



The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

Grace the greatest gift

Micéal's journey

Father speaks to His children

Why I became a Catholic

Act of Consecration to St Michael

De Montfort, a despised prophet



God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

Our Father is a prayer for all people dictated by Jesus in response to the request from the disciples when they saw Jesus praying. They were so amazed they wanted to pray in the same way. The disciples said to Jesus, “Teach us how to pray.” That lesson from Jesus is so important, as the one lesson on how to pray. The Our Father consists of seven requests, (for wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord) and we should not be afraid of asking the Lord, because He is willing to offer us what we need. Some people say that to request or to ask is not the best way to pray.

We know we have to thank God, and to praise Him but, it is a part of our life, if we are humble, that we depend on God completely. We turn to Him and ask. When we pray the Our Father we turn to the Father. We not only believe in God but in the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “When you pray say, ‘Our Father’”. It is a tremendous thing because we dare to say it. God is all powerful, omnipotent, the creator but, we dare to say, “Thanks to the Lord.”

So we say, “Our Father”. If you have a great experience of your earthly

father, you understand when we say ‘Our Father’, who is the real Father of us all. It helps us to understand that when we turn to God, when we realise that He is Our Father, we dare to ask as Jesus taught us: we are allowed to ask God who is Our Father.

Try and say to God daily, “Father, Father.” it is very pleasing to Him. If you have a son and he says, “Daddy, daddy, daddy.” it is pleasing to your heart.

We say this prayer in the plural form as this is not about me, but about us. We belong to a community of people when we say, “Our Father who art in heaven.” It means that God is over us, above us, somewhere else. He is the mystery itself. We should have reverence for God when we pray because He is in heaven, He is transcendent over us, beyond or *above* the range of normal or physical human experience, which reminds us of the holiness of God.

I assure you of the constant daily prayers of the priests of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel for all our readers and families.

Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA
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The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

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The Father speaks to His children

(Part 1)

“God is my Father!” This cry is being heard ever more frequently in today’s world; people are coming to recognize that God is indeed their Father.

Consequently, we feel it our duty to publish a message, given to the world by God the Father through one of His creatures who loved Him so much, Sister Eugenia Elisabetta Ravasio, and recognized as valid by the Church.

We consider it appropriate to introduce this work by quoting the testimony of a former Bishop of Grenoble, the Right Reverend Alexandre Caillot. In 1935 he set up a board of experts, drawn from various parts of France, to conduct a diocesan enquiry, which lasted ten years.

Its members included the Bishop of Grenoble’s Vicar General, Mgr Guerry, theologian; the Jesuit brothers, Fathers Albert and Auguste Valencin-Amons, who ranked among the foremost authorities in the field of philosophy and theology and were expert in evaluating such cases; and two doctors of medicine, one of whom was a psychiatrist.

We are sure that this message will help people to understand the deep tenderness the Father has for each one of us, and we hope that it will receive the widest possible circulation.



■ Mother Eugenia E. Ravasio in Africa

Short biography of Mother Eugenia Elisabette Ravasio

Who is Mother Eugenia, whom God the Father called “My beloved daughter”, “My little plant”?

In our opinion, Mother Eugenia is one of the greatest lights of our times, the little prophet of a new Church, in which the Father is the centre and apex of all mankind, and in which

unity is the highest ideal of spirituality. She is a light given by the Father to the world at this time of chaos and darkness, so that we may see the road that has to be followed.

She was born in San Gervasio d’Adda (now Capriato San Gervasio), a small town in the province of Bergamo, Italy, on 4th September 1907, in a family of peasant background.

She received only an elementary education. After a few years working in a factory, she entered the Congregation of Our Lady of the Apostles at the age of 20 years. It was

here that her great charismatic personality developed, leading to her election as Mother General of the Congregation at the age of only 25.

Quite apart from her spiritual qualities, her work in the social field alone would suffice to ensure her a place in history. In twelve years of missionary activity she opened over 70 centres - each with an infirmary, a school and a church - in the remotest spots of Africa, Asia and Europe.

It was she who discovered the first medicine for the cure of leprosy, extracting it from the seed of a tropical plant. This medicine was later studied and developed further at the Pasteur Institute in Paris.

She encouraged the apostolate of Raoul Follereau, who, following in her footsteps and building on the foundations laid by her, is regarded as the apostle of the lepers.

During the period 1939-41 she conceived, planned and brought to fruition the project for a "Lepers' City" at Azopte (Ivory Coast). This was a vast centre, covering an area of 200,000 square metres, for the care of leprosy sufferers. It remains even today one of Africa's and the world's leading centres of its kind.

In recognition of this achievement, France conferred the Couronne Civique, the highest national honour for social work, on the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Apostles, of which Mother Eugenia was Superior General from 1935 to 1947.

Mother Eugenia returned to the Father on 10th August 1990.

Her most important legacy to us is the Message of the Father ("The Father speaks to His children"), the only private revelation made personally by God the Father

and recognized as authentic by the Church after ten years of the most rigorous examination. We reproduce at the beginning of the text the statement issued by Mgr Alexandre Caillot, Bishop of Grenoble, following the investigation.

"It is noteworthy that the Father (in 1932) dictated the Message to Mother Eugenia in Latin, a language totally unknown to her.

In 1981 this Message came to our notice, and in 1982, its fiftieth anniversary, we published it in Italian.

The many miracles of grace worked by the Message have led us to disseminate it gratis, especially in prisons, barracks and hospitals. In addition to English, it is available in French, Italian, Spanish and German and other languages." (**Father Andrea D'Ascanio OFM Cap**)

God says

Book 1, part 1

July 1st, 1932: Feast of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here, finally, is the day, blessed forever, the day the celestial Father promised! Today the long days of preparation are over, and I feel close, so close, to the coming of my Father and the Father of all men. A few minutes of prayer, and then what spiritual joys! I was overwhelmed by the desire to see Him and hear Him! My heart, burning with love, opened up with such great confidence that I realized that, until then, I had never been so trusting with anyone. The thought of my Father made me, as it were, madly happy. Finally I began to hear singing. Angels came to announce this glad arrival! Their songs were

so beautiful that I decided to note them down as soon as possible. This harmony ceased and then came a procession of the elect, the cherubim and seraphim, with God, our Creator and our Father. Prostrate, with my face to the ground, sunk in my own nothingness, I said the Magnificat. Immediately afterwards, the Father told me to sit close to Him and write what He had decided to say to men. The entire heavenly court who had accompanied Him vanished. Only the Father remained with me and, before sitting, He said: "I have already told you and now I say it again: I cannot give My beloved Son another time to prove My love for men! I am now coming among them in order to love them and to make them know this love, assuming their image, their poverty. Look, now I am putting aside My crown and all My glory to take on the appearance of an ordinary man!"

Having assumed the appearance of an ordinary man by placing His crown and His glory at His Feet, He took the globe of the world and held it to His Heart, supporting it with His left Hand. He then sat next to me. I can say but a few words about His arrival and about the appearance He deigned to assume, and about His love! In my ignorance I do not have words to express what He revealed to me.

He said: "Peace and salvation to this house and to the whole world! May My power, My love and My Holy Spirit touch men's hearts, so that all mankind may turn to salvation and come to its Father, Who seeks it, to love and to save it! Let My Vicar Pius XI understand that these are days of salvation and blessing. Let him not fail to take this opportunity to

call the attention of the children to their Father, Who is coming to help them in this life and to prepare their everlasting happiness. I have chosen this day to begin My work among men because today is the feast of the Precious Blood of My Son Jesus. I intend to bathe in this Blood the work I am beginning, so that it may bear great fruit among all mankind.

This is the real purpose of My coming:

- 1) I am coming to banish the excessive fear that My creatures have of Me, and to show them that My joy lies in being known and loved by My children, that is, by all mankind, present and future.
- 2) I am coming to bring hope to men and nations. How many have long since lost it! This hope will make them live in peace and security, working for their salvation.
- 3) I am coming to make Myself known just as I am, so that men's trust may increase together with their love for Me, their Father. I have but one concern: to watch over all men and love them as My children.

The painter delights in contemplating the picture he has painted. In the same way, it is My pleasure and delight to come among men, the masterpiece of My creation! Time presses. I wish men to know as soon as possible that I love them and that I feel the greatest happiness in being with them and talking with them, like a father with his children. I am the Eternal One, and when I was alone,

I had already thought of using all My power to create beings in My image. But material creation had to come first, so that these beings could find their means of sustenance; it was then that I created the world. I filled it with all the things I knew would be necessary to men: air, sun and



■ The picture of God the Father by vision of M. Eugenia E. Ravasio, the reproduction from 1936, unknown author.

rain, and many other things that I knew to be necessary for their life. In the end, man was created! I was pleased with My handiwork. Man sins, but it is precisely then that My infinite generosity shows itself. In the Old Testament, I created and chose prophets to live among men. To them I told My desires, My sorrows and My joys, so that they could communicate them to everyone. The more evil grew, the more My goodness

urged Me to communicate with just souls so that they could transmit My commands to those who were creating disorder. Thus, I was sometimes obliged to be strict in order to reprove them; not to punish them - that would only have done harm - but to take them away from vice and lead them to their Father and their Creator, Whom they had forgotten and ignored in their ingratitude. Later, evil overwhelmed men's hearts to such an extent that I was compelled to send calamities upon the world to purify men through suffering, the destruction of their possessions, or even their death. These were the Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, man's wars against man, etc. I have always wished to remain in this world among men. So, during the Flood, I was close to Noah, the only just man then. In the other calamities, also, I always found a just man with whom I could stay and, through him, I lived among the men of that time, and it has always been thus. The world has often been purified of its corruption because

of My infinite goodness towards humanity. I continued to choose certain souls in whom I was pleased, because through them I could be happy with My creatures, men."

