

“Mercy is love that seeks to lessen the misery of others.”
 — Bryan Thatcher, MD

A MIRACULOUS STORY

VISIONS LEAD TO THE SHRINE OF DIVINE MERCY IN SAGAR, INDIA

By Bryan Thatcher, MD

Several years ago, I was a speaker at a Divine Mercy conference, and one of the other speakers was a humble and reserved bishop from India. His name was Bishop Anthony Chirayath, and I was in awe as he told his story. It was one of many encounters I have witnessed during my years of spreading the mercy of God.

Sagar is a mission diocese in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. It has roughly 6 million people and most are Hindus. In 2006, the Catholic population was less than 4,000. In 2006, Pope Benedict XVI elected Msgr. Anthony Chirayath as its third bishop. The newly-appointed bishop found his diocese lacking even minimal infrastructure for his

priests, sisters, and the Catholics. To remedy the situation, he decided to go on mission appeal to Europe and the United States.

In early Oct. 2007, Bishop Chirayath flew to San Francisco looking for some financial help. On Oct. 5 at 9 p.m., he was working on his laptop perusing through his email and suddenly something happened. For some moments his mind went blank. He was totally shaken, possessed by a thought that he must build a shrine to the Divine Mercy in Sagar. Never before had he thought about the Divine Mercy and knew nothing of the devotion as propagated by St. Faustina. Humanly speaking, there was no reason to connect him to Divine Mercy. He said he was not dreaming, because it was only 9 p.m. and he was working on his computer. But it was a very possessive thought. He did not share it with anyone that evening.

The next morning, he flew to Sioux Falls. At 10 a.m., during a layover in Minneapolis-St. Paul, as soon as he activated

his cellphone, a total stranger called him from Charlotte, North Carolina. The man told him that the previous evening he was praying to the Divine Mercy and he had a vision of a Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Sagar. He saw thousands of people going to this shrine to receive the blessings of Jesus, the Divine Mercy.

“How could this be?” Bishop Chirayath asked the caller.

“This cellphone number is strictly personal, known only to a handful of people. I do not know you. I have not seen you, nor heard of you. Where did you get my number?” Then the bishop told him what had happened the previous evening.

The unknown man from Charlotte continued to say that his vision was so vivid, that the shrine was there and people were



The Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Sagar, India.

going there and getting the blessings of Jesus.

Bishop Chirayath told him then that even to build a small shrine he needed a little money.

“How much do you need?” the man asked. He replied at least \$3,000 to build a very small shrine. “I will send you right now \$5,000,” the man said, “and if you need more money I will give it to you. Do not stop the project. It has to be realized! God is with you. You must realize this project!” The next day the bishop received from him \$5,000.

Then another event occurred. On the third day after his vision, the bishop received an email from a priest in his diocese back in Sagar. He heard that a visitor to Khajuria said he had a dream the previous night about a Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Khajuria. The shrine was attracting thousands of people to receive the blessings of Jesus. In three days, the same vision happened to three different people who were total strangers to each other and living far apart!

Shrine

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More than 20 years ago, EADM shipped an 18-foot, two-ton statue of Jesus, the Divine Mercy, to Rwanda. Later that year, I visited the statue (that's me on the left). I will visit Rwanda in November to see how EADM can now assist the Marians in building a preschool.

Before returning to India, Bishop Chirayath went to visit the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. The rector of the Shrine invited him to celebrate the Mass for pilgrims at 2 p.m. In his homily, the bishop shared with the congregation his experiences the last few days. They all were wonderstruck! Before the final blessing, the rector stood up and told the congregation that he has something to add to what the bishop said during the homily. He told the bishop that the day of his experience of the Divine Mercy was the feast of St. Faustina, something that he was unaware of until that moment.

Soon after the bishop's return to his diocese, the clergy held their annual retreat, which was directed by a Vincentian priest, who centered his conferences on the devotion to the Divine Mercy. The intensity of the visions caused the establishment of a Shrine on Nov. 9, 2007 in an existing small chapel in the village of Khajuria in the Diocese of Sagar. The Shrine was named Dayasagar, which means "Ocean of Mercy." In the presence of all the priests and many sisters and faithful, Bishop Chirayath dedicated his diocese to the Divine Mercy.

On the same day it was entrusted to the care of the Vincentian Fathers of Rewa Province in India. Attached to the Shrine is a Renewal Centre for all who desire to spend time in silence, prayer, adoration, and retreat.

On July 15, 2008, three Adoration Sisters of Nirmal Rani Province started Perpetual Adoration in the Shrine chapel. Individuals and groups are coming regularly to pray at the feet of the Divine Mercy. Several miraculous healings have been reported. Special prayers are offered daily at the shrine for those who make requests.

To accommodate the increasing number of pilgrims, Bishop Chirayath decided to build an outdoor Shrine. Initially the idea was to put up an eight-foot-tall statue of Jesus, the Divine Mercy, on top of an outdoor stage, but when Fr. Vincent Akkara went to Kerala in search of an artist who could make a statue, he met Pauly, an artist who suggested instead he make a 30-foot statue. When completed, it was actually 43 feet tall and India's tallest statue of Jesus! The statue was blessed on Sept. 30, 2013, by Cardinal George Alencherry in the presence of 16 bishops and archbishops and more than 6,000 pilgrims of all faiths coming from India and abroad.

Help for the Philippines

Please help us assist Fr. Darek, MIC, at the "Mother of Mercy Village" in Mindanao as he is finishing the Chapel. He needs a confessional and baptismal font; must furnish and complete an Adoration Chapel; and expand the trade school, to give hope to and assist the poor young adults who desire to go to college and break the cycle of poverty. He also needs help in continuing support for the medical and dental clinic.



