The Hour of Mercy

Jesus asked Saint Faustina to celebrate the Hour of great Mercy, which is the hour when Our Lord died on the cross. He promised that from this prayer of the chaplet of Divine Mercy, said during this hour, tremendous graces would be given to all. This can be applied to other people as well, especially for the dying and the suffering souls in purgatory.

At three o’clock, implore My mercy, especially for sinners; and, if only for a brief moment, immerse yourself in My Passion, particularly in My abandonment at the moment of agony. This is the hour of great mercy... In this hour I will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion. (Diary, 1320).

As often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it. Invoke it’s omnipotence for the whole world, and particularly for poor sinners, for at that moment mercy was opened wide for every soul. In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world – mercy triumphed over justice.

Try your best to make the Stations of the Cross in this hour, provided that your duties permit it; and if you are not able to make the Stations of the Cross, then at least step into the chapel for a moment and adore, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, My Heart which is full of mercy. Should you be unable to step into the chapel, immerse yourself in prayer there where you happen to be, if only for a very brief instant. (Diary, 1572)

(For more on Divine Mercy see page 2)

Lightning, death, judgement and conversion

The testimony of Gloria Polo

I promise that the soul that venerates this image will not perish. I also promise victory over its enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I myself will defend it as My own glory.

Jesus, I trust in You

Here are some excerpts of an interview given by Dr. Gloria Polo at the National University of Colombia in Bogota. Her testimony is truly inspiring and helps us to appreciate Our Faith in a profound way.

Brothers and sisters! It’s beautiful for me to be with you sharing this precious gift. My Lord gave me more than ten years ago. I was attending graduate school; along with my nephew, who was also a dentist. My husband was with us that day. It was raining very hard, and my nephew and I were sharing a small umbrella. My husband was wearing his raincoat and he approached the outside wall of the General Library. Meanwhile, my nephew and I approached the trees without noticing, while skipping puddles. As we were about to skip a huge puddle, we were struck by lightning.

We were charred. My nephew died there. He was a young man, a soldier, and a very young age, he given himself over to the Lord and was very devout to the Infant Jesus. He always carried the Infant Jesus’ image inside a quartz crystal next to his chest. According to the coroner, lightning entered him through the image, ran through his heart, burned him on the inside and exited through his foot. But on the outside, he was not charred nor burnt.

In my case, instead, lightning came in (this way) and burned my body in a horrifying way. On the inside and outside. This body you see here, this reconstructed body, is through the mercy of our Lord. Lightning charred me, left me without breasts, practically made my whole flesh and ribs vanish. My stomach, my legs; lightning went out my right foot. My liver was charred, my kidneys were burnt, just like my lungs.

The most beautiful part is that, while my flesh was charred, at that instant I found myself inside a beautiful white tunnel full of joy and peace, a happiness for which there are no human words that can describe the grandeur of the moment. The climax of the moment was immense. I was happy and joyful; nothing weighed me down inside that tunnel. I felt the source of all that love, all that peace.

As I was going up, I realized I had died. At that instant I thought about my kids and I said “Oh, my God, my kids! What will they say?” This very busy mom never had time for them!” That’s when I saw my life truthfully and I became sad.

Then, I started descending slowly to find my body, where I found myself lifeless. My body was on a gurney at the medical center on campus. I saw how the doctors gave me electric shocks to pull me out of cardiac arrest. We lay there for two-and-a-half hours.

My flesh hurt, it was burned. Hurt a lot. Smoke and vapor came out of it. And the most horrible pain was that of my vanity. I was a woman of the world, an executive woman; an intellectual, a student, enslaved by my body, beauty, and fashion.

From there, we were transported to a hospital, where they quickly moved me to the operating room and began scraping all my burnt tissue.

All of a sudden, I went through a moment of horror. I had been a “dieting Catholic” all my life. My relationship with the Lord was down to Sunday Eucharist, no longer than 25 minutes, wherever the priest’s homily was shortest, because I couldn’t stand anything longer. That was my relationship with the Lord. All the trends of the world tossed me like a windsock. In fact, when I was already in graduate school, I once heard a priest say that hell didn’t ex- (continued on page 7)

Divine Mercy over the World

“Have mercy on us and on the whole world!”

Jesus said to St. Faustina: “Let no sinner be afraid to approach Me.” In Faustina’s “Diary,” Jesus invites each one of us to yield to His infinite mercy, to trust in His compassion and forgiveness. Great graces are promised to those who proclaim His great mercy.

“I shall protect them Myself at the hour of death, as My own glory. And even if the sins of the soul are as dark as night, when the sinner turns to My mercy, he renders Me the greatest praise, and becomes the glory of My Passion. When a soul praises My goodness, Satan trembles before it and flees to the very bottom of hell” (Diary, 378).