Taken from "The Father speaks to His children"

Imprimatur:

+ **Petrus Canisius van Lierde**,
Vic. Generalis e Vic. Civit. Vaticanae,
Roma, die 13 Martii 1989

THE FIAT OF THE ETERNAL FATHER

(God the Father desires that we begin each day with this prayer.)

My beloved Father, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Be Thou my Father, be always my Eternal Father. Do not leave my soul. Do not leave me out of Your sight, My Father, for I am Your child, whom You have created to please You, to adore You, to honour You, living my days as You have given me the licence to live it. Amen.

God the Father said to Mother Eugenia: “Day after day, My children, say that in your mind. That will be the way you will say your FIAT to your FATHER. And I, your FATHER, will open My Arms like this (and He stretched out His Arms) and I every day will gather you in My Arms, and I will hold you and I will rock you as your BELOVED MOTHER (the Blessed Virgin Mary) rocks each baby in her arms. For yes, you are My children. Remember the FIAT of each day as you live. As you do this from the beginning of the day, I promise you, My children, I guarantee you I will cover you in My Arms. I will send you My Angels with St Michael to protect you, and all the saints of your devotions to be with you during the day to guide you and assist you. I promise you, you will feel the power of My great LOVE for you that I will send you day in and day out. But you have to offer Me – every day – as you get up in the morning – that FIAT.”

Taken from “The Father speaks to His children”

■ The Immaculate Conception
by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo,
between 1767-68



CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, and tender Mother of all people, I consecrate myself to you and to your Immaculate Heart, and recommend to you my family, my country, and the whole human race. Please accept my consecration, dearest Mother, and use me as you wish to accomplish your designs upon the world. O Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, rule over me and teach me how to allow the Heart of Jesus to rule and triumph in me and around me, as It has ruled and triumphed in you. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, filled with infinite love, broken by my ingratitude, pierced by my sins, yet loving me still. Accept the consecration that I make to You of all that I am and all that I have. Take every faculty of my soul and body. Draw me day by day, nearer and nearer to Your Sacred Heart. And there, as I can bear the lesson, teach me Your blessed ways. Amen.

Meditation on the Our Father

St Francis of Assisi, the great master of prayer, invites us to a deeper understanding of words we say to God every day.

OUR FATHER MOST HOLY, our creator and redeemer, our Saviour and Consoler.

WHO ARE IN HEAVEN, with the angels and saints, enlightening them that they may know you, for you, Lord, are love, dwelling in them and filling them with your divinity, that bliss may be theirs, for you, Lord, are the highest Good, the eternal Good, from whom all goodness flows, without whom nothing is good.

YOUR NAME BE HELD HOLY: may our knowledge of you shine ever more clearly within us, that we may perceive the breadth of your blessings, the extent of your promises, the height of your majesty, the depth of your judgements.

YOUR KINGDOM COME: rule us now, through grace, and bring us at last to your kingdom of light where we shall see you as you are, and our love for you will be made perfect, our union blissful, our joy unending, in you.

YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN may we love you with our whole heart, ever thinking of you; with our whole soul, ever longing for you; with our whole mind, directing all our aims to you and seeking nothing but your glory; with our whole



■ St Francis of Assisi by Cigoli, between 1597-99

strength, spending all our energies and all our senses of soul and body to serve only your love and nothing else. May we love our neighbours as ourselves; drawing them all to your love in so far as we can, sharing their good fortune as if it were our own, helping them to bear their trials and doing them no wrong.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may remember, understand and revere the love he showed for us, and all he said and did and suffered for our sake.

FORGIVE US OUR SINS through your mercy beyond words, through the power of the passion of your

beloved Son, through the merits and intercession of the Virgin Mary and of all your chosen ones.

AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US and that we ourselves who cannot fully forgive, make us fully forgive; make us love our enemies, truly, for your sake; teach us how to pray sincerely to you on their behalf; and not to render harm for harm to anyone, but rather try to do good to all, in you!

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION whether veiled or visible, sudden or searing and prolonged.

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL past, present and to come. Amen.

Conditions of indulgences

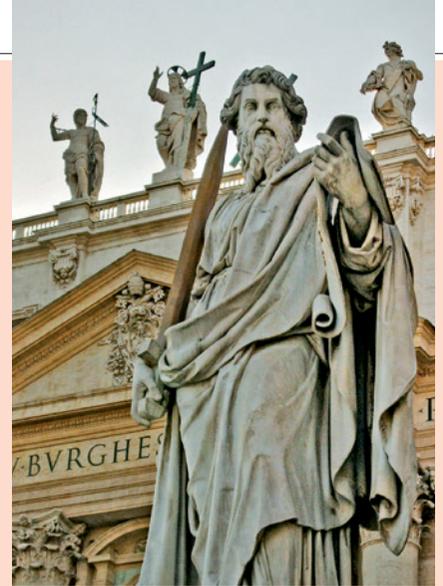
1 This is how an indulgence is defined in the Code of Canon Law (can.992) and in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (n.1471): “An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints”.

2 In general, the gaining of indulgences requires certain prescribed conditions (below, nn. 3, 4), and the performance of certain prescribed works (nn. 8, 9, 10 indicate those specific to the Holy Year).

3 To gain indulgences, whether plenary or partial, it is necessary that the faithful be in the state of grace at least at the time the indulgenced work is completed.

4 A plenary indulgence can be gained only once a day. In order to obtain it, the faithful must, in addition to being in the state of grace:

- have the interior disposition of complete detachment from sin, even venial sin;
- have sacramentally confessed their sins;
- receive the Holy Eucharist (it is certainly better to receive it while participating in Holy Mass, but for the indulgence only Holy Communion is required);
- pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff.



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

6 For the sake of those legitimately impeded, confessors can commute both the work prescribed and the conditions required (except, obviously, detachment from even venial sin).

7 Indulgences can always be applied either to oneself or to the souls of the deceased, but they cannot be applied to other persons living on earth.



■ The Vatican, Italy

Taken from: www.vatican.va

Micéal's journey

His strength came from his faith

Micéal Kevin Murphy was born 16th January 1995, and weighing 7lbs 7oz he was just perfect. We named him Micéal (the Irish version of Michael), meaning 'God sent' and Micéal was God sent. Before he was born we were convinced that he was a girl, which meant a four week stage of just being totally mesmerised by him and it sank in that we had been blessed with the most beautiful, blue-eyed, red-haired son. We were truly blessed. Micéal seemed to just arrive and thrive through each stage of his baby life. 'So lucky' was how other parents described us as our son was so content.

He loved his brothers

At the age of two Micéal became big brother to Brian. He absolutely idolised his baby brother, constantly taking care of Brian and protecting him. I can still hear his little voice saying, "No, no, Briany. That's dangerous!"

At the age of four he had another brother, Aidan, to love and protect. Micéal tidied up for his brothers, he helped feed them, cleaned their little faces and hands and would hug them, always telling them, "I just love you, you know." At the age of ten, he then

had the arrival of yet another little brother, Eoghan: only this time he finally had a brother with beautiful red hair like his own! He was besotted with Eoghan, protecting, hugging and kissing him right up to the day he left us.

Academic excellence

Our first born excelled academically, achieving the highest G.C.S.E (General Certificate in Secondary Education) grades in his high school, and then moved on to achieve 3 A*s and 1 A in his A-levels (Advanced Level); the only person to achieve an A* in Advanced Mathematics in his school. He loved Gaelic football and performed with the greatest of skill, which led to him being awarded Player of the Year by his club, Dorsey Emmets, at each level at which he played. His team mates honoured Micéal with the quote: 'With Strength and Pride we remember Micéal.'

It was in his second year in Queens University, Belfast, while studying Accountancy that Micéal won an award for the highest achieving student - the BDO award for accountancy. Such an honour but, yet again, Micéal did not shout about it, he just smiled and said, "Mum, I need a new suit." He was achieving at the highest standards and excelling in statistical mathematics, another detail we were to learn later.

Passionate about farming

Micéal was also extremely passionate about farming beef cattle. As a young child he worked the land, fed and cleaned the livestock. He tended to the cattle in winter and assisted in all births. Charolais cattle were his love - "A field of white, Mum," he would say, "some day I will have a field of white pedigree Charolais," and he had in fact already begun his pedigree dream herd. Along with his cattle, there was of course Ted, his St Bernard pup, now a full-grown, loving dog. Micéal spent hours grooming and teaching Ted to obey his commands. He loved animals and nature, telling me once, "Mum, did you know that the rainforest are the lungs of the earth? And man is suffocating it!" On another occasion he said to me, "You know what's wrong with the world? Greed - man's greed is destroying this world." Micéal was quiet, so loving and caring with a smile that warmed, calmed and invited you to him.

