glogowiec, Plock, Niepokalanow and Vilnius

Pilgrims will have the choice of coming for the full pilgrimage starting and finishing in Warsaw or having their return flight from Vilnius in the four day and six day options.

Tuesday 9th June

Arrival at hotel in Warsaw. The Holy Mass in the chapel at Zytunia Street. Evening meal in hotel restaurant with group.

Wednesday 10th June

Visit to the birth place and Holy Mass at the Church in Swinice Warckie where she was baptised. Visit to Plock, where Jesus as King of Divine Mercy asked her to paint the image. Visit the Shrine of Blessed Mother in Niepokalanow where St Maksymilian Kolbe lived. Evening meal in a restaurant in the Old Town in the market square.

Thursday 11th June

Depart for Vilnius, on route will go to Ostrowek where she was a domestic servant. Holy Mass in the chapel in Ostrowek. Evening meal at hotel in Vilnius.

Friday 12th June

Visit the studio/room where the Divine Mercy image was first painted. Talk by a nun at the convent where Jesus dictated

the dairy to St Faustina. The Holy Mass for our group. Stations of the Cross.

Saturday 13th June

The Holy Mass in English at the shrine of Our Lady called Ostra Brama. Sightseeing in Vilnius with a professional guide. Evening meal in the hotel.

Sunday 14th June

Holy Mass in front of the original Divine Mercy Image in the Shrine. Holy Hour - free time. Evening meal in the hotel restaurant.

Monday 15th June

Return journey by coach to Warsaw for those staying overnight.

Option 1

Departure for Warsaw by coach.

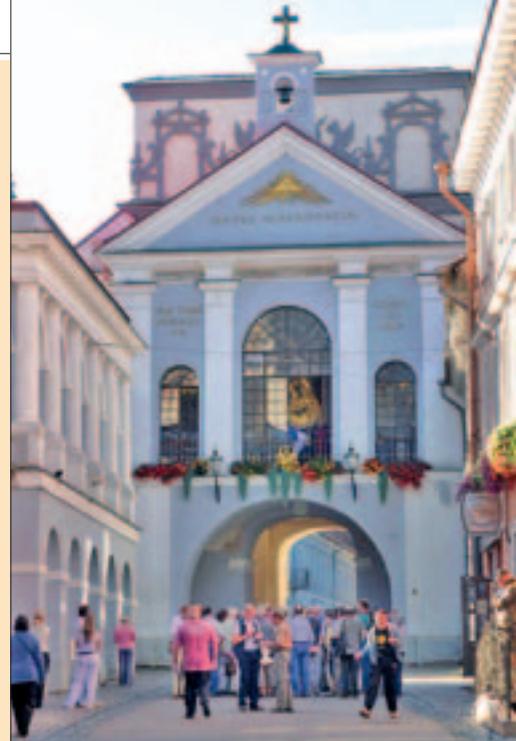
Option 2 & 3

Depart for airport flight from Vilnius or Kowno.

Tuesday 16th June

Option 1

Morning Mass at Church of John the Baptist 12 Bonifraterska Street,



■ Ostra Brama, Vilnius, Lithuania

Warsaw followed by breakfast and check out of hotel.

Option 1 – Seven nights

£495.00 / €599 / \$780 (Twin Room)
+ **Flights** Arrive and depart from Warsaw

Option 2 – Six nights

£445 / €557 / \$758
+ **Flights** Arrive in Warsaw and depart from Vilnius

Option 3 – Four nights in Vilnius

£345 / €430 / \$585 USD
+ **Flights** Arrive and depart from Lithuania only
Plus single room supplement
£20 / €25.00 / \$35 per person per night

For more information contact:

Noreen Bavister
PO Box 4332, Harlington,
Dunstable, Beds, LU5 6NR. England
Phone: +44 (0)779-5318-605
or +44 (0)152-5873-918
Email: noreenbavister@btinternet.com
Email: holyangelsinfo@gmail.com

Where do the demons live?

Given that Satan and the fallen angels were cast down into hell and are incarcerated there, how is it that they can leave hell and are capable of causing harm (such as temptation or possession) to human beings? Are the demons which have possessed a human person, therefore, escapees from Hell?

