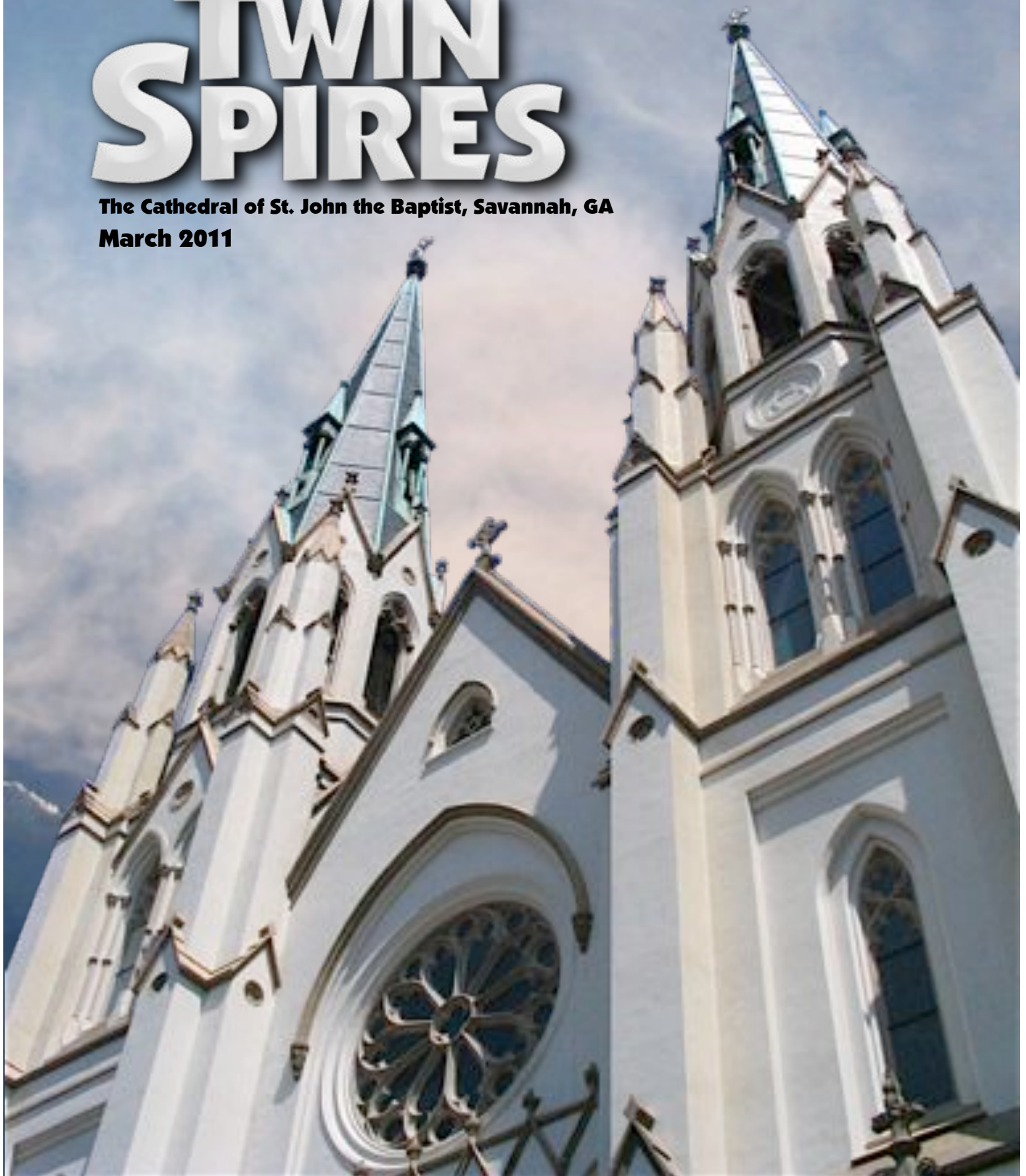


# THE TWIN SPIRES

**The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Savannah, GA  
March 2011**





# Food helps prevent crime

By Peter Paolucci

Recently the Savannah Morning News reported that juvenile arrests in Savannah have been on the decline for the past few years, but cash-strapped agencies supporting troubled youth say that could be temporary. The connection between juvenile crime and a troubled home life is very common. When a child lives in a home where there is not enough food, this can lead a juvenile to begin a pattern of criminal behavior, because children are looking for a better life than what they have at home.