Micéal began holding his head

It was 14th May 2015, and Micéal was heading to the Balmoral Show. He was accompanying a group of people with whom he was studying an extra agricultural class in the evenings at home, in Cullyhanna, Newry, Northern Ireland. He felt unwell that morning

and I asked him to stay at home, but he was adamant he was going to the show, which he and his brothers had not missed since they were toddlers. I was worried: this was my first-born son who had never smoked or drank alcohol. He attended the gym every morning, trained for football three times a week and only ate 'clean food'. I told him, "If you will not stay at home I will go with you." So off we both went on a coach bus. We had not travelled far when Micéal began holding his head in his hands, and rocking to and fro. I wanted to stop the bus but, Micéal did not want to draw attention to himself. As we arrived at the Balmoral Show I caught sight of the paramedics and asked Micéal, "Please, son, will you go to them?" He then agreed. I knew straight away this was not good, as Micéal never complained, never said he was sore or in pain, even when he had broken his wrist in two places at seven years of age. The paramedics took Micéal to the main first aid centre at the show, where Micéal was examined and advised to go to the Royal Victoria Hospital. Again, he wanted me to just give him two painkillers so he could get into the show – I found out later he wanted to buy a cattle trailer, his first cattle trailer. We went by ambulance to the Royal where Micéal was attended to immediately.

His strength came from his faith

Within two hours Micéal was told he had a lesion on his brain – a tumour. Micéal just put his right arm over his eyes and said, "I wasn't expecting that now." I couldn't breathe. I was crying. Micéal looked at me and said, "Mum,



■ Micéal at hospital

come on, it is what it is. Don't cry, don't cry, Mum." Micéal's toughest journey began in that accident and emergency room. The Micéal that entered that hospital would never be again.

Micéal always had strong faith. We are Roman Catholics and although our religion was never a visible part of our lives to the outside world, to us it is a main part of who we are. Micéal's strength came from his faith: a total belief in a 'miracle' and that there would always be hope. So as a family we began Micéal's journey, the six of us together. Nothing would beat us - not together. We believed whole-heartedly that Micéal would beat this.

Micéal was admitted to the Royal Victoria Hospital on 14th May 2015. He was moved upstairs to the 7th floor, temporarily, until a bed became available on the 4th floor. The tests began, one after another: CT scans, MRI scans, ultrasounds, blood tests, dye tests - needle after needle - multiple IV ports, and steroids in high doses to keep the swelling on Micéal's brain down. He began to lose mobility on the left hand side of his body. The physiotherapist's were amazed at how he continued to walk with a crutch carrying his whole body

weight through his right shoulder. There were specialists for the brain, physio, speech and wellbeing that all attended to Micéal. They fell in love with his smile, good nature, his optimistic mood and his total manner and his respect for them.

Daily prayers

Micéal was devoted to his morning and night prayers and Divine Mercy. They needed to be said in a special order, the same order each time. He needed to prepare to pray by arranging his prayer book and prayers in a certain order. This was done each day, no matter what. This was so important to Micéal, more important than his medication times.

Micéal was moved to a 'bay' on the 4th floor, where we met his neurosurgeon, Nicola Johnston. On the bay were people who needed brain surgery or had just been through brain surgery.

Micéal and I watched as a Chinese man was being admitted to the ward. His wife was by his side and they both looked so scared. Micéal said, "Mum, we need to help them. Imagine that was me in a foreign hospital and we

could not understand anyone.” So we started with small gestures and we referred to them as Mr and Mrs Ching, as we did not know their names. We gave Mr Ching straws to drink his hot water with. We gave Mrs Ching a blanket to use as she slept in the chair. I showed Mrs Ching where to find the hot water. Micéal would say, “Show them, Mum, please Mum.”

Mrs Ching began to look towards Micéal and I when the doctors would do their rounds and Micéal would either put his thumbs up to reassure them or his hands down to let them know he wasn't sure. Mr and Mrs Ching began to give Micéal the thumbs up also. It was so lovely. They trusted my son. After his brain surgery to try to remove the tumour (it was the size of a satsuma), which was wrapped around the main blood vessel in his brain Micéal was moved to another ward. Mr and Mrs Ching's son-in-law came to thank Micéal for his kindness, and my son's modest reply was, “No bother at all.”

A card for Mr Chin

On 3rd June, Micéal was discharged and as he limped and pulled himself down the ward, the nurses shouted, “Micéal, you are going the wrong way!” But he wasn't. Micéal was going to the bay with a Divine Mercy prayer card he wanted to give to Mr Ching. He got to Mr Ching's bed, gave him the prayer card, shook his hand and wished him the very best. Mr Ching cried and thanked him, constantly bowing to him. We never did find out how things went for Mr Ching, but Micéal kept him in his prayers and hoped that they both took the Divine Mercy prayer home with them.

Divine Mercy prayer book

Micéal had introduced anyone that asked him about his prayer book to the Divine Mercy, and nurses, doctors and helpers all seemed genuinely interested in his story of St Faustina and the Divine Mercy. It was after his brain surgery when a complete stranger from the recovery ward grabbed me by the shoulders and said, “It is by the Divine Mercy that your son is with you.” I was shocked but, thankful. Micéal came home and Fr Cullen was so good to visit Micéal regularly. Our son loved to receive the Body of Christ. One day when he was annoyed that he could not go to Medjugorje, Fr Cullen reassured him and said, “Micéal, you do not need to go to Medjugorje to feel Our Lady, she is right here with you in this room.” Our son was delighted.

He trusted our Lord

Micéal continued to pray. He went through 30 radiotherapy fractions. The full dose of radiation is usually divided into a number of smaller doses called fractions. This allows healthy cells to recover between treatments. Micéal had the fractions as a series of treatment sessions that made up his radiotherapy course but his health was deteriorating. He had lost all mobility whilst at home with us. However, he never gave up and was always thankful, always caring. Even when he could no longer pray himself he would look at me and say, “Divine Mercy, Mum,” and we would pray together. Micéal trusted in Our Lord and his Mother.

On 20th September 2015, a Sunday, four months and five days from when

he first felt the pain in his head, Micéal opened his eyes for the first time that day. I had been holding his hand whilst reading ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’ to him, telling him over and over again how much we loved him. He looked to his right side at his daddy, Kevin, who said, “Hello, Micéal! You're sleeping all day. Are you going to wake up?” Micéal then looked to his left side at me, and then to the foot of his bed and he closed his eyes. It was 5:55pm. My baby was gone.

Micéal was and still is a good man, a good son, a good brother and a true gentleman. He believed in his miracle, he believed in Our Lord, the Divine Mercy and his Holy Mother, Our Lady.

Since Micéal passed, he has graduated from Queens University: we were told he was able to graduate because he achieved such a high phenomenal standard. His primary school, St Patrick's, Cullyhanna, have named an award after him. His two high schools, St Joseph's and St Paul's, have both named quizzes and awards after him. Accountancy firm BDO have changed their award, that Micéal himself won, to the ‘Micéal Murphy Prize’ from the BDO awarded in Queens University, Belfast.

We as a family have carried on the fundraising that Micéal himself began, as he wanted to give something back. The ‘Thumbs Up For Micéal’ fundraising team have to date raised £18,000 (\$23,618.00) for the Cancer Fund for Children in Micéal's memory.

People always tell us as a family how Micéal affected their lives in a positive way. Micéal's strength, commitment, devotion, honesty and trust will always amaze me. I thank God for Micéal and I thank Micéal for the privilege of being his mother.

Fidelma Murphy, Cullyhanna, Newry, County Down, Northern Ireland

Joyful news from (Part 2) a grotto in Venezuela



■ Maria Esperanza

Signs

Over time, María Esperanza came to discover new charisms with which God had endowed her. Her son was a witness to how hosts would materialise on the visionary's tongue in a miraculous manner, which María was to receive on behalf of souls living in Africa which priests could not reach.

It was her gift of prophecy, however, which was to become famous in Venezuela. She would tell people their own life stories, advising them, throwing light on their problems and helping them find resolutions. Her children still recall how she would never turn away or fail to help anyone who came to her asking for prayer or for advice. Just the opposite – her

There are many indications that Venezuela has given the world a new saint for the 21st century. Padre Pio said of her that she would be our consolation once he himself was no longer in the world. To some extent she is already.

house was always filled with guests. During meetings and retreats, priests would ask people to let her get some rest. She, on the other hand, wished to find time for everyone, even at the cost of her own rest or sleep.

Yet another gift granted her was that of bilocation. We have two well-documented examples when witnesses saw María in two different places. On one occasion this bilocation occurred between Rome and Caracas. María was miraculously transported to the streets of the Mercedes district of the Venezuelan capital in order to help a girl threatened by two potential rapists. The girl was to recognise her rescuer a few months later when she visited Betania. María's family were astounded when the girl was adamant as to the date when this incident had taken place. After all, they quite clearly remembered being together that day in Rome. The second such example occurred between Caracas and Lima in Peru. In the presence of witnesses, she was seen at the same time by a group of pilgrims as well as people who were with her that same day in Venezuela.

The stories of miraculous interventions which occurred in the life

of the present day saint in the making (the cause for her beatification was initiated in 2010) have been countless. For how else can one describe her conversations with Padre Pio when he heard her confessions, despite the distance between them in terms of geography, or how else can one describe her incredible relationship with John Paul II, for whom María Esperanza carried the cross of his Parkinson's disease, in order that the Pope would have greater strength to serve the Church?

There is, however, a story, or rather a certain sign, which in terms of this extraordinary woman, also reflects her spiritual union with the Best of Mothers.