The connection between hell and Satan seems to be obvious. It is generally accepted that hell is the seat of the fallen angels, in the same way as the “abode” of the angels faithful to God is Heaven.

Prisoner or Master of Hell?

Dante Alighieri, a poet of quite extraordinary imaginative powers and influence, sited hell very precisely, claiming that it was a vast area, consisting of nine circles, of a downward-pointing cone, with each of the circles housing ever more serious sinners, with Lucifer being at its very depths. According to Dante, the gigantic funnel in the earth’s surface, which caused the formation of hell, occurred as a result of Lucifer’s fall to earth. The description of the ruler of hell is to be found in Canto XXXIV. Satan is a figure of gigantic proportions, a monster having three faces, a symbolic inversion of the Holy Trinity. At the front, a purple face, portraying hatred, is visible (in opposition to the love of

Christ), on the right, a pale yellowish face (yellow is a symbol of powerlessness, in contrast with the almighty nature of God), and, on the left, a face whose colour resembles the skin-tone of people living by the Nile (black – darkness set in opposition to the light of the Holy Spirit). Below each face, a pair of wings, of quite vast proportions, are visible, bigger than sails, membranous and un-feathered. Flapping these wings, Satan gives rise to a mighty wind, causing the waters in the underground river of tears to freeze. Lucifer’s six eyes emit tears, while his three jaws pour-out bloodied saliva. Between his teeth, he holds the three greatest sinners, the traitors Judas, Brutus and Cassius, one in each jaw, grinding them to powder with his teeth. Undoubtedly, Dante was possessed of a great, if somewhat macabre, imagination.

The hell described by John Milton in ‘Paradise Lost’, however, does not lie in the depths of the earth, but in another sphere altogether, in another part of the cosmos, perhaps beyond the borders of the universe. The fallen angels, cast into the abyss, build their own kingdom there, the impressive

seat of Satan, which they name ‘Pandemonium’. hell becomes the dominion ruled by Satan, who speaks the memorable words: “Better to rule in hell than serve in Heaven” (Paradise Lost, Book 1, verse 263).

On the one hand, therefore, hell is regarded as a place into which the fallen angels have been cast-down, but also a place in which Satan has built his kingdom, to which sinners, who do not convert and are condemned, then come. Satan is portrayed in a way analogous to the pagan gods of the underworld such as Hades or Pluto. Satan and the demons are also ascribed the role of those who carry-out the punishments of hell. We can therefore see the macabre sights, portrayed in many paintings and frescoes, of the damned being tortured and persecuted by devils (boiled in cauldrons, roasted on gridirons, being skinned etc.). These pictures have been planted deep in our consciousness, even if they are today seen as grotesque and not to be taken seriously.





■ Fall of Rebelious Angels by Frans Floris, 1554

A place of future punishment

When we look at texts in the Bible, however, the necessary connection of Satan with hell is less obvious. The Bible scholar, Klaus Berger, in his book ‘What is the Devil for?’, draws our attention to the fact that the fire of hell and hell itself has been reserved for the Devil, his angels and his human followers, but only as a place of future punishment and the final eschatological destination of such beings.

The words of Jesus himself seem to bear witness to this fact, when He prophesies that those who have rejected God will hear the words: “Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels” (Matthew, 25:41). According to the Book of Revelation, despite having earlier deceived nearly the whole of

humanity, “Then the Devil, who misled them, will be thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet are, and their torture will not stop... forever and ever” (Rev, 20:10). Biblical texts, in speaking of the evil spirits being cast into a river of burning sulphur, are obviously based on Jewish apocalyptic teaching, which makes use of symbolism and metaphor, but certainly intends to represent a future place of punishment for all the damned, rather than the residence of Satan intended by Milton.

We should, on the other hand, also take into account other New Testament texts. In the 2nd Letter of Peter, we read “When angels sinned, God did not spare them: he sent them down to the underworld and consigned them to the dark underground caves to be held there till the day of Judgement.” (2 Peter, 2:4), and in the Letter of Jude, that: “the angels who had supreme authority but did not keep it but left their appointed sphere, he has kept them down in the dark, in spiritual chains, to be judged on the great day”. (Jude 1:6). It was to these spirits that Jesus had announced that He would save people from under their power (compare 1 Peter 3:19).