Christ is always knocking at the door of our hearts to remind us that if we have recourse to His Divine Mercy, He will free our souls from evil, restore our ability to love and purify our intentions. Sin is our greatest tragedy since it leads us into the horrible reality of death and eternal condemnation. Trusting in Jesus, praying to Him, relying on Him – this is our one avenue of salvation. Jesus assures us that His wounded heart will not abandon us in the hour of death. It is never too late to renounce evil and start walking in the path of salvation. Having chosen Faustina, a simple, uneducated nun, who trusted Him boundlessly, Christ assigned her the critically important task of proclaiming His Merciful Love to the entire world.

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If only for a very brief instant. (Diary, 1572)
“Return to the Fount of My Mercy”

St. Faustina Kowalska, first saint of the third millennium

The third of ten children, Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska was born into a pious peasant family in the town of Vilnius, Lithuania. She was the twin sister of Helena. At the age of seven years, she first heard an interior call to the religious life. Thirteen years later she was to knock on many a convent door, before finally, on August 1, 1925, gaining admittance to the Convent of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Warsaw, where she took the name Sister Maria Faustina. After a five-year-long novitiate in Cracow, she made her perpetual vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and on June 13, 1931, was admitted into the Third Order of Fruits. Her spiritual director, Brother Adam Grudzień, instructed her to write her Diary. This extraordinary record reveals the depth and richness of her mystical life and union with God. She enjoyed great graces and a host of spiritual gifts: contemplative prayer, revelations, visions, prophecy, mystical espousals, invisible stigma, the ability to read human souls, and a profound knowledge of the mystery of God's mercy.

During her lifetime, Faustina was virtually unknown, even to many sisters of her congregation. Only a few of her superiors and her confessor and spiritual director, were ever aware of her visions and revelations. She died of tuberculosis, mysteriously united with Christ, at the age of 33, on October 5, 1938, having been a religious for 13 years.

Faustina's visions, spread the message of Divine Mercy began on February 22, 1931. Having appeared to her in vision, Christ commissioned her to paint an image of Him with red and pale rays of light encircling the image of the Sacred Heart. Divin Mercy began on February 22, 1931. Having appeared to her in vision, Christ commissioned her to paint an image of Him with red and pale rays of light encircling the image of the Sacred Heart. It was only after the appearance of the image that Christ asked Faustina to have another vision of Him so that He could repeat to her the message He had already given to St. John Paul II, “I am offering people a vessel with which they can pour forth from the very depths of My tender mercy. That vessel is this image bearing the inscription ‘Jesus, I trust in You’.”

In her Diary, Faustina writes: “I saw the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment...” (47).

“I promise that the soul that venerates this image will not perish. I also promise victory over all of its enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I Myself will defend it as My living reflection, through love and mercy.” (1074)

Faustina's Diary tells us that it is not enough to trust Jesus. We must show mercy to our neighbors in word and in prayer (742). Jesus says to Faustina: “If a soul does not exercise mercy in one way or another, it will not obtain My mercy on the Day of Judgment.”

“The Lord said to me, ‘It should be of no concern to you how anyone else acts; you are to be My living reflection, through love and mercy.’ I repeated in my mind: ‘Lord, My whole being takes advantage of My goodness.’ That makes no difference, My daughter. That is no concern of yours. As for me, I am always ready to do good toward other people, and especially toward sinners” (1446).

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

On September 13, 1935, Sister Faustina had a terrible vision of a destroying Angel (“the agent of evil”) about to strike the entire planet. She began praying, begging him to put off his reckoning. Her faith led her to cling to the Holy Trinity and felt the power of Christ's grace in her heart. Again she began to plead for the world in words that welled up out of the silence of her soul: “Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and for the sins of all humanity. Have mercy upon us!” (475).

The family of St. Faustina Kowalska

Her prayer was answered and the angel was prevented from carrying out the chastisement. The following morning, Sister Faustina heard these interior words: “Every time you enter the chapel, start reciting the prayer which I taught you yesterday” (476). Later, she was instructed in the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, a prayer which “will serve to appease My wrath. You will recite it for nine days, on the beads of the Rosary, in the following manner: ‘Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and for the sins of all humanity. Have mercy upon us!’” (475).
following words: ‘Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and those of the whole world.’ On the Hall Mary beads you will say the following words: ‘For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.’ In conclusion, three times you will recite these words, ‘Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world’” (476).

Jesus Himself tells us why it is so important to recite this prayer: ‘Recite the chaplet unceasingly that I have taught you. Whoever recites it will receive great mercy at the hour of death. Priests will recommend it to those who are about to die, and I will be with them in My goodness and My mercy. I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls that trust in My mercy’ (687).”

“...to share in His joy. To repeat: it’s as simple as ABC: Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him, repent of our sins, and ask for His Mercy. Be Merciful. God wants us to receive His Mercy and let it flow through us to others. Completely Trust. God wants us to know that the graces of His Mercy are dependent upon our trust.