A rose above her breast

“You must have heard that Marian apparitions are often accompanied by a smell of roses?” Fr Mazz, a spiritual son of María Esperanza, said to me one day.

“Yes, I've heard something of the sort. Apparently, people who have had

apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary often report smelling a wonderful fragrance at the time of the apparition.”

“Exactly. It was true of María Esperanza. It happened, that during her prayer, local people reported seeing rose petals coming down from the sky. I have one of them...”

“How come?”

“It was like this. I carry it wrapped in a special small container beneath my collar.” As he said this, the American priest starts to fumble at his neck in order to extract a minuscule package. A moment later, he was blessing a 10 year-old boy standing close to us with the rose petal.

One of the most extraordinary gifts of the Spirit which María Esperanza was granted in life is associated with roses.

“I had the chance to see it with my own eyes,” Marco, her grandson,

begins his tale. One can see the sparkle of excitement in his eyes as he recounts his story. “I was just a little tot at the time, so, as far as more intimate affairs were concerned, I could wander in with impunity.”

“What ‘intimate matters’ are you referring to?”

“At one time the gossip went round that a flower was growing in my granny’s breast.”

“That what?” I answered, unbelievably.

“That was what was being said. I wanted to see for myself. Because this particular miraculous phenomenon concerned a somewhat intimate part of the body, only women had access to the charismatic visionary – as also did I.”

“It’s obvious that no one can prevent a young child from getting in everywhere,” he tells me, laughing.

“So what did you see?”

“A small rosebud, growing just above her breasts, some distance below the neck. It was quite remarkable! It was small, but it was there, certainly, no question that it was there!”

Marco is genuinely affected by what he is telling me. It’s impossible not to believe him.

“Yes, a rose would appear on María’s body on more than one occasion,” adds Mazz, grinning from ear to ear in the American fashion.

“It was not always a small flower. Sometimes, the roses would be the size of a hand. Those roses were very beautiful.”

On my visit to Betania, I was to hear countless such stories. It’s possible that people who hear or read what I’m saying might consider such accounts as so unlikely as to be imaginary. In their place, I may well have been equally sceptical. I, however, was privileged to visit Betania. There, I spoke with the sons and daughters of María Esperanza. I spent a number of beautiful days in the company of her grandchildren. There were, therefore, endless occasions to have such conversations. I saw their faces as they told me of what they had personally witnessed. I observed their faces as they told me of what they had seen with their own eyes. I marvelled at their genuine, untrammelled joy – as they talked, as they prayed, when they unselfconsciously knelt before the statues of Our Lady or of the angels. There was not the slightest hint of pretence or show in their behaviour – absolutely nothing of the kind. That’s why I would assert that they were telling the truth.

Someone could ask me how it feels to spend time with a person who is a likely future saint. How does it feel to speak to them, to ask



■ Chapel of St Michael the Archangel, Bethany, Venezuela

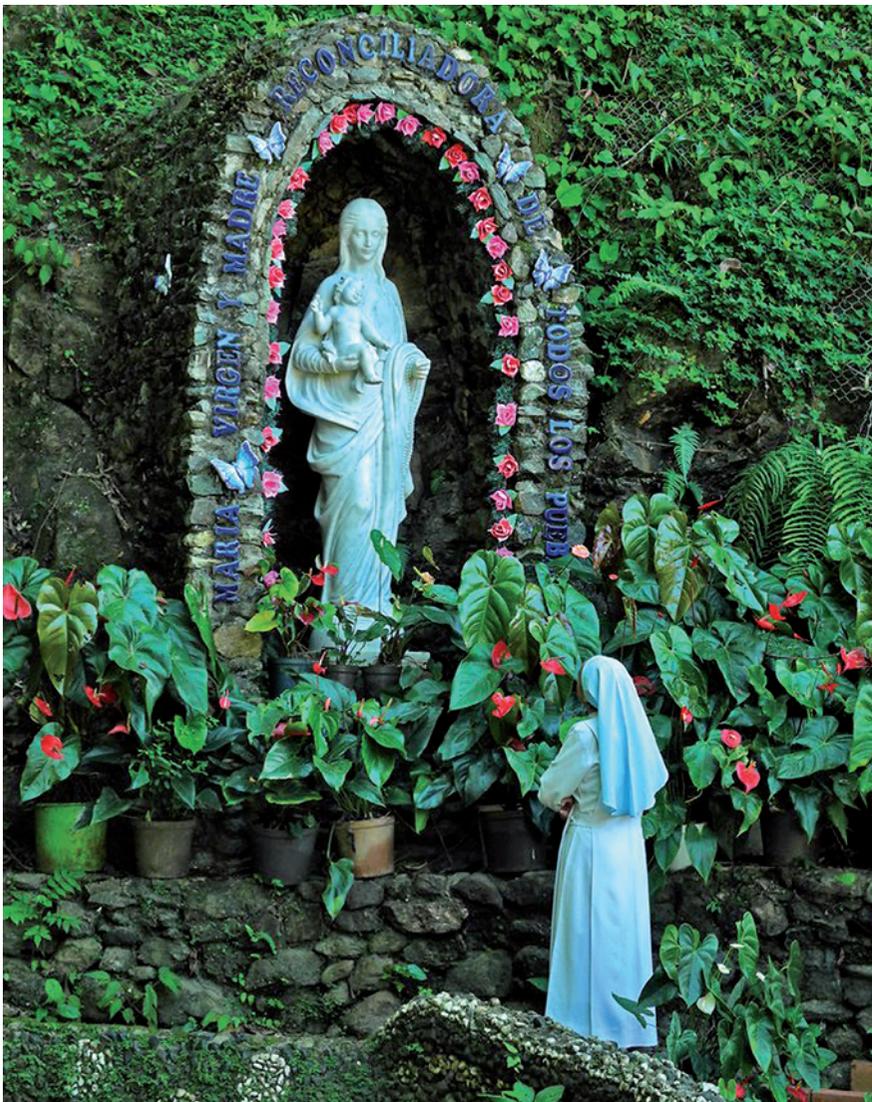
about their loved one with whom they spent much of their lives in everyday situations as a mother and granny. It is a bit like being given the opportunity to speak with St Pio of Pietrelcina's mother or with the husband of St Rita. They saw and experienced it. They do not feel the need to try to convince anyone. They just know.

Here in Betania, you discover something. You discover that it is possible to have unrestrained joy in your heart and an unexpressed peace. Sitting a few metres from the grotto in the rock, listening to the

small waterfall, allowing yourself to be lulled to sleep by the rustling of the Venezuelan bush, we can gaze at Her – at the figure of Our Lady of Bethany. Our Lady appeared here many times. She asked María Esperanza to tell people that they do not need to worry and that they should have hope - that she loves them very much and can't wait to finally meet us.

María Esperanza trusted. It is my opinion that she is now in the best company under the sun.

Stefan Czerniecki, Poland



■ Place of apparitions of Our Lady, Bethany, Venezuela

PRAYER THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD, MARIA ESPERANZA

Merciful Father, You endowed María Esperanza with an abundance of spiritual gifts for the consolation of Your people. She served You as a wife, mother and missionary of the unity of the family and reconciliation among all peoples. You granted her the grace of seeing Mary uniting all peoples in Betania. Grant us the graces to follow her example in humility, hope and unconditional love.

Through the intercession of Your servant, María Esperanza, we ask You for healing and reconciliation in our families and in the whole human family.

We particularly ask You for the following intention.... Through the merits and prayers of Your servant. We humbly ask that she may be raised to the company of saints in the Church as an example of virtue.

We ask you this according to Your Holy Will, beloved of Your servant right up until the end, through Jesus Christ, Your Son and Our Lord. Amen.

By permission of
Bishop Paul G. Bootkoski,
Metuchen, New Jersey,
4th December 2009

Act of Consecration to St Michael

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

An act of consecration is a very particular prayer, recited at important moments. For example, the Act of Consecration of mankind to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, recited on the First Friday of every month, is universally known. The act of personal consecration made by John Paul II, summed up in the now-famous words of his motto: Totus Tuus – Completely Yours - derives from the Act of Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary, compiled by St Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort in his “Treatise of True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary”.

For the entire Michaelite family in its widest sense comprising both congregations, as well as knights and all those with a devotion to St Michael, the Act of Consecration to St Michael the Archangel, solemnly recited in the Shrine of Blessed Bronisław Markiewicz in Miejsce Piastowe, near Krosno, Poland, has very particular significance. The words of the Act repay closer study, as they contain much of great spiritual value from which we can also benefit. This analysis will also be

preceded by looking at the structure of prayers, such as The Lord’s Prayer, in the Early Church. We know that the Lord taught his disciples this prayer at their request and that it is regarded by all Christian denominations, regardless of the divisions which separate them, as the most important as well as the most beautiful and valuable prayer, because it summarises the entire message of the Gospels. This fact is also essential to a better understanding of the content of the Act of Consecration.

Act of Consecration to St Michael the Archangel

Saint Michael the Archangel, great prince of heaven and most faithful guardian of the universal Church, I greet you and praise you for that splendour with which God has adorned you so richly. Trusting in your goodness, the power of your prayers and numerous blessings for men I stand before you in the company of my Guardian Angel, Blessed Father Bronislaw Markiewicz, all the Saints and Blessed ones. I ask them to witness my dedication and devotion to you. Saint Michael the

Archangel, I consecrate to you my body and soul. I choose you as my particular defender and intercessor. I solemnly promise to always honour you and to make every effort to spread devotion to you.