In the account of the healing of the Gerasene demoniac, in the version given in the Gospel of Luke, the demons plead with Jesus “not to order them to depart in to the Abyss” (Luke 8:31). This enigmatic word is a translation of the Greek ‘abyssos’, meaning a dark, empty place, devoid of life, a state of chaos. In the Septuagint (the ancient translation of the Old Testament into Greek), the word ‘abyssos’ is used to describe the Earth in its primordial state of chaos, prior to the creation of light and of plant life. (Genesis 1:2; compare to Jeremiah 4: 23-26). None of these texts imply that this gulf or abyss is a permanent abode

of the evil spirits. The demons are simply afraid that Jesus will order them there. In Revelation 9:2, we read that this Abyss is a place from which “the smoke dropped locusts which were given the powers that scorpions have on earth”. From it will also issue the beast of the Apocalypse (Revelation 11:7 and 17:8). Satan will be chained up and thrown into the Abyss for a thousand years: “Then I saw an angel come down from heaven with the key of the Abyss in his hand and an enormous chain. He overpowered the dragon, that primeval serpent which is the Devil and Satan, and chained him up for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and shut the entrance and sealed it over to make sure he would not deceive the nations again until the thousand years have passed. At the end of that time he must be released, but only for a short while”. (Revelation 20:1-3). It is difficult to say exactly what exactly the author signifies by “the Abyss”. It may perhaps be simply a primordial chaos, something beyond creation.

Demons above our heads

From the Letter to the Ephesians, we can conclude that Satan dwells rather in the air, between the Earth and the moon, which is why he is called “the ruler who governs the air” (Ephesians 2:1-2), and St Peter concludes that “the Devil is prowling round like a roaring lion, looking for someone to eat” (1 Peter 5:8). Satan was thrown down from Heaven, but, according to the imagination of the early Christians, the ‘prison’ (in Greek – ‘fylake’) of the fallen angels extends above our heads. The demons, rising upon the air, can cause us harm,

despite being the prisoners of their environment. Consciousness of the possibility that the atmosphere around us may be filled with demons is much more disturbing than a vision of demons existing in a far-off hell.

“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man it wanders through waterless country looking for a place to rest, and not finding one it says, ‘I will go back to the home I came from. But on arrival, finding it swept and tidied, it then goes off and brings seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and set up house there, so that the man ends up being worse off than before’. (Luke 11: 24-26). From this fragment, we may conclude that demons are spirits capable of moving from place to place at will, unrestricted by the physical barriers imposed by the natural world. They can also exist within human persons, and even find a kind of rest (relief) existing within

physical beings. They prefer to possess swine than to be nowhere (Mark 5:2). We can also conclude from Biblical texts that evil spirits laid claim to certain territorial rights and became attached to certain geographical locations. Deserts, for instance, have often been regarded as being such places, that is, as unfriendly territory, which poses a threat to human beings.

A state and not a place

Contemporary theology speaks of hell as being not just a place, but also a state. Hell is a state of a definite rejection of God and therefore of rejection of the very source of happiness and contentment, a denial of the point of one’s very existence, the self-destruction of one’s vocation and purpose. Hell is, therefore, (a state of) boundless despair. It is a blind alley

from which there is no longer any way out. It is the terrible consequence of saying “No” to one’s Creator.

It is worthwhile concluding with words from the Christopher Marlowe’s play “The Tragic History of Doctor Faustus”, which carry a very deep meaning:

MEPHISTOPHELES: “Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer Conspired against our God with Lucifer and are forever damned with Lucifer”

FAUSTUS: “Where are you damned?”

MEPHISTOPHELES: “In hell.”

FAUSTUS: “How comes it then that thou are out of hell?”

MEPHISTOPHELES: “Why this is hell, nor am I out of it. Think’st thou that I, who saw the face of God, and tasted the eternal joys of heaven, am not tormented with ten thousand hells in being deprived of everlasting bliss?”

