

Strona Proboszcza

The Pastor's Page

April 15th, 2007

Second Sunday of Easter – Divine Mercy Sunday

Rev. Mark A. Borkowski

Month of the Blessed Eucharist

FmarkB@aol.com

Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Dear Parishioners & Friends of Sweetest Heart of Mary,

This Sunday, the last day of the Easter Octave and Second Sunday of Easter's seven, is also the Feast of Divine Mercy. This feast focuses our attention once again on the mercy of Almighty God that comes through the passion and death of His Only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. The foundation of the devotion is a series of appearances of the Merciful Savior to a humble Polish nun in the early 1930's.

To place the origin of this devotion in the perspective of the history of our parish church, Sr. Faustina's first vision took place when Bishop Joseph Plagens was pastor of Sweetest Heart of Mary Parish. His assistants at that time were Fathers Anthony Kolańczyk and, Adam Koprowski and Joseph Torzewski. Most Reverend Michael Gallagher was the bishop of Detroit. It was not yet an archdiocese! There were 21 nuns teaching in our school (the high school had not yet been established) and there were 966 students at that time in the school. They lived in a relatively speaking new convent (St. Joseph Hall). It was only seven years old! The church building itself had only been standing for 38 years!

Back in Poland, the young Helena Kowalska had entered the convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy and received the name Sister Mary Faustina. She was now 26 years old. On February 22nd, 1931 Jesus appeared to her in her cell in the convent. He was dressed in a white garment and held one hand raised in blessing and with the other He was touching the garment at the breast. From under the garment came two rays of light, one red, the other pale. The Lord requested Sister Faustina to have a painting made of this image with the inscription: *Jezu Ufam Tobie! Jesus I Trust in Thee!*

Along with this sacred image the Lord instructed Sister Faustina to make known to all humanity God's great love for His creation as manifested through His Divine Mercy. Sister kept a very detailed diary of all Jesus' words as He appeared to her over and over until she died on October 5th, 1938. From these writings have been taken the prayers of a very powerful novena beginning on Good Friday and ending on the Second Sunday of Easter, the Feast of Divine Mercy. Sister Faustina Kowalska has been canonized a saint by Pope John Paul II.

Our cluster observance of the Feast of Divine Mercy will take place at St. Joseph Church. After the 10:30 AM Mass on Sunday the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for adoration until three o'clock in the afternoon. Confessions will be heard from 1PM – 3PM. Benediction will take place at 3PM followed by a solemn mass in Latin with choir! If you missed the Easter vigil you really should take advantage of this fabulous opportunity to be spiritually up-lifted and bathed in the Mercy of God!

Lent and Easter Bigger and Better!

This Saturday evening, when the parish and its friends come together for the Annual Polish Easter Swieconka Dinner and tomorrow when the cluster gathers at St. Joseph's for our Divine Mercy Sunday devotions, we will once again for all practical purposes have completed another Lent and Easter in our cluster. As the pastor/administrator of this cluster of three churches the one thing that is extremely obvious to me is that this year's events, devotions and liturgies were even better attended and "bigger" than the previous year. This seems to be a trend in our cluster and I am very happy about that. Who would have thought that working as a cluster could cause each parish to do better individually, but this is the case! I know this well, as this year on the day after Easter my body really felt the pain of this growth. I spent the entire day in bed very sick. Just now I am beginning to feel like myself again. I am not complaining. In fact my real purpose in this article is to thank the many people who worked so hard during these 40 days! Starting with the fish fry! What an overwhelming success in so many ways! Yes it was a financial success! But look how many people it brought to our church, many who had never been here before. I am sure they will return! This would not have been possible without the commitment and sacrifice of those folks who were there every Friday from early in the morning until late at night or who were even working on the Fish Fry earlier in the week buying everything needed to pull something so big off! To all those who shopped, baked, set-up, cooked, served, and cleaned up, I say *Bóg zapłać!* May God reward you for your kindness! The same is true in the church building itself. Attendance at our services was very good, extremely impressive on Good Friday. The church was beautifully decorated and prepared for all our services. We had plenty of willing servers. And the music was uplifting and very much in accord with our Polish-American heritage. To all those who brought this about I also express my sincere thanks. Now of course there is always room for improvements and facts were learned this year to make next year's triduum go even smoother and better. With the transfer of Fr. Ward in July, some changes will be made next year in the cluster schedule of services and of course I will need to rely even more than ever on more help from parishioners to make sure everything gets done that needs to be done! But for now, let us take pride in another Easter beautifully achieved in our cluster. This is what I will be reporting to my brother priests next week when I am in attendance at the annual national convention of the Polish American Priests' Association in Cleveland. This will be a chance to rest a bit and enjoy a change of surroundings for a few days. It is always interesting to see other Polish parishes throughout the country. And surprising to find out how well know Sweetest Heart of Mary is on the national level.

Hopefully you noticed that the mural of the Annunciation on the right side of the high altar has been completely restored. This work was done by local Polish artist, Mr. Tomasz Jedrzejowski. The work was paid for by an anonymous donor last Christmas. It cost \$9000 to restore and is guaranteed for 25 years. The other mural of the Immaculate Conception on the left side of the altar will be tackled next year during Lent. Even though we received donations for both murals we are not able to have this work done at this time due to the many weddings scheduled.

Have You Ever Been to Poland?

If you've never been, and you've been thinking about going, why not go with a group from the parish in September of this year? Please find in this bulletin a flyer with the complete information on the trip.