On the first Sunday after Easter, April 18, 1993, at St. Peter’s Square in Rome, Pope John Paul II declared Sister Faustina Kowalska a member of the community of the blessed. She was canonized in the Jubilee Year 2000 on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 30th. She is, therefore, the first saint of the Third Millennium.

In his canonization-Mass homily, the Holy Father pointed out that by Divine Providence, the life of this humble daughter of Poland was inextricably linked with the history of the recently ended 20th century. “In fact, it was between the First and Second World Wars that Christ entrusted His message of mercy to her. Those who observed her, will say that she, who was so untouched and innocently impregnated in events of those years and the horrible sufferings they caused in millions of people, knew how necessary was the message of mercy (...). What will the years ahead bring us? What will man’s future on earth be like? We are not given to know. However, it is certain that in addition to new progress, there will unfortunately be no lack of painful experiences. But the light of Divine Mercy, which the Lord wished to return to the world through Sister Faustina’s charism, will illuminate the way for the men and women of the third millennium. (...)

“Sister Faustina’s” canonization has a particular eloquence: by this act I intend today to pass this message on to the new millennium. I pass it on to all people, so that they will learn to know even better the true face of God and the true face of their brethren. (...) Sister Faustina Kowalska wrote in her Diary, ‘I feel tremendous pain when I see the sufferings of my neighbors. All my neighbors’ sufferings reverberate in my own heart, I carry their anguish in my heart in such a way that it even physically destroys me.”

The Mercy Message

The message of mercy is simply this: that God loves us all, of us, for us all, even the great outcasts, the sinners he wants us to turn to Him so that He may bless us. He wants us to recognize His Mercy and allow it to flow through us to others. In this way, all will be able to share in His Joy. To repeat: it’s as simple as ABC: Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him, repent of our sins, and ask for His Mercy. Be Merciful. God wants us to receive His Mercy and let it flow through us to others. Completely Trust. God wants us to know that the graces of His Mercy are dependent upon our trust.

I would like all their sorrows to fall upon me, in order to relieve my neighbor’ (Diary, 365). This is the degree of compassion to which love leads, when it takes the love of God as its measure (...) It is this love which makes human hearts and bodies, if it is to face the crisis of the meaning of life, the challenges of the most diverse needs and, especially, the duty to defend the dignity of every human person. Thus the message of divine mercy is also implicitly a message about the value of every human being. Each person is precious in God’s eyes; Christ gave his life for each one; to everyone the Father gives His Spirit and offers intimacy (...)”

This consoling message is addressed, above all, to those who, afflicted by a particularly harsh trial or crushed by the weight of the sins they committed, have lost all confidence in life and are tempted to give in to despair. To them the gentle face of Christ is offered; those rays from his heart touch them and shine upon them, warm them, show them the way, and fill them with hope. How many souls have been consoled by the prayer ‘Jesus, I trust in you’, which Providence intimated through Sister Faustina! This simple act of abandonment to Jesus dispels the thickest clouds and lets a ray of light penetrate ev- ery life. ‘Jezu, ufam Tobie’ (...) And you, Faustina, a gift of God to our time, a gift from the land of Poland to the whole Church, offer for an understanding of the depth of Divine Mercy; help us to have a living experience of it and to bear witness to it among our brothers and sisters. May your message of light and hope spread throughout the world, spurring sinners to conversion and all who are trying to separate us and openning individuals and nations to the practice of brotherhood. Today, fixing our gaze on you the Bride of Christ, let us make our own your prayer of trusting abandonment and say with firm hope: Christ Jesus, I trust in you! Jezu, ufam Tobie!” (Homily of the Holy Father, April 30, 2000).

Robert Kasza
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St. Faustina receives a vision of Jesus

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St. Faustina receives a vision of Jesus
God’s mercy manifests itself in a dramatic way in the sacrament of Reconciliation (also called the Sacrament of Penance or Confes-
sion). The example of mercy that it demon-
strates tells us that God loves us – all of us – no matter how broken we may have been. He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sin, so that we will put our trust in Him. Thus, all will come to share His joy. The glory of His mercy is dependent upon our trust, so that the more we trust in Jesus, the more graces and blessings we will receive. He gave us one example of the depth of His mercy in the par-
able of the prodigal son.

In this parable, a man with two sons gave to the youngest his inheritance. The young man went out and wasted his fortune on ri-
violet living. Afterwards, there was a famine in the land and the son returned home. He found employment with a swine farmer, but such was his fate that even the pigs were given better nourishment than he was. So he said to his father: “Father, I have sinned against heaven and you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; take me as one of your hired men.” And he arose and went to his father.

While he was yet a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” But the father said to his servants, “Fetch quickly the best robe and put it on him, and give him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet,” and bring out the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; because my son was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and is found.” And they had a great feast in honor of his return.