Roman Zajac

ANGELIC PILGRIMAGE

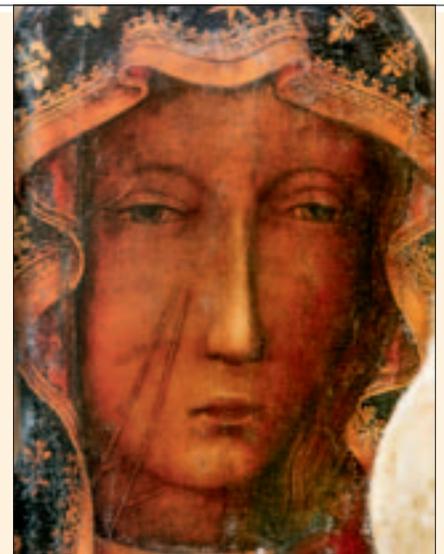
31st August – 7th September 2015

Saints of the Divine Mercy – St Faustina, St John Paul II 10th Divine Mercy Pilgrimage to Poland lead by Father Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

PRICE £495 / €599 / \$780 + flight to Cracow

- Divine Mercy shrine in Cracow
- Shrine of John Paul II in Cracow
- The birth place of JP II in Wadowice and shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska
- Shrine of Our Black Madonna in Czestochowa
- Shrine of St Michael the Archangel in Miejsce Piastowe
- The Old Town of Cracow
- The concentration camp in Auschwitz
- The salt mine in Wieliczka

Single room supplement £140 / €165 / \$225



■ Our Black Madonna in Czestochowa, Poland

Contact: **Lily Lister**

8 Bridge Street, Arbroath, Angus.

DD11 1RU

Phone: +44 (0)7999-868-412

Email: lilymlister@virginmedia.com

Creation of angels

What the scriptures teach us concerning the creation of the angels

At present, since I have undertaken to treat of the origin of the Holy City, and first of the holy angels, who constitute a large part of this city, and indeed the more blessed part, since they have never been expatriated, I will give myself to the task of explaining, by God's help...the Scriptures which relate to this point. Where Scripture speaks of the world's creation, it is not plainly said whether or when the angels were created; but if mention of them is made, it is implicitly under the name of "heaven", when it is said, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," or perhaps rather under the name of "light"...

Yet, though the fact that the angels are the work of God...it is indeed not explicitly mentioned; but elsewhere Holy Scripture asserts it in the clearest manner. For...here the angels are most expressly and by divine authority said to have been made by God, for of them among the other heavenly things it is said, "He commanded, and they were created" (Ps 148). Who, then, will be bold enough to suggest that the angels were made after the six days' creation? If any one is so foolish, his folly is disposed of by a Scripture of like authority, where God says,

"When the stars were made, the angels praised me with a loud voice" (Job 38:7).

The angels therefore existed before the stars; and the stars were made the fourth day. Shall we then say that they were made the third day? Far from it; for we know what was made that day. The earth was separated from the water... and the earth produced all that grows on it. On the second day, then? Not even on this; for on it the firmament was made between the waters above and beneath, and was called "heaven." ...There is no question, then, that if the angels are included in the works of God during these six days, they are that light which was called "day," and whose unity Scripture signals by calling that day not the "first day," but "one day."

...For when God said, "Let there be light, and there was light," if we are justified in understanding in this light the creation of the angels, then certainly they were created partakers of the eternal Light which is the unchangeable Wisdom of God, by which all things were made, and whom we



■ St Augustine by Peter Paul Rubens, 1639

call the Only-Begotten Son of God; so that they, being illumined by the Light that created them, might themselves become light and be called "day," in participation of that unchangeable Light and Day which is the Word of God, by whom both themselves and all else were made. "The true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn 1:9)—this Light lighteth also every pure angel, that he may be light not in himself, but in God; from whom if an angel turn away, he becomes impure, as are all those who are called unclean spirits, and are no longer light in the Lord, but darkness in themselves, being deprived of the participation of Light eternal. For evil has no positive nature; but the loss of good has received the name "evil."

St Augustine

From *The City of God*, Bk XI, ch. 9

Brief introduction to the nine choirs of angels



1. Seraphim

The Seraphim is said to be the highest order of angels who guard God's throne. They are often depicted as 'burning angels' to represent them on fire with love for God. In the Bible Isaiah saw them as six winged beings. These heavenly creatures praise God.

2. Cherubim

The word Cherubim is said to mean 'fullness of knowledge'. The Cherubim have the honour of observing and keeping the records of God's creative powers. Cherubims are said to have four wings and four faces. The Cherubims also act as heavenly counselors and are the seekers of the eternal truth.