St Michael the Archangel, be my strength through the whole of my life so that I do not offend God with any thought, word or deed. Protect me against all the temptations of Satan particularly those against faith and purity. Entreat peace for our souls at the hour of death and lead us to the eternal homeland. Amen.

MYSTERIES OF THE ACT OF CONSECRATION

The invocation consists of three titles, used in the first sentence:

1. Great prince of heaven.
 2. Most faithful guardian of the universal Church.
 3. Saint Michael the Archangel.
- In the last sentence of the opening, however, two further designations have been added:
4. Particular defender.
 5. Intercessor.

Only the third of these appeals clearly indicates to whom the prayer is addressed. The first two titles, although preceding the third, are only used with reference to St Michael the Archangel. In conjunction with the last two designations, they tell us more about St Michael the Archangel.

The petitions in the Litany to St Michael the Archangel tell us more about him as do the twenty four appeals in the Supplications. All of these appeals give us more information as to his identity. While repeating each in turn, we get to know him more and more, turning to his intercession with greater joy, thereby increasing our trust and devotion. Let us therefore reflect on the titles in the Opening or Invocation of the Act of Consecration.

A VERY PARTICULAR REQUEST

Among the four requests which we present to St Michael the Archangel in the Act of Consecration the second request, which deals with temptation and which is in two-parts, is particularly worth noting: **Defend me against all the temptations of Satan particularly those against faith and purity.** Why do we entreat St Michael against those particular temptations which threaten our faith and purity?

THE TEMPTATIONS OF SATAN

This particular request first makes reference to **ALL TEMPTATIONS.** This we do in the Lord's Prayer: "And do not put us to the test" (Matthew 6:13 and Luke 11:4). The lack of a more precise definition indicates a reference to any type of temptation, in other words, to all inner compulsions which lead us to sin. Our fallen human nature leaves us open to Satan's activity, which is why we are constantly open to temptation. Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz memorably stated that, regardless of the

hour of the day or time of year, "The Devil does not take a holiday"; that we are constantly vulnerable to "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:11) and whether directly or indirectly, we experience his constant encouragement to sin, to take the road in opposition to the law of God and the Gospel and to our baptism in which we are endowed with the dignity of the children of God. The Apostle Peter emphatically stated that: "Your enemy the Devil is on the prowl like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8), constantly and relentlessly, which is why temptations come our way each day in such number. We also give in to them many times a day, which is why Jesus exhorts Peter to forgive his brother, even seventy times seven, when he sinned against him, that is to say, succumbed to temptation (Matthew 18:22).

The second part refers to particular temptations, to those **AGAINST FAITH AND PURITY.** This immediately gives rise to the question: why faith and purity in particular? There are, after all, so many other inherent or acquired virtues which play a significant role in our spiritual lives and salvation. In writing of the spiritual gifts in his famous and most eloquent passage in 1 Corinthians 13:13, St Paul already stressed the primacy of love. Love is also of primary importance because "at the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love" (St John of the Cross, Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1022). No less important is the virtue of humility. Many reflections are devoted to the subject and all the saints attempted to attain it. Humility is fundamental to all other virtues – without it, holiness is unattainable. Blessed Bronislaw

Markiewicz wrote with great conviction that, "The greatest benefit is to grow in humility" (Writings 31/7/1869). Why then is it that it is neither love nor humility but above all faith and purity which are under the greatest threat? There must be some good reason, given that we are dealing with the greatest onslaught of the Evil One on one hand, and on the other, because the assistance of St Michael, the Prince of the Heavenly Host, in person, is so essential.

EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS

What are faith and purity and what spiritual gifts do they give us? We should remember that Jesus told us that only spiritual gifts are worth accumulating (Matthew 6:19, 33) – so that we should defend them at all costs and, when we are unable to do this by our own strength, we should invoke the powerful and effective assistance of St Michael the Archangel.

There are many definitions of faith and differing ideas of what is meant by purity. Throughout its history, the Church has taught not only a correct interpretation of Divine Revelation, recorded in Holy Scripture, but also a correct understanding of faith and purity and, virginal purity in particular.

FAITH AND PURITY ARE GIFTS. The most basic meaning of 'gift' is of a present, that which we receive from another, which was given to us. We are likely to have held a gift we were given on some special occasion such as a birthday, saint's day, First Holy Communion or other sacrament or brought back for us as a souvenir from a holiday or visit to a shrine. A gift expresses a desire to give something to another, although



we can also give gifts to ourselves (we may buy souvenirs for ourselves). More usually, we want to endow, offer or pass on something to another person. The gift is usually an object, at times a very precious object (such as a book, ring, pen or card). This object also has a spiritual value (friendship, faithfulness, life or prayer). It can also be a person (spouse, doctor, voluntary worker or soldier). Even the smallest of gifts becomes a source of happiness and joy. A gift is always a sign of a good, loving heart and reminds us that the other person is

close to us, wishes us well, remembers and loves us.

Among the countless spiritual gifts we receive on earth, faith and purity are priceless. **FAITH** is **GOD'S** most precious and valuable **GIFT TO MAN**. **PURITY**, on the other hand, is the most precious **GIFT A HUMAN PERSON CAN OFFER TO GOD**. It is through faith and purity that a person receives God in all His fullness and gives him/herself to God completely. This "gift is given and also assigned" (a favourite phrase of St John Paul II). We

have to accept **A GIFT WHICH IS GIVEN**. We have to accept God: "He gives Himself to us completely" (in the words of the hymn) and does so heroically! Through Christ and in Christ, God gives himself in an act of love measured by the Passion and Death of His Son (John 3:16; 1 John 3:1,16). **A GIFT WHICH IS ASSIGNED** – requires a response on our part. We should give ourselves in return: "Totus Tuus! – wholly Yours!" In response to God's great gift, we should also engage our deepest and complete selves, giving of ourselves a gift which only God is worthy to receive. In order that our hearts and bodies should remain pure we should control and restrain our own nature, sometimes to a heroic degree, given that our bodies are particularly susceptible to the temptations of covetousness and lust (1 John 2:16).

The unseen God has revealed Himself to man in the person of Jesus Christ. Can there be anything more precious? "The deepest truth about God and the salvation of mankind is reflected in the revelation given us in the person of Jesus Christ, who is both the mediator and fullness of revelation" (Dei verbum, 2) through whom "we are bold enough to approach God in complete confidence" (Ephesians 3:12). Christ is the image of God directed towards man, but Christ is also the image of man, because He "became as all men are" (Philippians 2:7) turned towards God. The acceptance of the gift which God gives of Himself and responding to His Revelation and love by giving ourselves in return – that is perfect Christian faith and love.

Fr **Karol Dąbrowski** CSMA
Translated by **Joanna Jabłońska**

De Montfort, a despised prophet in his own country

St Louis-Marie de Montfort had an exceptional devotion to the angels, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Rosary.

Pope John Paul II once recalled how as a young seminarian he “read and reread many times and with great spiritual profit” a work of de Montfort and that: “Then I understood that I could not exclude the Lord’s Mother from my life without neglecting the will of God-Trinity.” According to his Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae, the pontiff’s personal motto was “Totus Tuus.” The thoughts, writings and example of St Louis de Montfort were also singled out by Pope John Paul II’s encyclical Redemptoris Mater as a distinctive witness of Marian spirituality in the Roman Catholic tradition.

Louis Marie Grignion was born into a poor family at Montfort-sur-Meu, in Brittany in the northwest of France on 31st January 1673, but he spent most of his childhood at Iffendic, a small town a few miles away. His parents were Jean-Baptiste and Jeanne Robert Grignion.

From his childhood, he displayed a devotion to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. At the age of twelve, he entered the Jesuit College of St Thomas Becket in Rennes, where his uncle was a parish priest and where he remained for eight years.

When de Montfort finished school, he began his studies of philosophy and theology, still at St Thomas in Rennes. He never failed to visit the church before and after class. Louis-Marie was inspired by a local priest to preach missions among the very poor. And, under the guidance of some other priests he began to develop his strong devotion to Our Lady. The assurance that he was called to the priesthood came to him when he was praying before the statue of Our Lady in the Carmelite church at Rennes.

Also at Rennes, he joined a society of young men who during holidays ministered to the poor and to the sick in the hospitals, and read for them enlightening and uplifting books during their meals.

Towards the end of 1693, through a benefactor, de Montfort was unexpectedly given the opportunity to go to Paris to study at the Saint-Sulpice Seminary and attend the Sorbonne University for lectures in theology.

At the age of twenty he set off for the capital, walking the whole 200 miles as an expression of the poverty he had joyfully embraced. He gave away all the money he had to beggars, as well as the new suit he had received. Then, kneeling down in the road, he resolved never to possess anything of his own but to rely entirely on the loving providence of his heavenly Father.

On arrival he lodged in a succession of boarding houses, living among the very poor. After less than two years, he became very ill and was admitted to hospital.

