

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

1312 Dallas Street
Waco, Texas 76704

Website: www.stjohnswaco.org
E-mail: saintjohn1312@yahoo.com
Phone (254) 753-6742

Pastor/Administrator: Father Cyril Ejaidu

Confession: Sunday 10:00-10:25 am

Mass: Sunday 10:30 am

Mass: Wednesday 6:00 pm

Divine Mercy Sunday

April 16, 2023

April 23, 2023

Lectors

KOPC

Eucharistic Ministers

KOPC

***Ministry for the
Sick and Homebound***

Mrs. Gwendolyn Stewart and
Mrs. Carolyn Brown

Photographer

David Haliburton

Bulletin

Celeste Sheehy

Live-Stream and Music

Greg Guerra



Parish Council Members

Chairman: Father Cyril Ejaidu

President: Ms. Faye Stewart

Vice President: Mr. Darren Sliva

Recording Secretary: TBA

Other members

Mr. Joseph Brown, Mr. Freddy
Duron, Mr. Stanley Glynn, Mrs.
Sylvia Glynn, Mr. David Gradel,
Ms. Roseanne Reyes

Finance Committee:

Mrs. Bobbie Sharkey

Mrs. Carolyn Brown

Ms. Jessica Breda

Mrs. Joyce Fonteneaux

Mr. Matthew Sheehy

Knights of Peter Claver Council

and Court Council #385

Grand Knight

Mr. Joseph Quinones

Court #385 Grand Lady

Mrs. Teaberta Black

Saint Faustina reports in her *Diary*

what Jesus told her about Divine Mercy Sunday:

**“My daughter, tell the whole world about My inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day 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. On that day are open all the divine floodgates through which graces flow”
(*Diary* #699).**

That day is today! It is the Feast of Divine Mercy! Today's feast is among the newer feasts in our Church. Though Jesus' desire that this feast be celebrated on the eighth day of Easter was spoken to Sister Maria Faustina Kowalska back in 1931, it was not solemnly instituted until the year 2000. On April 30 of that year, Saint Pope John Paul II canonized Saint Faustina and inaugurated the Feast of Divine Mercy as a universal feast within the Church. Because this Feast is so recent within the Church, we can be certain that we still have much to learn about the message of this Solemnity as well as the numerous messages about God's mercy revealed in Saint Faustina's *Diary*.

Among the many messages contained within her *Diary*, Jesus revealed to us that this Sunday, the eighth and final day of the Octave of Easter, is a day like none other. Though grace and mercy are continuously poured out from Heaven upon us, Jesus is very clear that today is unique. Today, “a whole ocean of graces” is poured forth upon souls who approach the font of His mercy. Sit with that image for a time. “A whole ocean of graces.” What does that mean? Symbolically speaking, a whole ocean is meant to depict the infinite. Try to imagine what it would be like to have the entire ocean poured upon you—it's beyond comprehension! Thus, God is saying that the infinity of grace is given today. The question for us all to ponder is this: How receptive am I to those infinite graces?

By analogy, imagine that your life was like a thimble, and an ocean of water was poured upon you. As a thimble, you could not contain all that was given. Therefore, we should realize that God wants to stretch our capacity to receive His mercy more abundantly by widening our capacity for mercy. What if your soul were like a large pond? Still, the waters of the ocean could not be contained within that pond. What is it that is capable of receiving an entire ocean of mercy? Only an ocean can contain an ocean. For that reason, God desires to first prepare our souls to receive an infinity of mercy by transforming us into vessels of infinite capacity.

Saint Teresa of Ávila, in her spiritual classic, “Interior Castles,” teaches us that the soul is, indeed, capable of infinite capacity for the simple fact that God dwells within. The soul is like an interior castle with many interlinked dwelling places through which we must pass so as to arrive at the central chamber. She teaches that the goal of the spiritual life is to travel through these various dwelling places to the center of our souls where the infinite God dwells so that

we can be present to Him there. Therefore, we must understand that our souls are indeed capable of receiving the infinite waters of mercy, because God created us with this ability when He chose to live within us. The key to being able to fully receive this fullness of mercy is to seek out the infinite God, dwelling within. How is this done?