"Agencies like the Social Apostolate have played a key role in providing groceries for families that are trying to make ends meet," said Sister Pauline O'Brien, Social Apostolate Director. "Although securing grants and donations has been tough, that will not stop us from helping to feed families in the community. It challenges us to be creative, to make our money stretch further and fill in the gaps," O'Brien said. "The way I see it, we need to move forward more positively. I always say I'm going to find the money somewhere because these folks need assistance. We are particularly dependent on food donations from various churches in Savannah," Sister Pauline concluded.

Located on East Liberty Street, the Social Apostolate operates two separate food programs; a Soup Kitchen that provides about 70 meals a day to the homeless of Savannah and a Grocery Assistance Program that helps working families survive. Each month they provided a week's supply of food, consisting of a

frozen chicken, a canned ham, canned salmon and tuna, spaghetti and tomato sauce, rice, beans and cereal to over 100 different families, comprised of more than 200 individuals. Every month one of the parishes in Savannah is designated to contribute food to the Social Apostolate Food Basket Program and during the month of March, it is the Cathedral Parish's turn to support Sister Pauline in her ministry. "In these dire economic times, families in need are even more dependent on food received from the Social Apostolate.

If every parish household brought a bag of groceries to church each week, the baskets would be overflowing with food every Sunday in March," according to Deborah Wade, Chairman of the Christian Service Committee. "And the need is so great. Last year when we brought food donations over to the Social Apostolate each week, the shelves filled up; but by the next week they were empty again. It was only through the generosity of the Cathedral parishioners that the shelves stayed full throughout the month of March," said Deborah.

Recently one of their former clients returned to the Social Apostolate to say thank you for the help they provided to her several years ago. She wrote the following letter to express how she felt: "Around 5 years ago, I was at the lowest point in my life. I had no real home, no job and no food. My children and I were very worried. I was embarrassed and discouraged. I was raised Catholic and

attended Catholic schools my entire life but had slipped and my faith was not what it should have been. One day, I stopped by the Social Apostolate and whispered in someone's ear that I was hungry but didn't have any money. Without a second thought I was given food, not just one meal, but enough for my whole family to eat for an entire week. Over the past five years things have gotten a lot better for me. I found a good job, went to college and this year will receive a second degree. And I was further blessed this past June, when I bought my first house. I am so grateful for your help. You saved me even if you didn't see it at the time. Just that small helping hand made the difference. Thank you for everything you did for us. You made a big difference in our lives. Forever grateful, Elaina Maria Landolfi".

Here is your chance to make a difference in someone's life. The Food Drive will run through the entire month of March. Collection baskets will be maintained in the vestibule throughout the month and a reminder notice will appear in the Bulletin every week. Put this reminder on your refrigerator and bring a bag of groceries to church every week. Non-perishable food items such as canned foods, rice, macaroni, peanut butter and jelly are always needed for this worthy cause. This is an opportunity to fulfill your Lenten responsibility for almsgiving before we get to Easter, a chance to be of service to your fellow man. Remember, "To those whom much is given, much is expected." Please be generous.

# Lent

By Fr. Mark Van Alstine



With Lent already upon us, and our recent Catholics Come Home initiative inspiring many hearts, consider taking advantage of this time to deepen your faith's understanding. A number of adults are preparing to become fully one with the Catholic Church at our upcoming Easter Vigil celebration.

Led by our Rite of Christian Initiation team, these adults have at their disposal a number of learning resources to understand the Catholic faith. They need to understand the faith in order to discern whether or not to join the church.