3. Thrones

Throne Angels represent the divine majesty and are associated with the power of judgement. They carry out God's justice according to spiritual and universal laws. The Thrones also act as angels who are friends of all the planets. It is the Thrones who will drive forward God's chariot, often they are portrayed as angels who carry the scales of justice.

4. Dominions

The Dominions are angels of leadership and are said to ensure that God's will is carried out by other angels. They help balance the force of creation and of the material and spiritual worlds. The Dominions represent the superiority of wisdom over intellect and govern the natural world and the elements.

5. Virtues

Virtues are known as angels who watch over the heavenly bodies and nature. The Virtues are often associated with miracles performed on earth. Shining bright and

often depicted with swords, shields or sceptres, these wonderful angels will assist you in your darkest hour.

6. Powers

Powers are warrior angels who maintain order around planet Earth and protect it from being overthrown by Satan, defending the cosmos and human souls. They fight against evil spirits who attempt to wreak chaos through human beings.

7. Principalities

The Principalities are a realm of angels who keep a watchful eye of the nations of planet earth and its leaders. They are protectors of religion, giving strength in times of hardship.

8. Archangels

The Archangels are the most frequently mentioned throughout the Bible. They are the leaders of the angelic armies and are Holy messengers of God. There are only three archangels acknowledged by the Catholic Faith: Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. They also command God's armies and act as guardian angels to leaders of world movements. They may be of this or other hierarchies like St Michael the Archangel.

9. Angels

These include guardian angels who are assigned by God to every human being at the moment of conception. Angels are closest to the material world and human beings. They deliver our prayers to God and return with God's answers. Guardian angels have the capacity to access all other angels at any time, their role is to watch over us during our lives. They are also the most caring and social of beings who assist those who ask for help.

Noreen Bavister, UK

Belarus Project

Thank you for your ongoing support and kind donations. Walking with my God is very humbling, He has been with me every step of the way. Each step though often hard has had a great impact on this community, especially the youth. The shell of the pastoral centre is now complete. By springtime I hope to have the basic fundamentals such as running water, a gas supply and electricity. Then when funds allow we will install a small kitchen. With God everything is possible.

There are three easy ways to pay, please make all donations via the Global Children's Foundation.

Donate by Post

Please make your cheques payable to **Global**

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Global Children's Foundation
PO Box 4332, Harlington, Dunstable,
Beds LU6 9DG. England.

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You can transfer money directly into the GCF bank account.

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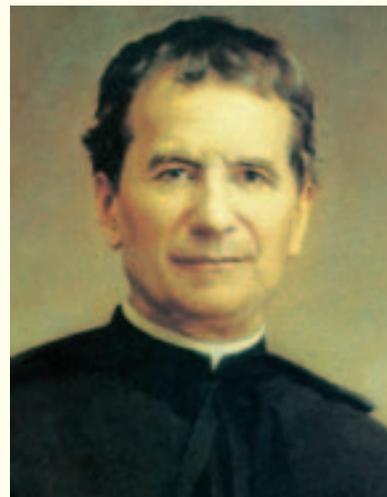
to find the link to our Just Giving page to make a one-off or monthly donation.

I am very grateful for your financial support. Every Tuesday (the day of St Michael the Archangel) I celebrate a Mass for all the donors of this project.

Special thanks to Father Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA, the chief editor of The Angels magazine, who is the patron of this work. With my gift of prayer and a humble heart.

God bless you.

Father **Christopher Poświata** CSMA
Belarus Project Global Children's
Foundation
PO Box 4332, Harlington,
Dunstable, Beds LU5 6NR UK



Angelic wisdom

When tempted, invoke your angel. He is more eager to help you than you are to be helped! Ignore the Devil and do not be afraid of him; he trembles and flees at the sight of your guardian angel.

Ask your angel to console and assist you in your last moments.

Be good. This will make your angel happy. When sorrows and misfortunes, physical or spiritual, afflict you, turn to your guardian angel with strong trust and he will help you.

If you wish to please Jesus and Mary, obey your guardian angel's inspirations.

Pray to your guardian angel. Invoke his aid if you should find yourself in any serious danger of body or soul, and I assure you that he will help and protect you.