When he left hospital, he found himself with a place reserved at the Little Saint-Sulpice, which he entered in July 1695. Saint-Sulpice had been founded by Jean-Jacques Olier, (1608 – 1657) who had established the Society of Saint-Sulpice, a clerical congregation, and a seminary attached to the church which came to be known as the French school of spirituality. Among many gifted and devout students, de Montfort was outstanding both for his intellectual abilities and for the holiness of his life

Being appointed the librarian, his time at Saint-Sulpice gave him the opportunity to study most of the available works on spirituality and, in particular, on the Blessed Virgin



■ 19th century depiction of de Montfort with Marie Louise Trichet at the Daughter of the Wisdom congregation

Mary's place in the Christian life, which led to his devotion to Our Lady and the Holy Rosary which he expounded in many of his written works, especially his book on the *Secret of the Rosary*.

After his ordination in 1700 he expressed a great desire to go on mission to the new French colony of Canada, but his spiritual director advised against it, and he chose a life of missionary work in France instead. He was greatly troubled by the lack of priests to minister to the people's needs, and the widespread ignorance of the faith. Throughout the years of his unceasing missionary work, relying solely on divine providence, he walked from diocese to diocese, but on account of the disapproval he met in various places he began to wonder whether he was following the path God wanted. He travelled to Rome, on foot, to put the matter to Pope Clement XI, who assured him

that his vocation lay in evangelising France and, who commissioned him to continue his missionary work - catechising children, instructing the poor in the knowledge of their faith, and encouraging people to renew their baptismal promises - but always working under the guidance of the diocesan authorities.

The sixteen years between his ordination to the priesthood and his death were very full years, during which he went from parish to parish renewing the Catholic life of the west of France. The strenuous apostolic work, the long journeys on foot, his unceasing penances and an attempt on his life by poisoning all took their toll. In 1716, while preaching a mission in the village of St-Laurent-sur-Sevre, he became gravely ill and struggled into the pulpit to give his last sermon, which was significantly on the kindness of Jesus. After his peaceful death in the afternoon of 28th April and before his

burial in St-Laurent, thousands came to pay their respects. Ever since, his tomb in the parish church has been a place of pilgrimage. He was canonised by Pope Pius XII on 20th July 1947 and his feast is kept on the anniversary of his death, 28th April.

Devotion to the angels

One of the reasons why St Louis-Marie de Montfort had such devotion to the angels is that veneration of the pure spirits was a basic and fundamental part of his training and also of his culture. His college teachers, the Jesuits, were known for their enthusiasm in cultivating devotion to the angels.

Even as a seminarian in Paris, de Montfort was known for the veneration he had toward the angels: he "urged his fellow seminarians to show marks of respect and tenderness to their guardian angels." He often ended his letters with a salutation to the guardian angel of the person to whom he was writing: "I salute your guardian angel". He also saluted all the angels in the city of Nantes, a custom that, it appears, he repeated when he entered a new village or city.

Louis Marie de Montfort's seminary training under the Sulpicians brought him into contact with the thought of Cardinal de Bérulle and Olier, both of whom had deep veneration for the angels. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, manuals of piety and treatises on the pure spirits were numerous.

Noreen Bavister, England



■ Blessed Fr Bronislaw Markiewicz, founder of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel

Many sections of the Bible call us to battle to see with spiritual eyes, eyes which will allow us to perceive spiritual reality. We can then ask: Why? Is it not sufficient to rely on factual information? The difficulty, however, is that events occur within both a physical as well as spiritual dimension.

One very eloquent example which reinforces this truth is the episode in the life of the prophet Elisha when he was being persecuted by the king of Aram. When the Aramaic commander encircled the prophet in Dothan, Elisha's servant is terrified. Elisha, however, consoled him, saying: "Do not be afraid for there are more on our side than on theirs." And Elisha prayed:

A different dimension

It may seem farfetched to say that we should always multiply all persons present by two so as to include each one's own personal guardian angel. But it is true to say that putting our trust solely in the evidence of our eyes can lead us astray and play tricks.

'Yahweh,' he said, 'open his eyes and make him see.' Yahweh opened the servant's eyes, and he saw the mountain covered in fiery horses and chariots surrounding Elisha" (2 Kings 6:16-17). It was by grace that the prophet's servant was able to perceive the spiritual assistance which God had sent Elisha because he could perceive spiritual as well as physical realities.

Unseen and yet close

We can inquire further: how important is the ability to perceive spiritual matters and to what extent does this allow us to actually alter the course of events? Fr Bronislaw Markiewicz assures us that perceiving the world from a spiritual standpoint should radically change our lives and behaviour. We should always think on the presence of God. God had already revealed to Abraham: "Live in my presence, be perfect, and I shall grant a covenant between myself and you" (Genesis 17:1-2). This means: always turn your eyes to me and hold me in your thoughts and in your heart. God

is present everywhere, but we, unfortunately, fail to discern Him with our eyes and therefore are quick to lose interest in Him or forget Him altogether, while spontaneously turning our attention to the fleeting, earthly things which surround us. We sometimes also tend to represent God as a Lord and Creator, resident in heaven, and forget that He is continually close to us, beside us and among us. Were we to live and act under His gaze, all our doings would become good and even deserving of eternal life. This is a sure and certain way to persevere in goodness, leading us to ever greater perfection. Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz next turns his attention to the fact that many people refrain from anger or the making of aggressive comments when they realise that they are being observed. In no way does this mean that God exerts control over us. It is a matter of something else entirely. When we become conscious of the presence of our Heavenly Father amongst us as well as His ever vigilant assistants, the angels, only then can we truly begin to act in a rational manner. How often does the consciousness of the good opinion which others have of us hold

us back from doing things which could damage that good opinion? If this is the case, how much more so can our behaviour change if we perceive with our spiritual eyes the face of a loving God?

“Holy addiction”

Fr Markiewicz zealously encourages us to cultivate a “holy addiction”, whereby we remind ourselves of the truth that God is by our side, can see our actions, discerns our thoughts and hears each and every one of our heartbeats. Blessed Bronislaw suggests cultivating such a habit as one of the most effective ways of uniting ourselves closely to God. This habit is important in as far as we can use it even when we are most intensely absorbed in activity and unable to pray or to reach for the Bible. Many aspects of our lives could be very different if we but possessed this essential ability to see, feel and be convinced of the presence of God, if only we started our day asking God: “Lord, how do You want this coming day to be and what do You wish me to do?” The Lord wishes to speak to us and guide us through life, as expressed by the prophet Jeremiah: “When you search for me, you will find me; when you search wholeheartedly for me, I shall let you find me, Yahweh declares. I shall restore your fortunes and gather you in from all the nations and wherever I have driven you, Yahweh declares. I shall bring you back to the place from which I exiled you” (Jeremiah 29:13-14).

Joanna Krzywonos

Why I became a Catholic

Over many of the years in the first half of my life I attended four different denominations of churches; Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist and Baptist.

My overall experience was that there were times when I would listen to excellent and informative preaching and times when I would hear dull and lacklustre preaching. There would often be music, both choral and instrumental, that would lift the soul to great heights and there would be music that seemed dull and banal.

The Real Presence

My experience over the last 40 years since becoming a Catholic has been absolutely the same on these two aspects of worship; gifted preachers and uninspiring preachers; music of great beauty and music that would have been better without.

But there has been one overpowering difference that I have never experienced outside of the Catholic Church and that is the presence of Jesus the Christ in a real and tangible way. Catholic terminology refers to it as the ‘Real Presence’.

For many years before I had even the slightest thought of becoming a Catholic, I had on occasions ventured inside a church, and although I was often the only person present, I sensed this feeling that there was something

different, something special that seemed to be building within me. After being received into the Church I was eligible to receive Holy Communion under the elements of a wafer of bread and a chalice of wine which after the consecration becomes the actual ‘body and blood’ of Our Risen Lord.

The Power that I have experienced through this communion has been tremendous; an infilling of strength for whatever I may have to face up to along with a cleansing and healing of my inner self.

Pearl of great price

I truly believe that although the road was a long one, that I am now a member of the One True Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In no way does this denigrate any of the fine teaching and examples of Christian living that I experienced amongst non-Catholics; nor the fact, that I committed my life to Jesus primarily through the ministry of a friend who was in the Salvation Army, but the journey has brought me to what I consider to be the ‘pearl of great price’.

Ronald Bisset

Largs, North Ayrshire, Scotland

Grace, the greatest gift



My kingdom on earth is My life in the human soul.

From the many words of Jesus, written by St Faustina the secretary of God's mercy, we read, above all, that Jesus wants to bestow grace upon souls. As the King of Mercy He wants to give souls this gift: "My Heart overflows with great mercy for souls and especially for poor sinners... I desire to bestow my graces upon souls [from the tabernacle] but they do not want to accept them. You, at least, come to Me as often as possible and take these graces they do not want to accept. In this way you will console my Heart" (Diary, 367).

St Faustina often experienced His generosity from the merciful Jesus who is always ready to grant favours constantly, at any moment, without hesitation.

Why does Jesus want to give souls graces? In the Catechism we read: "Grace is *favour, the free and undeserved help* that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life" (CCC 1996). It's a beautiful sentence revealing, on the one hand, the goodness of God, His unselfish gift of grace, and, on the other hand, man who is the only one of all creatures to become a child of God and who is called to participate in the nature of God and eternal life. St Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain" (1 Cor 15:10).

St Paul also says, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 4:7). What did St Paul **mean** when he said he had fought the good fight? This well-known and often quoted passage is quite significant in that this epistle was St Paul's last before his martyrdom in AD 67. It is a deeply moving affirmation of his unwavering faith and unyielding love for the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is also significant for believers today because it serves as a stark reminder that the Christian life is a struggle against evil - within ourselves and in the world.