What about those of us adults already Catholic, many so since infancy? We too need to deepen an adult-level understanding of our Catholic faith. At least one of the Catholics Come Home shorts features our Church's wonderful intellectual heritage. Our God-given intellectual gifts, fueled by curiosity and creativity, become the brick and mortar of building a mature understanding of faith. "Understanding" indicates what stands under, the foundation.

While the adults preparing to join us at the Easter Vigil build their understanding, during Lent, I will lead a series of Sunday morning presentations for parishioners interested in building their faith foundations, and gaining a better understanding of the faith.

While Lent's 40 days seem lengthy in the face of prayer, fasting and abstinence, we have only four Sunday mornings available for these mini-courses – March 27, and April 3, 10 and the 17. We will meet in the lower chapel from 9:00AM to 9:50AM, convenient for parents

with children in parish religious education and for persons attending our earlier Sunday Masses. Forthcoming parish bulletins will indicate the topics for each of these mini-courses. Granted these courses will be few, sufficient interest may spark further adult education opportunities.

Regardless of one's ability to participate in these mini-courses or our adult initiation program, Lent provides us a special season of grace to better understand our faith. The Lenten call to repentance means a turning away from, and a turning toward. Turning away from what, and for what reason? Turning toward what, and for what reason? These questions inspire us toward understanding.

Our faith, with a good foundation, finds in Lent a blessed season of growth, enrichment, purification, all leading to celebrate the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. What do "the passion," "the paschal sacrifice," "Lent," "prayer, fasting, and abstinence," "repentance," "reconciliation," and all such words of this season mean for a Catholic adult? Take time to better understand these yourself. Prayerfully read the new Catechism of the Catholic Church, get a good book recommendation from a faithful friend, dig into a Catholic study Bible.

Do something to foster your faith's understanding. For some adults, the culmination of Lent will be their well-informed decision to fully join the Catholic Church. For us already Catholic, making an effort this Lent to better understand our faith will enrich our Easter celebration as well.

## Cathedral Women Actively Serving the Lord

By Joyce Piersanti



Anna and Merritt Kalunze

The Cathedral Council of Catholic Women was particularly busy late last

year. The Annual Cathedral Rummage Sale was a big success, providing the funds needed to renovate the gathering room in the Rectory. They were able to prepare a Holiday Basket for the Cathedral Ball Auction, and throughout the quarter, they met their commitment to feeding the poor as members donated food and made sandwiches each month for the Social Apostolate, which serves the disadvantaged in our community.

During the Christmas season their activities reached a fever pitch as they prepared homemade fudge and cakes that were sold during the holidays. CCW members decorated the Angel Trees with tags representing the Christmas wish lists of families in need

through the Social Apostolate. Items were also collected for the Humane Society and other pet rescue organizations. CCW members, Bishop Boland, Monsignor O'Neill, other Rectory priests and staff celebrated with a special holiday dinner at the Rectory. They helped Brother Robert decorate the Cathedral for Christmas and recently completed the renovation of the second floor bathroom in the rectory. (See story below).

The CCW has just taken over responsibility for the Coffee and Doughnuts Receptions as well as the Parish Covered Dish Suppers each month. And they are now getting ready for their St. Patrick's Day Parade fundraiser at the Cathedral.

As you can see, the CCW is a very active group. Anyone interested in joining this group of dedicated Catholic Women in serving the Cathedral, our parish and the community, please come to the Parish Center on the last Wednesday of each month, at 5:30 to help prepare food for the poor, followed by the CCW monthly meeting at 6:00 PM. Or for more information, please call 272-0205.