Take courage and pray; your guardian angel will also pray for you, and your prayers will be answered.

St Don Bosco

ENGLAND

**23rd January
at 6.30pm**

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour
and St Anselm RC Church
1 Elwes Way, Great Billing
Northampton NN3 9EA
Contact: Fr Damien Walne
Phone: +44 (1) 604-406-410
Email:
frdamien@ourladyandstanselm.org

**24th – 25th January
All Masses**

St Peter the Apostle RC Church
103 Woolwich New Road,
London
SE18 6EF
Contact: Fr Michael Branch
Phone: +44- 208-854-0359

**26th January
7:00pm Holy Mass
Divine Mercy
and St Michael the Archangel**

Roman Catholic Church
of English Martyrs,
Chalkhill Road
Wembley Park,
Middx HA9 9EW
Contact: Fr Hugh Corrigan
Phone: 020 8904 2306.
email: wembleypark@rcdow.org.uk

**27th January
6:00pm Holy Mass
Divine Mercy
and St Michael the Archangel**

Our Lady and St Joseph
Catholic Church
100A Balls Pond Road
Kingsland, London
N1 4AG
Contact: Fr Michael Daley PP
Phone: +44 (0)207 254 4378
email: michaeldaley@rcdow.org.uk

**28th January
6:15pm Holy Mass
Talks: Divine Mercy
and St Michael the Archangel**

Church of the Holy Ghost
High Street, Midsomer Norton,
Somerset
Contact: Father Michael Clothier
or Denise Vallency
Phone: +44 (0) 7714 285-456

**29th January
7:00pm Holy Mass
Talks: Divine Mercy and St Faustina**

St John the Evangelist RC Church,
South Parade,
Bath Avon
BA2 4AF
Contact: Fr David Ryan or Denise
Vallency
Phone: +44 (0) 7714 285-456

UGANDA

6th - 7th February
Our Lady of Visitation
Mbuye Catholic Parish
PO Box 103 Rakai, Kyotera
Uganda
Email: skbukenya@gmail.com
Contact: Fr Silvester Bukenya
Phone: + 256 (0) 733-184-906

8th - 9th February
Ggaba Parish
P. O. Box 9415, Kampala, 1
Uganda
Contact: Fr Ssengondo
+256 (0)782 - 199- 589

10th February
The Eucharistic Shrine,
Mt. Sion Prayer Centre
Bukalango, Kampala-Hoima,
Kampala Archdiocese Uganda
with Msgr. Magembe

CANADA

**28th February – 3rd March
Retreat**
St Michael's Parish
1920 Wildwood Drive.
P.O. Box 369 Brights Grove

ON N0N 1C0,
Canada
Contact: Fr Vince Gulikers
Phone: 519-869-2845
email: vgulikers@dol.ca

USA

**8th – 15th March
St Michael
and the Holy Angels Retreat**
St Clare of Montefalco Parish,
Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park,
MI, USA
Contact: Fr Andrew Kowalczyk
Phone: +1 -313-647-5000
Email: andrewk@stclarem.org

**21st – 25th March
Divine Mercy Retreat**
Pope John Paul II
Polish Centre
3999 Rose Drive
Yorba Linda,
California 92886
Contact: Fr Henry Noga SVD
(Pastor/Director)
Phone: +1-714-996-8161

**10th – 15th April
Talks: Divine Mercy**
St Anthony of Padua
Catholic Church 5770 N. Maroa
Fresno, California 93704
Contact: Marie Farley
Phone: +1 805-878-6902
Email:
mariefarley@live.com

IRELAND

**8th May
2 – 5.00pm: 2.00pm Holy Mass
Divine Mercy
and The Knighthood of St Michael**
Rosa Mystica, Glenleighan,
Fintown, Co Donegal.
Contact: Mary Doogan
Phone: +44 (0)7854-387-409
Email: marytdoogan@yahoo.co.uk

9th May and 10th May

**9.00am – 6.00pm Whole Day Retreat
Talks on St Michael the Archangel
/ Divine Mercy**

The La Verna Retreat Centre
Rosnowlagh, Co Donegal, Ireland
Contact: Claire O'Shea
Phone: + 353 (0) 71-9852-572
email:
lavernarossnowlagh@hotmail.com
www.lavernaretreat.com