This is only a pale comparison of what occurs in Heaven when the sinner returns to God after, per-
haps, many years of living in sin. “I tell you, there will be more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner repent-
ning than over ninety-nine upright people who have no need of repentance.” (Lk 15:1-32)

The institution of the sacrament

Christ instituted the Sacrament of Penance when he appeared to the Apostles after the Resurrection. He said to them: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations; baptize all nations. Christ foresaw that His people would fall into sin; therefore they would need for-
baptize all nations. Christ foresaw that His people

Jesus, through the sacrament of Reconciliation, draws us from the darkness of sin into the light of grace

Ill. 74.2), “The acts of the penitent are the proximate matter of this sacrament.” Regarding the form of the sacrament, both the Council of Florence and the Council of Trent teach that it consists in the words of absolution. “The form of the Sacrament of penance, wherein its force principally consists, is placed in those words of the minister: ‘I absolve thee, etc.’; to these words indeed, in accordance with the usage of Holy Church, certain prayers are laudably added, but they do not pertain to the essence of the form nor are they necessary for the administration of the sacrament” (Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, c. 3).

The effect of this sacrament is deliverance from sin” (Council of Florence). The same definition in somewhat different terms is given by the Council of Trent (Sess. XIV, c. 3): “So far as pertains to its force and efficacy, the effect (res et effectus) of this sac-
rament is reconciliation with God, upon which there sometimes follows, in pious and devout recipients, peace and calm of conscience with intense consola-
tion of spirit.” This reconciliation implies, first of all, that the guilt of sin is remitted, and consequently also the eternal punishment due to mortal sin. As the Council of Trent declares, penance requires that the performance of satisfaction “not indeed for the e-
ternal penalty which is remitted together with the guilt either by the sacrament or by the desire of receiving the sacrament, but for the temporal penalty which, as the Scriptures teach, is not always forgiven en-
tirely as it is in baptism” (Sess. VI, c. 14).

Why we confess our sins

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that, “All mortal sins of which penitents after a di-
gle self-examination are conscious must be re-
counted by them in confession; even if they are most secret and have been committed against the last two precepts of the Decalogue (the Ten Com-
mandments); for these sins are always wounding the soul more grievously and are more dangerous than those which are committed openly.” 1456

A penitent that wilfully conceals a mortal sin, incurrs the guilt of heresy. Unbaptized persons who with the necessary disposition must perform certain actions and/or satisfaction due to the sin committed.

According to St. Thomas (Summa Theologica

For the sake of grace, a penitent must confess all serious sins at least once a year. Anyone who has a mortal sin on his soul must not receive Holy Communion, even if he experiences deep contrition, without first having received sacramental absolution, unless he has a grave reason for having received Communion and there is no possibility of going to confession. Children must go to the sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time.

Without it being strictly necessary, confess-
ion of everyday faults (venial sins) is never-
theless strongly recommended by the Church. Indeed the regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, and it is a sign that we are progressing in the life of the Spirit. By receiv-
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Seal of confession
Regarding the sins revealed to him in sacramental confession, the priest is bound to inviolable seclusion, for reason both of charity and of the sanctity of the seal which he assumes by spiritual sacrifice; this makes him the depository of the secrets of his penitents, even though he can reveal them to himself in his prayer in order to help them in their conversion, mercy, or in the preparation of the sacrament. Seclusion is required, so far at least as the sinner is able to be convinced that his confession will be made known to no one except himself, the priest, and God. If, however, the penitent is not convinced that his sin will be kept secret, the priest must not accept the seal of confession.

In this case, the priest must exhort the penitent to have a thankful heart and to make the necessary dispositions for the future, either to save his own life or to be able to save the life of another, for the further ends of human justice, or for the spiritual advantage of his own soul. If the penitent refuses to have his sin divulged, or if he cannot or will not acknowledge that his sin is the cause of his present condition, he must be considered as having committed the crime in question by himself.

The seal of confession is a strict and inviolable secrecy, by which the penitent receives from his confessor what is usually called a promissory absolution, but which, in reality, is neither forgiveness nor absolution; it is a loving remembrance of God and the Holy Spirit. This is to remind us that Jesus Christ, 'our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14)' is present in the sacrament of Absolution and Penance to forgive the sins of all who approach Him in sincere penance. Therefore, the priest, when conferring the sacred absolution, is legally bound to keep the confession as a secret, and to prevent the public or private communication of any matter revealed to him in the sacrament of Penance, in order that the sacramental bond of secrecy may be preserved.

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Do I have reverence for God’s name? Do I ever speak His name in anger? If I make an oath by God's name, am I truly living up to what I swore to do in His name? Since I am a child of God, how am I living up to my name? Am I faithful to all my promises? Am I a person of my word?