### ROSALYNN CARTER GUEST BATHROOM

By Anna Kalunze



Early in 2011, the Cathedral Council of Catholic Women undertook the much needed renovation of the guest bathroom on the second floor

Rectory. On March 17, 1972, then Governor Jimmy Carter and first lady, Rosalynn Carter, visited Savannah for St. Patrick's Day. After attending Mass, the Carters were invited to a reception in the rectory for the Grand Marshall, dignitaries and visiting guests. Mrs. Carter asked for the directions for the nearest powder room. To Bishop Lessard's dismay, she had to be escorted across Harris Street to the rest room in the school. Upon hearing this, the Cathedral vowed to add a guest bathroom to the main living space of the Rectory and henceforth it became known as "The Rosalynn Carter Bathroom".

Almost forty years later, the CCW offered to update the guest bathroom and with the support of Monsignor O'Neill, began

planning the renovation. Monsignor's only request was that we be sure to retain the Peacock Painting.

Work began in January and was completed exactly two weeks later. The original peeling wallpaper was removed along with the plumbing fixtures and worn cabinet. Sandpiper Supply, owned by parishioners Chat and Carol Howard, including daughter Christy Ellis, recommended a plumbing fixture to address low water pressure. Christy's help in choosing the under mount sink, cabinet and fixtures, was most appreciated.

Parishioner Hugh Coleman took care of removing and installing all plumbing fixtures and was instrumental in helping CCW with this process. Scott McKee removed wallpaper, prepared walls, installed a new ceiling, cut baseboards, installed a new fan and light fixtures including moving an electrical outlet.

Scott and a CCW member located the original tile remnants in the basement of the Cathedral so that repairs could be made to the flooring. With the paint colors chosen to compliment the cherished Peacock Painting, walls and trim were painted. The fixtures and mirror were hung, two days ahead of the deadline. In recognition of the bathroom's original "would-be patron", a special sign proclaims it as "The Rosalynn Carter Guest Bathroom".

On to the next project!

# Ball Committee Thanks Sponsors

On February 24, 2011 the Heritage Ball Committee hosted a reception for sponsors and major benefactors to express our gratitude for their previous year's support and encourage future participation. During the evening, as guests arrived, they were treated to exclusive tours of the Cathedral.

Gretchen Reese, this year's Chair, greeted the attendees and thanked them for their past support. Monsignor O'Neill highlighted that more than ten years have passed since the restoration and many areas in the cathedral need serious attention. He introduced Gerald Cyr, Property Chair of the Parish Council, who made a presentation on the current structural needs and preservation issues of the Cathedral.

Ball committee members prepared a delicious spread and were in attendance to greet the guests and encourage their continued support of the ball, an important annual event that benefits the Cathedral Heritage Endowment Fund, the eventual funding source for the myriad structural needs of our Cathedral.



Pictured above: **1-** Frank Rizza, Fr. Dan Firmin, Rob Massey. **2-** Msgr. O'Neill. **3-** Cynthia Cyr, Gerald Cyr, Jack Reese. **4-** Gretchen Reese, Gerald Cyr. **5-** Jessica Reiling, Savannah Dan Leger, Carol Letcher. **6-** Barbara Paolucci, Karen Gelow, Roger Haneline, Rita Haneline. **7-** Angela Keslar, Joe Brennan, Gretchen Reese, Anna Kalunze, Paul Kalunze **8-** Amy Ramsey, Gretchen Reese, Ann Pinckney, Mary Downs, Carol Letcher, Jessica Reiling.

# A CALL TO ACTION

**“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” 2 Corinthians 5:20**

By Jean M. Dorsinville, Parish Council Chairman

We all saw the ads sponsored by the Diocese of Savannah as we watched television in our homes. We paused for a moment, watched and heard the testimonies, and marveled at the expressions of faith by Catholics, who for reasons best known to them, had drifted away and have chosen to return to their roots. Some of us perhaps pondered, *there but for the Grace of God go I*. Their messages were very persuasive and may have correlated with our own experience. Many of us, over the course of the years, have known of family members, friends or acquaintances who distanced themselves from the Church. We have shared that experience. Now we have the opportunity to welcome those lost brethren back to the faith.