The wrath of justice, if nothing else, is like a reward in eternal life for fruits and favours in the mortal life of the apostle. A reward for justice and holiness, which from the moment of his conversion, more and more filled his life.

Another passage of the Catechism underlines the free gift of grace and points to its healing power and illumination: "The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it" (CCC 1999). Healing and making souls shine seems to be the most important activity of our Saviour.

The rays from the image of the Divine Mercy are meant to transform our hearts, to make us more merciful, so in turn we can give our hearts back to Him in love. We read in the Diary of St Faustina the explanation of the rays in the Divine Mercy image: "...on one occasion my confessor told me to ask the Lord Jesus the meaning of the two rays in the image. During prayer I heard these words within me: 'The two rays denote Blood and Water. The pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls. These two rays issued forth from the very depths of My tender mercy when My agonized Heart was opened by a lance on the Cross'" (Diary, 299).

Value of our personal suffering

The consequence of a lack of belief in God is not salvation but a rejection of the soul forever. St Faustina wrote, "Today Jesus said to me, 'I desire that you know more profoundly the love that burns in My Heart for souls, and you will understand this when you

meditate upon My Passion. Call upon My mercy on behalf of sinners; I desire their salvation. When you say this prayer, with a contrite heart and with faith on behalf of some sinner, I will give him the grace of conversion. This is the prayer - O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of Mercy for us, I trust in You” (Diary, 186, 187).

A special role in entreating God’s mercy for the world is by suffering: “Help Me, My daughter to save souls. Join your sufferings to My Passion and offer them to the Heavenly Father for sinners” (Diary, 1032). “There is but one price at which souls are bought,” Jesus said to St Faustina, “and that is suffering united to My suffering on the cross” (Diary, 324). “... every conversion of a sinful soul demands sacrifice” (Diary, 961). “I have need of your sufferings to rescue souls” (Diary, 1612).

A devoted heart will stay strong

We will receive in abundance great favours from His merciful heart, the source of a vessel of trust. A devoted heart will stay strong and never waver. How much love, goodness and patience Jesus shows when He says to St Faustina, “Child, speak no more of your misery; it is already forgotten. Listen, My child, to what I desire to tell you. Come close to My wounds and draw from the Fountain of Life whatever your heart desires. Drink copiously from the Fountain of Life and you will not weary on your journey. Look at the splendours of My mercy and do not fear the enemies of your salvation. Glorify My mercy”



Jesus, I Trust in You

“My mercy is greater than your sins, and those of the entire world. Who can measure the extent of My goodness? For you I descended from heaven to earth; for you I allowed Myself to be nailed to the cross; for you I let My Sacred Heart be pierced with a lance, thus opening wide the source

of mercy for you. Come, then, with trust to draw graces from this fountain. I never reject a contrite heart. Your misery has disappeared in the depths of My mercy” (Diary, 1485).

“My daughter, know that My Heart is mercy itself. From this sea of mercy, graces flow out upon the

whole world. No soul that has approached Me has ever gone away unconsolated. All misery gets buried in the depths of My mercy, and every saving and sanctifying grace flows from this fountain” (Diary, 1777).

No one excluded

Jesus greatly desires to save every soul. He does not exclude any, “Just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28). “In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost” (Mt 18, 14).

St Faustina writes, “Today the Lord said to me, ‘My daughter, My pleasure and delight, nothing will stop me from granting you graces. Your misery does not hinder my mercy. My daughter, write that the greater the misery of a soul, the greater its right to My mercy; [urge] all souls to trust in the unfathomable abyss of My mercy, because I want to save them all. On the cross, the fountain of My mercy was opened wide by the lance for all souls – no one have I excluded!’” (Diary, 1182).

He has made every effort to convince us that we should trust absolutely and firmly in the promises of His mercy and that no matter what sins we have committed, and no matter how much we think He would never forgive us, He has revealed that our sins are like a drop falling into an ocean of mercy.

The conversations between the Merciful God and St Faustina are moving, especially about the conversion of a sinful soul. Jesus wants us to first come to Him as children of God. We should not run away from the Father. We should desire to want to enter the

conversation alone with the God of mercy who wants tell you the words of forgiveness and shower you with favours. Oh, how dear a soul is to Him.

Jesus also says, “What joy fills My Heart when you return to Me. Because you are weak, I take you in My arms and carry you to the home of My Father” (Diary, 1486).

What joy fills Jesus’ heart when each one of us returns to Him, because when we are weak, He takes us in His arms and carries us to the home of the Father... (Diary, 1486).

Jesus wishes to heal rather than punish those who turn to Him: “Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My Merciful Heart ... before the Day of Justice I am sending the Day of Mercy” (Diary, 1588).

Jesus wants to act in souls and fill them with mercy, love and peace bringing souls to true salvation that they may have eternal life. He tells us, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full” (Jn 10:10).

St Faustina wrote in her diary, “Today, in the course of a long conversation, the Lord said to me, ‘How very much I desire the salvation of souls! My dearest secretary, write that I want to pour out My divine life into human souls and sanctify them, if only they were willing to accept My grace. The greatest sinners would achieve great sanctity, if only they would trust in My mercy. The very inner depths of My being are filled to overflowing with mercy, and it is being poured out upon all I have created. My delight is to act in a human soul and to fill it with My mercy and to justify it.

My kingdom on earth is My life in the human soul. Write, My secretary, that I Myself am the spiritual guide of souls – and I guide them indirectly through the priest, and lead each one to sanctity by a road known to Me alone” (Diary, 1784).

Jesus **yearns** for souls to come to Him for healing and strengthening. On this, St Faustina wrote, “The next day, after Communion, I heard the voice saying, ‘My daughter, look into the abyss of My mercy and give praise and glory to this mercy of Mine. Do it in this way: Gather all sinners from the entire world and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy. I want to give Myself to souls; I yearn for souls, My daughter. On the day of My feast, the Feast of Mercy, you will go through the whole world and bring fainting souls to the spring of My mercy. I shall heal and strengthen them” (Diary, 206).

Jesus: the most beautiful gift

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “Spiritual progress tends towards ever more intimate union with Christ ... God calls us all to this intimate union with Him...” (CCC, 2014). Saint Faustina observes that perfection consists in this close union with God (Diary, 457) and that this union guarantees eternal life: “... Thus united to You, I will live a life without end” (Diary, 1411).

Faustina writes, “The Lord said to me, I want to give Myself to souls and to fill them with My love, but few there are who want to accept all the graces My love has intended for them. My grace is not lost; if the



soul for whom it was intended does not accept it, another soul takes it” (Diary, 1017).

Jesus wants to be connected to souls, to be in union with them. He desires to come to human hearts and be united with human souls. When this happens the soul is filled with love.

How does Jesus unite with souls? The answer is in Holy Communion: As St Faustina records the words of Jesus to her, “I desire to unite Myself with human souls; My great delight is to unite Myself with souls. Know, My daughter, that when I come to a human heart in Holy Communion, My hands are full of all kinds of graces which I want to give to the soul. But souls do not even pay any attention to Me; they leave Me to Myself and busy themselves with other things. Oh, how sad I am that souls do not recognize Love! They treat Me as a dead object” (Diary, 1385).

This Grace brings fruit into the soul. (CCC 1391-1397). The Catechism teaches us that the first fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Communion is a deep union with Christ Jesus, who said: “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him” (Jn 6:56). Jesus also says, “As the living Father sent me, and I draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will also draw life from me” (Jn 6:57). Thus the Eucharistic is the basis of life in Christ.

Jesus further indicates that Communion supports, deepens and renews the life of grace received at baptism. It projects before us sin, it strengthens the love which weakens in everyday life. He keeps us from future sins of death, renews, strengthens and deepens our faith and helps us see Christ in the poorest, his brothers. When we consider this, we understand how Our Lord’s desire is

important; this desire of Jesus in the Eucharist is the most beautiful and the most fruitful gift for the soul. St. Faustina knew and understood this and that’s why she wrote, “Today, in Holy Communion, I want to unite myself to Jesus as closely as possible, through love. I yearn for God so ardently that it seems to me that the moment will never come when the priest will give me Holy Communion. My soul falls as if into a swoon because of my longing for God” (Diary, 1815). This is the most beautiful answer to Jesus’ thirst for souls.

True holiness is the perfection of the virtue of charity that Jesus spoke about when he gave us the two great commandments: to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves (Mk 12:29-34). St Faustina wrote, “Today during meditation, God gave me inner light and the understanding as to what sanctity is and of what it consists. Although I have heard these things many times in conferences, the soul understands them in a different way when it comes to know of them through the light of God which illumines it. Neither graces, nor revelations, nor raptures, nor gifts granted to a soul make it perfect, but rather the intimate union of the soul with God. These gifts are merely ornaments of the soul, but constitute neither its essence nor its perfection. My sanctity and perfection consist in the close union of my will with the will of God. God never violates our free will. It is up to us whether we want to receive God’s grace or not. It is up to us whether we will cooperate with it or waste it” (Diary 1107)

Fr Karol Dąbrowski CSMA

Jesus' Hour

The fourth gospel writer St John is a reflection on death and the role of death in life. For St John, Christ's death was his glory. In fact he often calls it Jesus' Hour.