3. Remember the Sabbath day, to make it holy. Am I faithful to Sunday Mass? Do I participate in the liturgy with my full heart? Am I truly in communion with the Church when I worship? Am I conscious of any ways in which I have broken communion by engaging in serious sin? Have I truly repented all of my sins before approaching the altar of the Eucharist? Have I availed myself of the sacrament of Reconciliation regularly in conjunction with my re- spect for the institution of the Eucharist? Do I participate in my local church life, whether public or private? Am I judging or critical of others in the assembly – the priest, musicians, lector, or deacon? Do I regularly take Sabbath-time for prayer, reflection, rest and recreation, or am I constantly pursuing a goal other than that of my salvation and the salvation of others?

Honour your father and your mother. For those with living parents: Do I regularly call or visit my parents? Do I give thanks for the good things they have given and forgive the wrongs they have done? If they are elderly, ill in body, mind or spirit, or suffering from some illness, do I show them the same love, kindness and support? When I disagree with them, do I still respect them? Do I seek to settle any disagreements in a civil, just manner?

For whose parents are deceased: Do I honor the memory of my parents? Do I help my local church in the education and formation of the next generation? Am I living the virtues they have taught me? Have I forgiven wrongs they have done to me? Have I expressed love and respect to the effects which were left unresolved at the time of their death?

For all: Do I encourage others to honour their parents, especially in times of family conflict? Do I honor the parents of my friends, showing them due respect and honor? Do I contribute to a culture which promotes the family and parental respect?

5. You shall not kill. Have I let my anger reach the point of vengeance and hatred where I desire not merely justice, but that harm be done to another person? Have I contributed – by any act of omission or commission, direct or indirect, formal or informal cooperation – to the destruction of innocent human life? Have I any of my thoughts, words, deeds, things I have done or things I have failed to do, which contribute to a culture of death rather than of life? Have I failed to respond to any need in my community to help promote a culture of life?

6. You shall not commit adultery. For married persons: Am I faithful to my spouse, not just in sexual relations, but in everything? Are there other people or activities in my life which take away time and attention due to my spouse? Do I respect my spouse as an equal partner, not an object to an affair with? Am I a person of my word? Do I contribute to an effective commu- nication in my marriage? Do I contribute to a sound prayer life and spiritual foundation in my marriage?

(continued on page 6)
The sanctification of mercy

(continued from page 5)

Do I live my marriage as a sacrament, a sacred cov- enant whose purpose is to image the covenant be- tween Jesus and the Church and to contribute to the salvation of each spouse?

For unmarried persons: Am I living a chastie life, respecting God’s gift of sexuality and its true pur- pose and place in His creation? Do I engage in any kind of sexual activity which is contrary to God’s pur- pose of sexuality?

Do I view pornographic materials or other titillating

Do not be afraid to break out of routine and comfortable ways of living, in order to take up the challenge of making Christ known in the modern ‘metropolis’. It is you who ‘must go out into the byways’ (Matt 22:9) and invite everyone you meet to the banquet which God has prepared for His people. The Gospel must not be kept hidden because of fear or indolence. It was never meant to be hidden away in private. It has to be put on a stand so that people may see its light and give praise to our heavenly Father.

Our Lady’s Plan for Peace in America

To obtain peace Our Lady asks:

– That the youth of America honor Her by the Purity of their lives.

– The Sanctification of families.

– The indwelling of the Holy Trinity in the Chris- tian home.

– The daily recitation of the Rosary.

– Personal, interior conversion.

Excerpts of messages taken from the book, “Our Lady of America”:

November 8, 1954: “It is the wish of my Son that fathers and mothers strive to imitate me and my chaste spouse in our holy life at Nazareth. We practiced the simple virtues of family life, Jesus our Son being their first priority. The Holy Trinity dwelt with us in a manner far surpassing anything that can ever be imagined. For ours was the earthly paradise where once again God walked among men.

“At our little home no sin was to be found, so it is the wish of the Heart of my Son and my Immac- ulate Heart that sin can be avoided. It is possible, be unheard of in the homes of our children. The Divine Trinity will dwell in your midst only if you are faithful in practicing the virtues of our life at Nazareth. Then, you also, my children, you also will become another paradise. God will then walk among you and you will have peace.”

September 26, 1956: “My child, I entrust you with this message that you must make known to my children in America. I wish it to be the coun- try dedicated to my purity, my new work will be the work of the Soul. They must have faith and believe firmly in love for them. I desire that they be the children of my Pure Heart, I desire the souls who become my children to become pure like to my Heart that their own hearts may be more pleasing to the Heart of my Son.”

August 22, 1957: “What am I to do, child of my heart, when my children turn from me? The false- peace of this world lures them and in the end will destroy them. They think they have done enough in concentrating themselves on their work. It is not enough. That which I ask for and is most important many have not given me. What I ask, have asked, will not be in vain: to ask for recog- nition of life. There must be sanctification from within. I will work my miracles of grace only in those who have faith and believe firmly in my love and attachment to sin and all that is displeasing to my Son. Souls who cling to sin cannot have their hands free to receive the trea- sures of grace that I hold out to them.”