14th May

7.30pm Mass

**Talks on Divine Mercy
and St Michael the Archangel**

Church of the Immaculate Conception
Church Rd, Mitchelstown
Co. Cork. Ireland
Contact: Rev. Fr Michael Fitzgerald PP
Phone: +353 (0) 25-840-90
Parish office: + 353 (0) 25-84-062
Email:
mitchelstownparishoffice@eircom.net

15th – 17th May

7.30pm Holy Mass

Divine Mercy and Holy Angels Retreat

Pallotine College Chapel
Kickham Street, Thurles.
Co Tipperary. Ireland
Contact: Fr Emmet O'Hara
Phone: +353-504-21202
Email: emmet.ohara9@gmail.com
www.thurlesparish.ie

WALES

22 – 24th May

Talks: Advanced Divine Mercy retreat

Franciscan Friary
Monastery Road, Pantasaph
Holywell, Flintshire CH8 8PE
Contact: Br Loarne Ferguson
Phone: office +44 (0) 1352-711-053

16 – 18th October

Talks: Holy Angels Retreat

Franciscan Friary
Monastery Road, Pantasaph
Holywell, Flintshire CH8 8PE
Contact: Br Loarne Ferguson
Phone: office +44 (0) 1352-711-053

Divine Mercy in Action today

Mary's Meals began in Malawi in 2002 when its founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow met a young woman called Emma who was dying from AIDS. She was sitting on the mud floor of her hut surrounded by her children. When Magnus asked her 14-year-old son what his dreams were in life, his stark reply was: "To have enough food to eat and to go to school one day".



Inspirational

This was a key part of the inspiration that led to the Mary's Meals campaign. Mary's Meals began feeding 200 children in one school in Malawi in 2002 and now, twelve years on, reaches 923,572 children with a daily meal in their place of education across five different continents. The average global cost of Mary's Meals per child, per year = £12.20

**To help or for more information,
please contact:**

Jane Hamilton, (UK & Ireland)
Main line: +44 (0) 141 336 7094
Direct dial: +44 (0) 141 336 1854
Email: jane.hamilton@marysmeals.org

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Prayer as I reflect on all the people you place in my life today

I think about my family, my relatives, the neighbours, people with whom we will spend this day. Dear Jesus, as I look at their faces and remember their stories, there are feelings of gratitude and some fear and anxiety. Thank you for these loved ones and please forgive me for the ways I have been less than accepting and loving. Please heal the wounds, division and conflicts that stand between us and help me to remember how dearly you love them. I only want to remember that you have come to save us all.

Prayer to the guardian angel

Guardian Angel from heaven so bright, watching beside me to lead me aright, fold thy wings round me, and guard me with love, softly sing songs to me of heaven above. Amen.

Prayer of St Gertrude the Great

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the Universal Church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen.

Chief Editor: Father **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA
Deputy Editor and Chief Co-ordinator: **Noreen Bavister**



Chaplet of St Michael

L. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
A. *Amen*

Say the following prayer on the medal:

*O God, come to my assistance.
O Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory be to the Father, etc.*

1. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim, may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.
(1 Our Father on the first large bead, 3 Hail Marys on the next three small beads)

2. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim, may the Lord vouchsafe to grant us grace to leave the ways of wickedness, to run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

3. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Thrones, may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

4. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Dominions, may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and subdue our unruly passions. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

5. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Powers, may the Lord vouchsafe to protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the Devil. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

6. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues, may the Lord deliver us from evil and suffer us not to fall into temptation. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

7. By the intercession of St Michael and the Celestial Choir of Principalities, may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

8. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Archangels, may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works, in order that we gain the glory of Paradise. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

9. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels, may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted hereafter to eternal glory. Amen.
(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)

Recite on the next four beads:

1 Our Father in honour of St Michael

1 Our Father in honour of St Gabriel

1 Our Father in honour of St Raphael

1 Our Father in honour of our Guardian Angel

O glorious prince, St Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King, and our admirable conductor, who shines with excellence and superhuman virtue, vouchsafe to deliver us from evil, who turn to you with confidence, and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day. Amen.

Prayer of Pope Leo XIII

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the Divine Power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.