Unlike the other gospel writers the death of Christ was not an instrument of torture or of shame. Indeed for St John Jesus came to die. In Matthew, Mark and Luke the fact that Christ had to die was indeed an instrument of torture or of shame. But for John the death of Christ was one of his greatest symbols of self sacrifice and love.

Jesus cements St John's view in (John 12:24) when he says "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

Dying becomes rising

Our Lord is using a horticulture parable when He is saying "Look in spring time you sew the seeds, they go into the ground they disintegrate and they grow up to be a bigger and a more glorious plant". The seed becomes a plant. And so for St John as the seed becomes a big plant, death becomes life. Dying becomes rising, and losing this life for Jesus leads into finding His life.

All of us know people who get lost in life emotionally, spiritually, practically. They lose their direction in life and find it hard to cope with medical pains, acute medical strain, hard knocks and the disappointments of

their lives. Depression can often happen. Indeed many a time we know people who get lost in the spiritual lives. But for St John these can be great opportunities, so that when we get lost in agonies and pains in fact instead of losing the plot, we find the plot.

During Lent the Church focuses our attention on the death of Christ and forces us to meditate a lot on the death of Christ. Yet it is a mystery why is it that Christ did not come some other way and save us. To come like a king, or announce that God has cancelled what happened to our original parents Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, all that bridge was blown up and restored in Christ.

No, instead He dies. It shows the heroic character of the faith of St Paul that he deliberately preached the doctrine of the cross and sums it up saying it is foolishness and stupidity.

Jesus' suffering, which the saint called the folly of the cross, was central in St Paul's preaching: "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

In Lent if we are to imitate Christ we should ask ourselves how do we embrace the cross, how do we carry the cross? Do we carry the cross with grace, power and wisdom or instead



■ Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane by Giacinto Brandi, c. 1650

do we try and avoid suffering at all costs and instead want power, position or possessions? What are our priorities? For St Paul the only priority was knowing Christ and Him crucified.

The special one

St John was a unique character, he was the special one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. For us today Christ should be the special one. There was only one apostle at the foot of the cross, John was there with Mary. The mother of God and St John knew what the cross was.

Let us ask Our Blessed Mother and St John to help us understand the great mystery that is suffering and the death of Christ and to help us unite our sufferings, our drawbacks, our challenges to the death of Christ. Then we imitate, in a special way, during this marvellous season of grace when God wants to help us in Lent to understand his sorrowful passion, death and resurrection.

Canon Bennie Noonan
Shefford, Bedfordshire, UK

Oscar the new altar server

This primary five student understands Christ's command to 'be open'.

On Thursday afternoon we began training our new altar servers as every parish does in September. With parents to assist we entered the Sacred Heart Room here at the Oratory. Immediately the little altar server, Oscar, spotted the statue of Our Lady. Without prompting from anyone Oscar fell to his knees before the statue, made the sign of the cross and recited the Hail Mary, blessed himself again and stood up ready to start the training programme.

Moment of grace

It was a remarkable moment of grace, revealing the openness of a child to heaven's invitation. For all of us who witnessed the little boy's fervour God was teaching something important.

Our ears enable us to hear what is from heaven and when we open our lips we can speak in a heavenly way as Oscar demonstrated vividly: this is called prayer. But the openness to God's word applies to the Gospel in general, so that we hear and speak the Good News every day.

In the Gospel of Mark (7: 31-37) there is a dramatic story to show that God gives us the gift of listening and

the gift of speaking. Christ heals a man who has a speech impediment and cannot hear. Naturally if the poor man had no hearing it would be almost impossible for him to learn words for speech or the word *Ephphatha*.

This Greek word that Jesus used means more than just "to open". It means to open in order to make a connection. It is used several times in the Gospels (mostly by Luke) to describe Christ's general effect on those who heard him, allowing them to connect words to meaning.

Ability to communicate

Jesus commands the two faculties, hearing and speech, to function. St Mark tells us the man's ears were opened and the ligament of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly. Instantly restored is his ability to communicate, but above all God longs for the man to communicate with God. That is why the Lord looks up to heaven before sighing and performing the miracle.

Miracles take place to this day through the healing ministry of the Church and at shrines such as Lourdes. In France it is not a daily occurrence but there are remarkable recoveries that doctors cannot explain. The medics have to refer to the Lord's authority and acknowledge with the people of Christ's own day that, "He hath done all things

well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak" (Mark 7:37).

The wider application of this Gospel story is a need for openness to God's world, in all areas of one's life. Jesus' command to the ears and mouth to be opened, means that we need to hear God so that we can speak of God, then we learn how to live in an upright manner and can encourage others to do so.

Be opened when it comes to God's commandments on faith and morality. Society regularly addresses it with collective ears: 'Be closed, don't be listening to those old commandments,' the world declares. Still, Christ can perform miracles of grace in each of us every day so that we open our hearts to His ways. Because he is the Lord who sets prisoners free.

We sing in psalm 145, 'My soul gives praise to the Lord.'

Good example for others

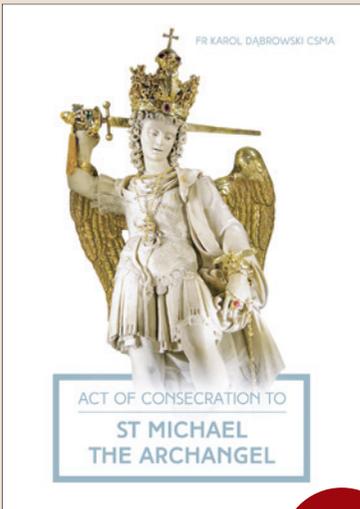
I was deeply moved by the response of Oscar, the new altar boy, on Thursday. His faculties of speaking and hearing are truly open to God and open to the Mother of God.

Oscar has learnt from the good example of his family and now he is giving a first class example to others. This primary five student understands Christ's command, 'Be opened.'

Watching a child in prayer inspires us to open our hearts to Jesus and say, 'He has done all things well.' Our fervent prayer is that on the last day Jesus will say to each of us, 'You have done all things well.'

Homily, 23rd September 2018
Fr Roland Colhoun, Newtownstewart,
 Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland

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St Faustina and St Michael

St Faustina is full of wonder, respect, reverence and admiration for St Michael the Archangel. The fundamental and only reason behind such an attitude is, as she is at pains to stress, the fact that he did the will of God. He is for her the angel resplendent in his wonder and boundless humility towards the Creator. He is the angel who gazes at God with love, who learns the will of God and courageously carries it out.



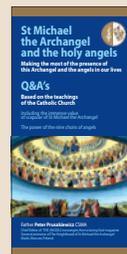
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22nd Annual Conference

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14th September 2019

3:00pm Divine Mercy Chaplet

4:00pm Talk: Deeper in Divine Mercy

5:00pm Eucharistic Healing Hour

6:00pm Parish Vigil Mass

Homily: St Faustina and St Michael

St Anthony Church

Keinton Walk, Henbury

Bristol BS10 7BE

Contact: Fr Colin Mason

Phone: +44(0)1179-620-676

Email: colin.mason@cliftondiocese.com

15th September 2019

9:15am & 11:15am Sunday Masses

Homily: St Faustina and St Michael

Sacred Heart Church

Grange Court Road

Westbury-on-Trym

Bristol BS9 4DR

Contact: Fr Colin Mason

Phone: +44(0)1179-620-676

Email: colin.mason@cliftondiocese.com

1st – 3rd November 2019

Talks: Walking in the footsteps
of St Faustina

St Michael of All Angels

Belmont Abbey

Ruckhall Lane,

Hereford HR2 9RZ

Contact: Geraldine Downing

Email: geraldine@dgdown.plus.com

Phone: +44(0)1978-357-367

SCOTLAND 2019**25th October 2019****7:00pm Holy Mass****Talk: Obeying the will of God and not our own will****St Mary's Church**

167 George Street, Paisley PA1 2UN

Contact: Helen Border

Email: Helen.Border@glasgow.ac.uk

26th October 2019**6th National Divine Mercy Conference****9:00am – 5:00pm****Theme: "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42)****St Augustine's Church**

12 Dundyvan Road, Langloan

Coatbridge, ML5 1DQ

Contact: Helen Border

Email: Helen.Border@glasgow.ac.uk

WALES 2019**29th & 30th October 2019****Theme: Saints of Divine Mercy: St Faustina, Bl Michael Sopocho, St John Paul II****Diocesan Shrine of Divine Mercy Sacred Heart Church**

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Contact: Fr Jason Jones

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Email: mariana.dugandzic@gmail.com

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PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Cardinal Mercier said: Pray this daily! This powerful way of praying will change your life! I am going to reveal to you the secret of sanctity and happiness. Every day for five minutes, control your imagination and close your eyes to the things of sense and your ears to all noises of the world, in order to enter into yourself. Then, in the sanctity of your baptized soul, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, speak to that Divine Spirit, saying to Him:

O Holy Spirit, beloved of my soul, I adore You. Enlighten me, guide me, strengthen me, console me. Tell me what I should do. Give me Your orders. I promise to submit myself to all that You desire of me and to accept all that You permit to happen to me. Let me only know Your Will.

If you do this, your life will flow along happily, serenely and full of consolation, even in the midst of trials. Grace will be proportioned to the trial, giving you the strength to carry it and you will arrive at the gate of Paradise, laden with merit. This submission to the Holy Spirit is the secret of sanctity.



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



■ St Michael weighing souls by Juan de la Abadia, circa 1490.

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.