Our Greeters are present to extend a warm welcome to our parishioners and visitors who assemble to worship at our beautiful Cathedral, the site of Christ-centered celebrations of the Eucharist. In order to fully enrich our celebration, we all need to be mindful that it behooves us to become participants in this outreach. Sharing a smile with people occupying a pew close to you can have a tremendous impact on their perception that we are ONE in Christ.

You who remain faithful to our Catholic traditions are asked to become ambassadors for Christ as Scripture commands us, by making every effort to invite this family member, this friend, this acquaintance to join us at our celebrations. Our Catholic Church may have been under attack but we need to remember the words spoken in Matthew 16:18 **“And I say also to you, that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”**



The Spirit is blowing a fresh wind through the Cathedral and our Diocese. We must always be mindful that *“The Church is not a Museum for Saints but a Hospital for Sinners.”* Acknowledging our sinfulness is our acceptance that we are all in the same boat, one that remains afloat because of our salvation through Christ Jesus, who died for our sins and who is the captain of that ship.

I am certain that my experience mirrors those faithful souls who have accepted the challenge to render service to God. The celebration of Mass is an indispensable reflection on what our Roman Liturgy has passed on through the ages and remains immutable. The Cathedral welcomes all children of faith in a spirit of reconciliation and genuine Christ-Love, which will surely continue to bear fruit while affirming God’s eternal presence. We beseech you therefore to allow the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself in your lives, to share the joy that He brings at the celebration of Mass and during your daily walk.

Let us remember that a “Church” is not simply bricks, mortar, and stained glass. **WE** are the Church. You and I, along with the priests who shepherd the flock and minister to our needs, are mindful of the omnipresence of God’s Holy Spirit guiding our paths. Come worship with us. Come share the good news. We encourage you to volunteer your services. We welcome your input. Introduce yourself to our Rector, Monsignor William O’Neill, along with Fr. Daniel Firmin and Fr. Mark Van Alstine. If you want to speak to one of them privately, call the Rectory at **233-4709**.



# Divine Mercy Sunday

The Feast of Divine Mercy, celebrated on the Sunday after Easter Sunday, is a relatively new addition to the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar. On April 30, 2000, the day that he canonized Sr. Maria Faustina Kowalska, the Polish nun associated with the message, as Saint Faustina, Pope John Paul surprised the

entire world by establishing Divine Mercy Sunday as a feast day for the entire Church. On that day, Pope John Paul II declared "It is important then that we accept the whole message that comes to us from the word of God on this Second Sunday of Easter, which from now on, throughout the Church, *will be called Divine Mercy Sunday.*" This year, Divine Mercy Sunday takes on special significance as, Pope Benedict XVI will perform the Beatification of John Paul II in Rome on May 1, the feast day instituted by John Paul II.

The message of Divine Mercy is that God is merciful. On the Feast of Divine Mercy, our Lord's Mercy grants forgiveness of all sins and punishment for even the most hardened sinners!

When did Jesus make this promise and how does one get it? Jesus left all the details in a diary that He commanded Saint Faustina to write in the 1930's. It was her job to record everything that He wanted mankind to know about His mercy before He returns to judge the world. To get this great promise one has to go to Confession and then receive Holy Communion on Divine Mercy Sunday. Jesus said, "*Whoever approaches the Fountain of Life on this day will be granted complete forgiveness of sins and punishment.*" (Diary, 300)

A plenary indulgence, the forgiveness of all temporal punishment resulting from sins that have already been confessed, is granted on the Feast of Divine Mercy to all the faithful who go to Confession, receive Holy Communion, pray for the intentions of

the Holy Father, and in any church or chapel take part in the prayers and devotions held in honor of Divine Mercy, or in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. 'Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!').