October 7, 1957. “Making the rosary a family prayer is very pleasing to me. I ask that all families strive to do so. But be careful! It says it with great devotion, meditating on each mystery and striving to imitate in your daily lives the virtues depicted there- in. Live the mysteries of the rosary and we will become a chain binding you to me forever. They who are found in the circle of my rosary will never be lost. I ask of my children of America to place on their throne of my Son, to be eternally united to Him.”

Canonical Approval

Archbishop Raymond L. Burke, formerly of the Diocese of St. Louis, MO, now Prefect of the Su- preme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signature in Rome, revealed the results of his review of the history and canonical status of the message of Our Lady of America in a letter written to the United States Conference of Bishops on May 31, 2007. We quote in part from that letter: “Having reviewed the corre- spondence between Sister Mary Ephem and her spiritual director of many years, Monsignor Paul F. Leibold, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Cin- cinnati and Priest of the Diocese of St. Louis, Leibold concluded canonically that the devotion was both approved by Archbishop Leibold and, what is more, was ac- tively promoted by him. In addition, over the years, other Bishops have approved the devotion and have participated in public devotion to the Mother of God, under the title of Our Lady of America.”

We have the complete message of Our Lady of America available (files only) and in leaflet form. Order from our Extensions (fax) to 1-888- 858-2163 (USA) 1-450-469-2209 (Canada).

— Marie Jacques

Anne Marie Lambert

Our Lady of America

Every year, hundreds of thousands of young people in America participate in the activities in Washington, DC, in addition to those who go out on the streets and into public places, like Creek State Park in Denver, CO: “Do not be afraid of ‘Torchbearers of the Queen.’ This torch, of wholeheartedly to follow Our Lady in her great accomplishment of this great renewal.”

ranks will be swelled by the youths of other na-

tually interested in the youth of our nation. It is they who are to be the leaders of this move-

to protest the culture of death and to promote a culture of life. The Pro-Life Movement in the Unit-

tions throughout the world look to this movement for leadership in pro-

tigation, be made known to me that in Washington, D.C., be made place of special pilgrim-

honor me, especially by the purity of their lives.” (…) “Our Lady, moreover, often em-

Ephrem Neuzil.) Tens of thousands of youth begin their pil-

Newspaper of our land.

On the eve of February 11, 1958:

“Our Lady made known to me that she is par-

ticulairly interested in the youth of our nation. It is

Those, particularly the youth, who are willing

of our Lady also calls to help in the accomplishment of this move-

The next day I was interiorly enlightened during Mass. It was made known to me that those, particularly the youth, who are willing whether to cast down the enemies in her service, or to battle against evil would bear the special title of ‘Torchbearers of the Queen.’ This torch, of course, is Divine Love, for it is Love alone that will conquer hate and all that hate brings with it.”

At the 1993 World Youth Day, Venerable Pope John Paul the Great spoke of this renewal, which at that time was the WYD was the 300,000 strong of Our Lady of America processed by the “Torchbearers of the Queen.”

Group from Collax, CA, of the highest order of nearly 200,000 young people assembled at Cherry Creek State Park in Denver, CO: “Do not be afraid to go out on the streets and into public places, like

the first Apostles who preached Christ and the Good

News of salvation in the squares of cities, towns and villages. This is no time to be ashamed of the Gos-

pel (Rom 1:16). It is the time to preach it from the rooftops (Matt 10:27). Do not be afraid to break out of

do not belong to me, no matter how small? Am I envious of another’s goods.

Of sexuality?

To make a good Confession

After examining your conscience and telling God of your sorrow, go into the confessional. Start with the sin(s) that is most difficult to say. (In order to make a good confession, the faithful must confess all mortal sins, according to kind and number.) Listen to the words of the priest. He will assign you some penance. When invited, express some prayer of sorrow or Act of Contrition. Afterwards, listen to the words of absolution, the sacramental forgiveness of the Church through the ordained priest. As you lis-

ten to the words of forgiveness, you may make the sign of the cross with the priest. Do your assigned penance and return to the Sacrament of Reconciliation often.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell. But most of all because I have offended You, my God, who are all love and goodness of deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Your grace to repress all sin, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

Marie Anne Jacques

Anne Marie Lambert

Our Lady of America

– How to make a good Confession

Do I live my marriage as a sacrament, a sacred cov-

enant whose purpose is to image the covenant be-

 tween Jesus and the Church and to contribute to the salvation of each spouse?