The heart of the path laid out in the *Diary* of Saint Faustina is as follows: Go to Confession and receive Holy Communion so as to obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. However, as many of the great spiritual writers explain, such as Saint Teresa of Ávila, there are many levels we must pass on our spiritual journey so as to be able to encounter God in His fullness. This, of course, includes encountering God's mercy given to us in Holy Communion and Confession. Those who receive these Sacraments while dwelling only in the first dwelling places, for example, will never benefit from them to the extent that those who dwell in the seventh and central mansion where the King dwells in fullness. Thus, mercy is given in its fullness but unless we make the transforming journey to God through conversion and purification of our souls, we will never be able to receive the ocean of graces God bestows.

Reflect, today, upon this ocean being poured forth upon you. How much of this mercy are you able to receive right now in your life? As you humbly admit your limited openness to God's grace, know that God patiently waits for you, dwelling in His fullness deep within you, waiting for you to make the journey to Him. Commit yourself to this journey by prayer, fasting, penance, the reading of Scripture, the celebration of the Sacraments and spiritual reading. There is an ocean of the fullness of life waiting for you. Dive in and allow His mercy to deepen your capacity to receive Him most fully.

My Lord, You are The Divine Mercy, the source of all grace and the Bestower of this grace in superabundance. I thank You for the infinity of Your generosity and pray that my soul will be more fully disposed to receive You. Please stretch the capacity of my soul through my ongoing journey of purification and conversion so that I will receive all that You wish to bestow. Jesus, I trust in You.

St. John's Offering

April 9, 2023

Regular Offering: \$2,047

Building Fund: \$130

Diocesan News

April 28, 2023 3:00 pm – April 30, 2023, 12:30 pm – Spend time “**Mingling with the Mystics**,” four of them who span six centuries of Christian history. Br. Joel Giallanza, CSC will lead each sessions providing an overview of the life and teaching of Saints Catherine of Siena, John of Ávila, Francis de Sales, and Thérèse of Lisieux. These four have much to teach us about developing our relationship with God in daily life. The retreat at Cedarbrake cost is \$280 for a private room and \$230 for a shared room, all meals included.

May 4, 2023 9:00 M – 2:30 PM - Come To Mary's House Filled with reflections and brief imaginative sequences, this retreat invites you to imagine you are with the Blessed Virgin — visiting in her living room, working in her garden, or catching up over coffee. Retreat leader, Shawn Chapman is a writer and a Discalced Secular Carmelite from College Station. The retreat costs \$45, lunch included

Please add names of church members and their family members to the sick list in the foyer of the church so that we may pray for you. We will update the list weekly and remove names from the list monthly. If a name should remain on the list indefinitely, please notify Celeste Sheehy.

Sick List

Father God, we pray for all those who are facing sickness in their bodies.

We ask that you restore their health, soothe their pain, and ease their worries. Give them your peace and comfort.

In Jesus name, Amen!

Don McKelvain

Sonja Hemstreet Gaines

Hilde Ouellette

Jessie Hithe

Gary Gradel

Gloria Johnson

Announcements

We will have **pastries and coffee available in Sophie Hall after Mass** every Sunday except the fourth Sunday of the month. Please stop by and visit for a few minutes.

In conjunction with Shepherd's Pantry, we provide a **food pantry for the community in Sophie Hall on the second Saturday of every month.**

If you are interested in **becoming a member of St. John's**, please fill out the membership card located at the back of the church. St. John's would like to welcome our new members and our guests. We are so very glad to have you with us.

Contact Carolyn Brown or Gwendolyn Stewart either while at church or email at saintjohn1312@yahoo.com **if you are aware of a church member who is ill, hospitalized, or homebound.**

If you have **items for the bulletin**, please submit them to Celeste Sheehy at stjohn1312@yahoo.com. Please submit all items **by 5:00 pm on Thursday** to allow time to prepare the bulletin for Sunday Mass.