During his homily, John Paul II also made clear that the Image of The Divine Mercy which St. Faustina saw is to be venerated on Divine Mercy Sunday. It represents the Risen Christ bringing mercy to the world. Pope John Paul II said: "Jesus showed His hands and His side to the Apostles. He points to the wounds of the Passion, especially the wound in His Heart, the source from which flows the great wave of mercy poured out on humanity. "From that Heart, Sr. Faustina Kowalska, the blessed who from now on we will call a saint, saw two rays of light shining and illuminating the world: The two rays in the Divine Mercy image, Jesus Himself explained to her, denote the Blood (the Eucharist) which is the life of souls, and the Water (Baptism) that makes souls righteous. Jesus also indicated that we would be able to receive graces from these images, and why not, if the sacraments themselves are contained within them?". We immediately think of the testimony given by the Evangelist John, who, when a soldier on Calvary pierced Christ's side with his spear, sees blood and water flowing from it (see Jn 19:34). The blood recalls the sacrifice of the cross and the gift of the Eucharist, while the water, represents not only Baptism but also the gift of the Holy Spirit" (see Jn 3:5; 4:14; 7:37-39).

As a result of the Catholics Come Home Campaign, many fallen-away Catholics have returned to the practice of their faith and now have the opportunity to avail themselves of Christ's infinite mercy. Why wouldn't every Catholic take advantage of this opportunity? It is the promise that Jesus Himself made for a complete forgiveness of all sins and punishment on that day, even to the most terrible sinner imaginable. God in His great mercy is giving mankind a chance for salvation.

As you go through Lent, arrange to go to Confession as soon as you can, so that you may be ready always to worthily receive Jesus in Holy Communion, especially on Divine Mercy Sunday, when you can receive the total forgiveness of your sins and punishment! It is like receiving a brand new start in life!

Continued→

## Be Merciful as Your Father is Merciful

We are not only to receive the mercy of God, but to use it by being merciful to others through our actions, our words, and our prayers; in other words, we are to practice the Corporal and Spiritual Works (Acts) of Mercy. The Lord wants us to do these works of mercy, because even the strongest faith is of no use without works. *“I demand from you deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it. I am giving you three ways of exercising mercy toward your neighbor: the first — by deed, the second — by word, the third — by prayer. In these three degrees is contained the fullness of mercy, and it is an unquestionable proof of love for Me. By this means a soul glorifies and pays reverence to My mercy. If a soul does not exercise mercy somehow or other, it will not obtain My mercy on the day of judgment. Oh, if only souls knew how to gather eternal treasure for themselves, they would not be judged, for they would forestall My judgment with their mercy” (Diary1317).*

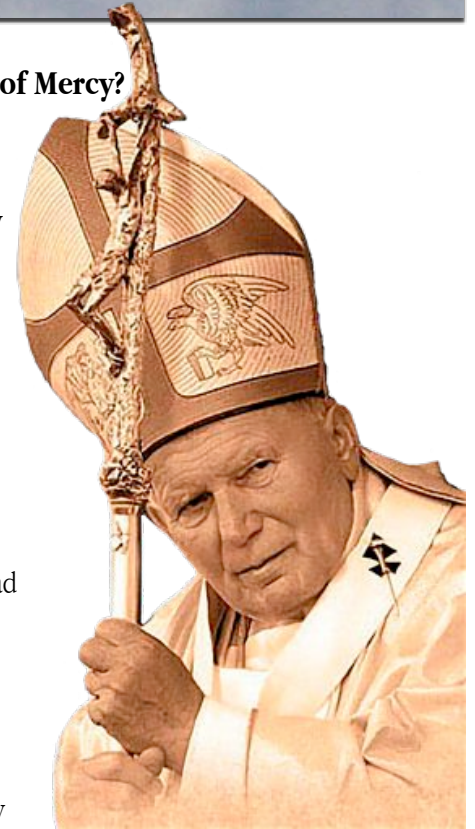
## What are the Works of Mercy?

### Corporal Works

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Comfort the prisoners
- Visit the sick
- Bury the dead

### Spiritual Works

- Teach the ignorant
- Pray for the living & dead
- Correct sinners
- Counsel those in doubt
- Console the sorrowful
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive wrongs willingly



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