

Piety - Divine Mercy

The 1st Sunday after Easter was proclaimed to be Divine Mercy Sunday in May 2000 by then Pope John Paul II. Being the 2nd Sunday of Easter, the 8 days in the octave of Easter are like one day. Many parishes will be celebrating with Eucharistic Adoration and a special Divine Mercy chaplet prayer.

Reflecting the words of Jesus communicated to St. Faustina, “The soul that will go to confession (preferably beforehand) and receive Communion (on this day) will obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment” (699). Jesus emphasizes that this is available to all, no matter what our past sins may have been.

Venerating this image of Divine Mercy is a very important part of this. The two rays coming from His heart represent the blood shed and the graces released through His Paschal Mystery. The white rays represent the graces of baptism by which we are justified. The red rays represent His blood which we receive in the Eucharist and is the life of our souls. As an icon, it helps us connect in an intimate way with our Lord and rest in thankfulness. Veneration includes gazing with deep religious respect and prayerfully contemplating the richness of this mystery.

Much can be said about this Mercy but it is important to remember that Jesus also said “this image...is to be a reminder of the demands of my mercy, because even the



strongest faith is of no avail without works (742).” This points to the importance of extending this Mercy to our neighbors. Through St. Faustina we learn that there are three ways to exercise mercy in our lives: 1) Word (Scripture), 2) Deed (works of mercy) and 3) Prayer. She also said that we each receive opportunities for grace on a daily basis which too few recognize. And of those who recognize these opportunities, few act on these graces. Let us not fall into the danger of lukewarmness. We either grow spiritually with these graces or we atrophy in the presumption that “all is well.” (The Catholic version of Once Saved, Always Saved.) Our Lord challenges us to continue growing on a daily basis. Let us daily take up our cross and proceed step by step to follow our Lord.

This Mercy is crucial for ourselves, for our families, for our world. “Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to My Mercy (300).” Let us spread this Divine Mercy promise with humble confidence and enthusiasm.

Deacon Frank Fischer, St. Dominic Parish

Study



Spiritual Direction by David Bender

I was asked recently to give a witness talk at one of the diocesan zoom Ultreyas and initially thought to say “no,” thinking I had nothing to say. However, during an adoration visit to the Blessed Sacrament, I received what I call “a shove from the dove.”

I am a retired, clinical psychologist. Fortunately, I found a way of understanding persons and the world during my internship year, when I was seriously considering another occupation. The methodology that I stumbled upon, Descriptive Psychology (DP) has been of great benefit to me, not only in my work, but in all other aspects of living. Recently, one of the heuristics from DP, along with another “shove,” provided me with insight concerning the source of one of my lengthy difficulties with a particular temptation. Encouraged by that, I began to think about spiritual direction, and how I could shed light on it with DP.

It was frequent in my work that a person would present for therapy with some dissatisfaction about themselves, and their circumstances, along with a strong desire to make personal change. Sometimes, however, the person seemed to be acting as if they could be their own therapist. To help out with this roadblock, I would typically bring out a whiteboard or a sheet of paper and draw a diagram. I ask that you imagine one of those diagrams now. At the top of the paper, think of three columns, with a heading that says A changes B into C. A, B and C are persons, each of which has a set of characteristics, indicated by a set of lines drawn under each. (It may help if you draw out such a diagram.) Person A is the therapist and person B is the one presenting for change and person C is the desired outcome. A person working for self change (B), working diligently, will unfortunately become more like the person who can help make the change (A), instead of moving in the desired direction toward (C). Only luck could provide some overlap of characteristics. There is a better way.

At this point, I would tell the client to just behave doing what comes naturally to them, and leave the therapy to me. In other words, the harder you work at it the more you’re going to become like someone who can help make the change, instead of becoming someone in whom the change occurs. This simple but straightforward approach was almost always easily understood.

Now, think of a parallel in the spiritual life. Imagine that the harder you work by yourself, the more you become like someone who can help make changes happen instead of being the one in whom they occur. This is exactly the place we all have for a Spiritual Director. When and if we can trust ourselves to another for direction, the more we can simply be who we are, following our director, of course, but without the extra effort of trying to turn ourselves into someone we’re not. Change is ever so much easier that way. Pray for the grace to follow your director’s advice, encouragement and directions.

Action / Witness Talk

Let's Pray the Holy Spirit prayer -- Come, Holy Spirit. My name is Lois Schering. I made the 6th women's English-speaking Cursillo in San Antonio, TX in March, 1981. I sat at St. Mary Magdalene's table and I worship at Our Lady of Fatima in Alcoa.

"Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

1 John 3:18. These words came to fruition a few months ago when I was losing my voice yet was serving as an EMHC to the homebound. My voice was down to a whisper yet I could still say the four most important words in the Communion Service -- "The Body of Christ." One of the ladies I take Holy Communion to is very hard of hearing. I knew she couldn't hear my weakened voice. I convinced a nurse who just happened to be Episcopalian to help me out by leading the Communion Service and as I held Our Lord, I said "The Body of Christ" and gave her the Eucharist. It worked out well. Afterwards, the lady said in so many words "Here she is in a weakened state yet she still serves." It touched me.

The following week I had no voice as I had a ruptured blood vessel in my vocal cord. It was very hard for me to tell Fr. Adam Royal that I had to step down from ministry. I have served as an EMHC for 44 years. I phrased it; however, until I get my voice back, please find a sub for me!!

I was silent 23 days. I wrote down everything I wanted to say. I came up with my own way of expressing myself, my sign language, when people thought I was deaf too. I -- hear -- you. If you think my mind was silent, No.