For unmarried persons: Am I living a chastie life, respecting God’s gift of sexuality and its true pur-

pose and place in His creation? Do I engage in any kind of sexual activity which is contrary to God’s pur-

pose of sexuality? If I sense a possible call to mar-

riage in the future, am I preparing myself now to be a good spouse, cultivating virtues which will serve well in marriage? Do I contribute to a culture which promotes the proper understanding of marriage?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I accepted anything under false pretences – through another’s mistake or some other circum-

stance – something which is not truly entitled to?

Do I contribute to the needs of the poor? (Heed the words of St. John Chrysostom: “Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs.”)

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. Have I told lies for a general, or par-

ularly about anyone? Have I participated in gos-

sip?

9. You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife. Am I inordinately attracted to another person’s spouse? If so, have I engaged in any speech or be-

haviour which could lead to an inordinate end? Have I accepted anything which I thought to be entitled to? Am I envious of another person who, for various reasons, is an inappropriate sub-

The testimony of Gloria Polo

(continued from page 1)

ist and neither did demons. That was the only thing that had kept me in the Church. When I told the devil I didn't exist, I just thought we were all heaven regardless of who we were. That distanced me completely from the Lord.

But back to that instant in the operating room, I was really terrified! I saw demons coming for me and I was their pay. At that point through some special insight given to me, I realized I owed each one of them a debt of love and, therefore, that my true enemy was the devil of the lie to state that he didn't exist. I saw how they were coming for you. You can't and you can't get rid of that intellectual mind was of no avail to me.

I started descending and light became scarce and I started roaming some tunnels in pitch darkness. The darkest earth on earth is like noonlight sunlight compared to it. That darkness causes pain, horror, and shame. And it smells very bad. I finished descend

When we came to the fifth commandment, the Lord showed me I was a horrible assassin and that I had committed the worst and most abominable in front of His eyes: an abortion. Money empowered me to pay for several abortions because I claimed women had a right to choose when they wanted to become pregnant or not. I saw in the book of life and it hurt me deeply when I saw a fourteen-year-old girl aborting because I had taught her. When one is poisoned, nothing good remains. Everything that comes close to you is also spoilt.

There were these girls, three of them my nieces and the other one, my nephew's girlfriend. Their parents would let them come to my house because I had money and talked to them about fashion, glamour, how to show their bodies, and so on. My sister talks to you about virginity and chastity because they're outdated. They talk about a 2000-year-old Bible but priests have refused to come to terms with them, because the worst deafness is that of a man again, even their anointed or their priests, or any of them. You will go back, but you won't repeat this 1000 times. And woe be to those who don't change their ways despite having been threatened and warned. I couldn't accuse Him of condemning me!

Of course not. Out of my free will, I chose my father, and my father was not God. I chose Satan; he was my father.

With that immense shame and pain, I started to cry; "Satan, Lord, let me be swallowed by the earth for I asked you! Forgive me, Lord, give me a second chance!" And that was the most beautiful moment. I have never been able to forget it. I have the picture of Him who had burst, with the cry of that baby being torn away from the hands of his Father, God. No wonder I was always sour and ill-tempered, with a grim face, frustrated and with the bitterness in my voice that makes my soul shake when I hear God. Everything was inundated with love and peace and all those creatures ran away in horror because they can't stand love or peace. And there was peace for me when that precious voice called out to me. "All right, if you are a Catholic, tell me the commandments of God's law."

How shameful all of this was! They made an analysis of all our life based on the Ten Commandments. They showed me who I was and I felt it. I was a woman, I had children without a mother, for all those suffering children in their loneliness. Never once compassionate for consideration for the sick, never kept them company. They showed me how I would tell God my sins, despite all my filth and all my indifference and all my horrible feelings, the Lord always, until the very end. God is always "begging" each one of us to convert. (...) I couldn't accuse Him of condemning me! Of course not. Out of my free will, I chose my father, and my father was not God. I chose Satan; he was my father.

When we came to the fifth commandment, the Lord showed me I was a horrible assassin and that I had committed the worst and most abominable in front of His eyes: an abortion. Money empowered me to pay for several abortions because I claimed women had a right to choose when they wanted to become pregnant or not. I saw in the book of life and it hurt me deeply when I saw a fourteen-year-old girl aborting because I had taught her. When one is poisoned, nothing good remains. Everything that comes close to you is also spoilt.

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Of course not. Out of my free will, I chose my father, and my father was not God. I chose Satan; he was my father.

The Lord told me: "That is love for your fellow

man. You will go back, but you won't repeat this 1000 times. You will repeat it 1000 times 1000. And woe to those who don't change their ways despite having heard you, because they will be judged much more severely than me. I will remember the sin of those who come a baby-killing machine!"

Abortion is a heavy chain that drags and trembles; it is a hurt that never ends. It's the eminence of being a murderer. A baby-killing machine cannot be compared to one child. I sponsored several abortions. Each time the blood of a baby is spilled, it's like a holocaust to God. I have killed many of those suns who were created and sent to the world. When there is an abortion, that soul screams and moans in pain, even if it has no eyes or flesh. When it is murder, that cry is heard and heaven shakes and an equally strong cry is heard in hell, but this time of joy. Immediately after that happens, some seals break loose in hell and I have to come out to continue prowling around humankind, keeping it enslaved to the flesh and to all those bad things we see and, even worse, that will come.

