



Vol. 7 • Spring 2025



# Becoming

... A People of God

This issue of “Becoming” contains articles which I hope you find meaningful. Having just celebrated the Feast of St. Joseph, I’ve included our parish prayer to St. Joseph, asking for his intercession for help with our building plans, construction, and fundraising.

The reflections of St. Padre Pio scattered with joy and laughter, suffering and sacrifice, and peace and calm, may provide food for meditation during your time in prayer throughout the season of Lent.

Since 2000, the Second Sunday of Easter has been designated by Pope John Paul II as Divine Mercy Sunday, when we celebrate Jesus’ unfathomable divine mercy. Jesus commanded this feast day through St. Faustina. I’ve included a few quotes from her diary. Mark your calendar for Sunday, April 27, and join us in a sung Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by Eucharistic Adoration.

The last two selections discuss discipleship: one is a how-to in step-by-step fashion; the second is remembering that we need God’s infinite grace to continue the ministry of discipleship in its many forms. The latter is attribut-

ed to Saint Oscar Romero, but was actually written by the late Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw.

How will *you* share your beautiful soul with the rest of the world?

*St. Joseph, pray for us.*

*St. Padre Pio, pray for us.*

*St. Faustina, pray for us.*

*St. Oscar Romero, pray for us.*

The season of Lent is the season when we turn back to God. Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we experience conversion. We meditate on the passion of Christ, gruesome though it is, in our Stations of the Cross, in praying the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.

God deserves everything because He has given us everything. True sacrifice can never be just a “nod to God.” It must be big enough and precious enough to represent our entire lives.

Sacrificial giving is about faith, and growing in deeper faith means to carefully consider the role that money plays in our lives. Do I cling to it, or do I trust God enough to let some of it go for a cause greater than myself?

Believe with me!  
Alexis

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# Prayer to St. Joseph

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## GRATITUDE

“As the years go by, Gratitude walks with me along the road of memories. Her steps and mine are slow, and we do not talk very much. But somehow her silence speaks and makes music in my heart.”

Catherine de Hueck Doherty  
*Not Without Parables*  
Ave Maria Press, 1977

Our capital campaign is still ongoing after several years for many reasons. It may just be that we haven't *persistently* appealed to God for guidance and help in our fundraising adventure. Jesus said that we must become like children in order to enter the Kingdom of God. Children are totally reliant on their parents for everything. We, too, are to be totally reliant on Jesus for our daily needs. To quote from the book of Tobit, Chapter 4, “At all times bless the Lord God, and ask him to make all your paths straight and to grant success to all your endeavors and plans.”

Here's our parish prayer to St. Joseph. Print it out. Add

it to your smart phone “Notes.” Most importantly, pray it.

*St. Joseph, patron saint of the Universal Church, husband of Mary, foster father of Jesus, be like a father to us and give us your guidance as we make our plans for the future of our parish.*



PRAYER



FASTING



ALMSGIVING

*Help us to build the structure we need to accomplish the goals your foster son, our Savior, wants us to accomplish, and preserve us from self-serving foolishness.*

*Above all, teach us to live the humble goodness, trusting acceptance, and absolute dedication that you exhibited throughout your life, so that, we, the people of St. Luke, may proclaim by our words and actions*

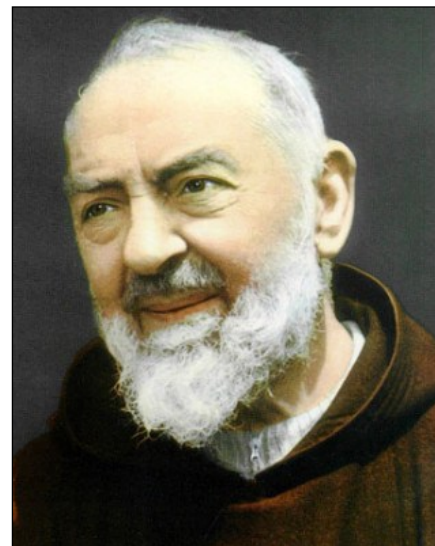
# Lenten Meditation

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Francesco Forgione was born on May 15, 1887, to Italian peasant farmers. Padre Pio was known to have expressed a strong desire to dedicate his life to God at the age of five. In 1903, he became a friar at the young age of 15 and was ordained a priest in 1910. Pope John Paul II beatified Padre Pio in 1999 and canonized him in 2002.

Saint Padre Pio is perhaps best known for his stigmata, visions, and the gift of healing. He is recognized as the Patron Saint of Civil Defense Volunteers, as he served in the military as a friar in World War I. He spent much of his life ill and in pain, yet remained extremely faithful, hopeful, and even joyful. For this, he is venerated as a symbol of hope—inspiring and consoling those in times of struggle through unwavering faith.

Here are a few quotes from Saint Padre Pio. Memorize a few to use when life requires more patience, calm, and mercy. Spend some time with them in front of the Blessed Sacrament. I pray you find these comforting and filled with the warmth of God's love, guiding you to a deeper faith during this Lenten season.



Pray, hope, and don't worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer.

Prayer is the best weapon we have; it is the key to God's heart. You must speak to Jesus not only with your lips, but with your heart. In fact, on certain occasions, you should only speak to Him with your heart.

The longer the trial to which God subjects you, the greater the goodness in comforting you during the time of the trial, and in the exaltation after the combat.

Joy, with peace, is the sister of charity. Serve the Lord with laughter.