I went through the Called and Gifted seminar to find out if the Charisms that I was involved with were the ones God had chosen for me at Baptism. Yes, they were. My charisms are Mercy, Intercessory Prayer, Craftsmanship, Administration, Healing and Prophecy. Deacon Leon Dodd and Toni Jacobs wanted to start a healing ministry. I have been on healing teams before

when I was in the Charismatic Renewal. I felt God was calling me back to the healing ministry so I became one of the healing team ministers at Our Lady of Fatima parish.

I went thru a healing retreat and at the end of it, there was a healing service. In preparation for the healing service, I went to confession and forgave everyone that I could think of. The most important person to forgive was myself. Just prior to the beginning of the healing service, I prayed thru the intercession of Servant of God Fr. Patrick Ryan¹ for everyone to be healed. I was silent at the time I prayed over others. Any comments, I wrote down and others shared them. After my small group of ministers prayed over all that came to us, they prayed over me. After I was prayed over, I returned to my seat in the Church. As the last prayer of the retreat was being said, I felt a breeze go over me from the left side to the right and sensed peace. I shared it in writing with Sharon Brothers, who was sitting next to me. I left the retreat without checking my voice because I was very tired. In my garage, I counted out loud to 10. There was a voice!! I thanked God for the healing. I was no longer tired!!! I told Tom. I emailed everyone on the healing team and told them I had a healing. Later, I shared it with my Doctors and nurses in their offices. I shared it with everyone I saw or emailed. I asked Fr. Adam to not give my ladies to anyone else. He hadn't reassigned them. I did ask Fr. Adam to reassign the lady with the hearing problem since I couldn't talk that loud.

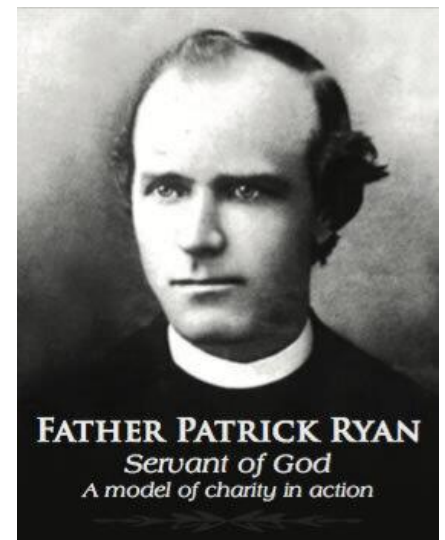
I was still on schedule for surgery for the vocal cord. Everyone wanted to know if I was completely healed so surgery wouldn't be needed. The impression I was getting was from the movie "The Song of Bernadette." The blind stone cutter who put the spring water on his eyes was healed and he could see. He rushed to his Doctor who said nothing had changed." But the stone cutter was healed. I felt that is what God had done for me. I had surgery and it was a success. However, I developed post op pneumonia, followed by a yeast infection in the

mouth because of using too many antibiotics, followed by seasonal allergies, all affecting my voice. During all this time, I was at peace. I felt the prayers of everyone especially from the healing team and palanca from the Knoxville Cursillo Community and the Richmond, VA Cursillo Community, where I lived before moving here.

When I went to see the Doctor two weeks after surgery, he told me that the granules that were around the vocal cord were gone. I must back up a bit. In 1990, I had surgery for a goiter on my larynx. My vocal cord is paralyzed. The Doctor put Teflon into the vocal cord to move it over so I can talk. The hoarseness and comments that I sounded like I had a cold were the result of Teflon disintegrating. Some of you have said that my voice is stronger. It is because the granules coming off the Teflon are no longer there. THAT comment from the Doctor is the realization that God healed that too when He healed my voice. God is Good all the time. All the time God is Good. De Colores!

¹ Fr. Patrick Ryan died a martyr's death in the yellow fever epidemic in 1878 when he was only 33 years old. He was Pastor of St. Peter and Paul Basilica from 1872 to 1878 in Chattanooga, TN., who gave his life in ministering to his flock.

<https://dioknox.org/father-patrick-ryan>



Upcoming dates to remember

ULTREYA

JC Zoom Ultreya - Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88974850171?pwd=SVNnMSs5S2R4VUs3Q3puQXNEcHFTZz09>

Meeting ID: 889 7485 0171

Passcode: 909354

May 11th – 6:30 pm

June 8th – 6:30 pm

July 13th- 6:30 pm

St. Jude Parish, Chattanooga In person Ultreya - Second Thursday of every other Month

May 11th – 6:30 pm

July 13th – 6:30 pm

September 14th- 6:30 pm

Last Tuesday DOK Zoom Ultreya - Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89612322462?pwd=VFIRRWRTTHh3kyZXh6dkwrQTY5QT09>

Meeting ID: 896 1232 2462

Passcode: 055818

April 25th – 6:30 pm

May 30th – 6:30 pm

June 27th – 6:30 pm

Cursillo Weekends

**Send in your candidates applications for the upcoming
Men's and Women's Weekends soon!**

Men's Weekend – April 27-30, 2023 at Christ Prince of Peace Retreat Center
Clausura is Sunday April 30th at 4 pm. Arrive between 3:30 and 3:45 so we can be ready for the arrival. Bring a dish to share. Palanca Vigil is available on the website and the address to that page is: <https://knoxvillecursillo.org/WeekendVigil.asp?ID=M>

Women's Weekend – November 2-5, 2023 at Christ Prince of Peace Retreat Center.
It is not too early to begin offering Palanca for the team who are in formation. Here is the link to the page: <https://knoxvillecursillo.org/WeekendVigil.asp?ID=W>