The price of innocent blood releases one more demon. I have seen those miseries washed in that blood and my clean soul became absolutely dark. After those abortions, I had no more sense of sinfulness. For everything was okay. It was said to see how all those debts I owed the devil included as well all those babies I had killed myself because I had a "secret". I intrinsically knew how many little babies had been created and those sons had burst, with the cry of that baby being torn away from the hands of his Father, God. I was always sour and ill-tempered, with a grim face, frustrated with everyone and very depressed. I had become a baby-killing machine!

How could I say I hadn't killed? How about everyone I disliked, hated, or simply couldn't put up with? I was being a murderer there too. Because people don't only die from a gunshot. It's enough to hate them, to do bad things to them, to be envious of them. You kill with that.

On the seventh commandment, regarding not stealing, I considered myself very honest. The Lord showed me that white food was being wasted in my house, the rest of the world was going hungry. I had forgotten I had a mother and I had talents, that I was the merciful hands of God. Much less that all the good I didn't do the Lord. Do you want to know what the Lord kept on ask

img the me? About my lack of love and charity. That's how it was. When we came to the fifth commandment, the Lord showed me I was a horrible assassin and that I had committed the worst and most abominable...
“Little Audrey” was born in the city of Worcester, Massachusetts on December 19, 1983. On August 9, 1987, when she was seven weeks old, she fell into the family swimming pool and nearly drowned. She was rushed to a nearby hospital where she was stabilized on a ventilator in the Medical Center where she was accidentally overmedicated with 750 mg. of the drug Phenobarbital. The overdose caused her to lapse into a coma-like state called Akinetic Mutism, which meant that she had very limited body movement. Medical professionals told the family that she needed to place her in an institution where she could live out the remaining days of her life. Her mother’s faith-filled response to them was simply: “I shall place her in my arms.” They predicted that “she would not live more than two weeks.” Thus began a labor of love which lasted for twenty years. Audrey came home from the hospital in November 1987, four months after her accident. Her family immediately set about working around the clock with relatives and medical staff keeping close watch that all of Audrey’s needs were met and that she received only the very best of care. There was such a tremendous outpouring of love from all those around Little Audrey that it was no wonder that God chose to dispense His special blessings upon her family and anyone else who came in contact with her. What began as a labor of love for a helpless little girl had now grown into an apostolate that would spread throughout the whole world.

Miracles began to happen: statues of the Virgin Mary, in the thousands of blood, oil began to exude from statues and holy images and many people were even healed of their illnesses. On five different occasions, the statue of the Virgin Mary was being celebrated in Audrey’s home, many people witnessed the Host in the celebrant’s hands beginning to bleed. (An interesting side notice in this regard received her the first Holy Communion from the hands of Most Rev. Bernard Joseph Flanagan, bishop emeritus of the diocese of Worcester, MA (1959-1983). When we recall that Audrey was unable to swallow because of her condition and was being fed via feeding tubes, it is remarkable that on the day of her First Holy Communion and every day after that, she was able to receive Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist without any difficulty. Even permission to have the Blessed Sacrament in a Tabernacle in her room, thus she was in the continuous presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. But, by far the most wonderful of all was that hearts were changed and conversions began taking place. Little Audrey had clearly become one of God’s special instruments and her mission seemed to be two-fold: to bring souls to Jesus and to be a statement of life in a culture of death.

According to the world’s standards, Audrey’s life was of very little worth or even of no value at all. She could not work, she could not speak, and she could not even eat without the aid of feeding tubes. She needed constant care and could even be considered a “burden” to her family and to society. But God has made use of “the weak to confound the strong” (Cor.1:28), and “He has exalted the lowly.” (Luke 1.)

Pope Paul VI in his encyclical letter, Populorum Progressio, reminds us that: “…in the design of God, every man is called upon to develop and fulfill himself, for every life is a vocation.” Little Audrey’s vocation was truly that of a witness in this life, that we are all precious in God’s eyes, and that every human being has a particular place and purpose in society. What she was unable to provide physically to society, God made up for in a most extraordinary way, manifesting how great His love is for all of mankind.

Little Audrey died on April 14, 2007. On September 11, 2008, Most Rev. Robert J. McManus, Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester, MA, recognized the Foundation for the Promotion of the cause of the beatification and canonization of Audrey Marie Santo. We can now plead to her intercesion, especially the grace for which we now ask… We ask this through Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

(April taken from Little Audrey’s website, www.littleaudreysanto.org)

Audrey’s bedroom after her death and her grave site (right) in Worcester, Massachusetts

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