Jesus is with you even when you don't feel his presence. He is never so close to you as He is during your spiritual battles. He is always there, close to you, encouraging you to fight your battle courageously. He is there to ward off the enemy's blows so that you may not be hurt.

The most beautiful act of faith is the one made in darkness, in sacrifice, and with extreme effort.

The storms that are raging around you will turn out to be for God's glory, your own merit, and the good of many souls.

You must have boundless faith in the divine goodness, for the victory is absolutely certain.

My past, O Lord, to Your mercy; my present, to Your love; my future to Your providence.

You complain because the same trials are constantly returning. But look here, what have you to fear? Are you afraid of the divine craftsman who wants to perfect His masterpiece in this way? Would you like to come from the hands of such a magnificent Artist as a mere sketch and no more?

I recommend calm and calm all the time.

How unbearable is pain when suffered far from the Cross, but how sweet and bearable it becomes when it is offered close to the Cross of Jesus.

If we earnestly endeavor to love Jesus, this alone will drive all fear from our hearts, and our soul will find that instead of walking in the Lord's paths, it is flying.

The greater your sufferings, the greater God's love for you.

St. Padre Pio's feast day is September 23.

# Second Sunday of Easter: Divine Mercy Sunday



## Divine Mercy Sunday:

April 27, 2025

In 2000, Pope John Paul II instituted the Feast of the Divine Mercy—Divine Mercy Sunday—which is set on the Sunday immediately following Easter Sunday. This feast day was commanded by Jesus to St. Faustina Kolwalska in 1931. The Feast of Divine Mercy Sunday is a day of grace for all people, particularly for great sinners.

### *The Image*

The vision came to St. Faustina in February of 1931. Jesus provided the imagery and specifically requested that it be signed with “Jesus, I trust in you.”

The image of Divine Mercy is that of the Risen Christ. Its rays are red and pale and represent the Sacraments of Mercy—Baptism and Eucharist—the sacraments very much celebrated on Easter Vigil and throughout the Easter Season.



Jesus, I trust in you.

From the words of Jesus from the Diary of St. Faustina (#299):

**“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 #313

**“Not in the beauty of the color, nor the brush lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace.”**

Diary # 699

**“On that day (the Feast of Divine Mercy) the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment.”**

Consider joining us, experiencing the presence of God in the Holy Eucharist, and spending time in prayer and song. Let’s continue to open ourselves up to our Lord Jesus and see what wonders He works in our lives.

Please check the bulletin for the Sung Divine Mercy Chaplet and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament that is scheduled on Sunday, April 27, 2025. I pray that I see you there!

# Stewardship Corner: Become A Disciple Maker

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## Be a Disciple Yourself

- Before you can help others, you have to be a disciple in more than words only.
- Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus?
- Are you an example of faithful prayer, charitable service and joyful giving?
- People believe people who “walk the talk.”
- Pope St. Paul VI – “The world does not merely need teachers but witnesses.”

## Pray

- Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. He will show up!
- People You Know: Ask the Holy Spirit for specific names of people He wants you to accompany.
- People You Don't Know: Ask the Holy Spirit for the words to use.

## Focus on the “Why”

- The point is to help someone take one step closer to Jesus. -Do it for the glory of God, not the glory of me. We plant the seeds of faith; the Holy Spirit does the actual conversion.

## Joyful

- Our attitude is important – express joy during your faith conversations.
- Active listening – listen to understand, not to build your response or explain why they are “wrong.”
- Many times, people just want someone who will listen to them without immediately judging them.

## Develop Friendship

- This is a process that takes time.
- Many times, we need to build friendship with a person before we begin the God talk.
- The core of friendship is trust and the seed of trust is humility.

## Accompany

- Walking with someone on their faith journey means that I am available to them on their schedule, not mine.
- Be intentional, check-in on them; schedule time with them.
- Pray for people on the spot if needed.

## Share Your Faith Story

- This is the hardest part for most Catholics – sharing their faith story with others.
- Have a 5 minute and 30 second version to share with others.
- Share the highs and lows of your faith journey.
- No one can “out-argue” you about your relationship with Jesus – that should give you the courage to share your story with others.
- We all share stories about people in our life that we love (spouse, children, grandchildren).
- Why don't we share those same stories about our love for Jesus?
- If you received the greatest gift ever, you probably have told others about it.
- What about the Holy Eucharist we receive at Mass?

## Invite

- Personal invitations work the best.
- Depending on where the person is at in their faith journey, you may have to start slow.
- Be respectful, natural and honest.
- Inviting someone to Mass may not be the first step. You may need to build up to that.
- Invite them to events that they may have interest in.

*“Heavenly Father, fill us with zeal to share the Good News with joy and conviction. Empower us to serve one another with humility and generosity. May our hands be instruments of Your peace, and may our lives be a testimony to the love of Jesus Christ. With grateful hearts, we entrust ourselves to Your divine care. May our vision be clear, our listening profound, our discernment wise, our evangelization fervent, and our service selfless. May our words and actions reflect the love and mercy that flow from Your sacred heart. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen”*

From the Stewardship Letter from the Archdiocese of St Louis

# We Trust in God's Grace

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At the Ordination of Deacon Filiberto Cervantes, Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

*Saint Oscar Romero*



Presentation of the Sacred Oils, Holy Thursday 2024



Signing the Book of the Elect at the Rite of Election.



Those preparing for Baptism and / or Confirmation at the Rite of Election.