DIVINE MERCY AS A WAY OF LIFE

By Bryan Thatcher, MD

In 1997, EADM hosted a large “Divine Mercy as a Way of Life” event. We had more than 1,100 people in attendance, and it was a beautiful event.

I never understood why I chose that title until years later. As I traveled and spoke across the U.S. and numerous countries, people would tell me, “We know all about Divine Mercy. We pray a Chaplet every Friday after Mass.” Or, “We know all about Divine Mercy, we celebrate the Feast Day every year.” Or, “We know all about Divine Mercy. We have an Image in our church.” While the beautiful Image, Feast Day, and Chaplet are powerful devotional tools and expressions of God’s mercy for us, we must also be reflections of the Image and be vessels of love and mercy to our family, friends, and co-workers. It is much more difficult to live the message than it is to recite the Chaplet or hang an Image in our home.

In my travels, I have found that forgiveness is a major stumbling block to spiritual advancement. It is a moral virtue and not a weakness; it is an act of mercy to someone who has acted unjustly to us. Forgiveness does not mean we condone or excuse the act. It doesn’t mean we forget the injustice — it’s a virtue one decides to do even if the other person does not want reconciliation. We pray the Our Father prayer at Mass and ask, “Father, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” and yet often we don’t forgive!

Trust in God is easy when things are going well, but what happens when we get the call from the doctor’s office that we have cancer, or our loved one has Alzheimer’s disease? Or news that one of our children is getting a divorce? It is at these times that our faith is put to the test.

Trusting in God means we do our best, walking in this valley of tears, but staying close to Jesus and keeping our eyes on Him. But instead of maintaining our inner peace, fear, exaggerated anxiety, and discouragement take over, and we lose everything we prayed for. For many, the fear of the cross is greater than the cross itself. We must let “Jesus, I Trust in You” be our anchor in life!

Living the message also means that we embrace our crosses and accept them as Jesus accepted His. Remember the pain that St. Faustina endured from advanced tuberculosis? But she joined her sufferings to those of Jesus on the Cross, and as she suffered, she had joy, as she suffered out of love of God. She wrote in *Diary* entry 446 as she saw Jesus on the Cross:

When He had hung on it for a while, I saw a multitude of souls crucified like Him. Then I saw a second multitude of souls, and a third.

The second multitude were not nailed to [their] crosses, but were hold-

ing them firmly in their hands. The third were neither nailed to [their] crosses nor holding them firmly in their hands, but were dragging [their] crosses behind them and were discontent. Jesus then said to me, **Do you see these souls? Those who are like Me in the pain and contempt they suffer will be like Me also in glory. And those who resemble Me less in pain and contempt will also bear less resemblance to Me in glory.**

Reflect on this quote: “If the angels were capable of envy, they would envy us for two things: one is the receiving of Holy Communion, and the other is suffering” (*Diary*, 1804).

Lastly, we must try harder to get out of ourselves and our problems and try to see the needs and wants of others. Saint Faustina wrote, “God’s love is the flower — Mercy the fruit” (*Diary*, 949). Mother Teresa tried to instill in her nuns that they must see Jesus Christ in each of the dying beggars that they encountered. That is a reiteration of Sacred Scripture

as Jesus tells us that, “I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brethren, you did it for me” (Mt 25:40). And as St. James wrote, “Be assured then, that faith without works is as dead as a body without breath” (Jas 2:26) This concept emphasizes that faith should not be passive but should lead to good deeds as one radiates the love of God.

The needs of the poor can at times be overwhelming, and Mother Teresa said she was to share God’s love to “one soul at a time.” But as we begin to reach out to others, we begin to see the needs of others and we find great joy.

Let us pray for an infusion of the Holy Spirit so that we can better live the message of mercy and become living icons of the Merciful Savior!



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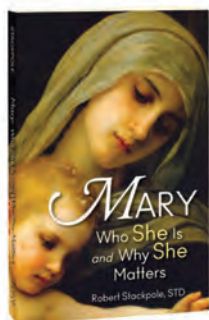
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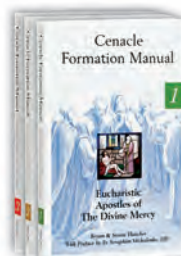


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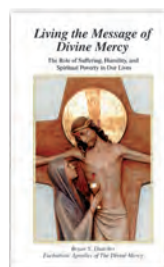
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DIVINE MERCY AND THE 'FLAME OF LOVE'

By Bryan Thatcher, MD

Recently, our sister ministry, Mother of Mercy Messengers, spearheaded by Dave and Joan Maroney, asked me to give a talk to their group regarding Divine Mercy and the “Flame of Love” movement. The messages have been welcomed by Cardinal Peter Erdo, and are spreading rapidly.

The Flame of Love Ministry developed from the writings of a Hungarian woman, Elizabeth Kindelmann, from 1961-82. She is considered a modern-day mystic. She lived from 1913-85, and was an orphan and a humble mother of six children. Her mission was to communicate the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a unique grace from the Eternal Father. The spiritual diary received an Imprimatur from Cardinal Peter Erdo and the messages are locally approved for devotional use.

Elizabeth came from a poor family. Her father was Protestant and her mother Catholic. She started working at an early age, and often worked long hours and multiple jobs at one time to survive. At times she had to beg for food.

As she approached age 50, she thought her life would enter a more calm and pleasant period, but this wasn't meant to be. The Lord Jesus and the Blessed Mother began speaking to her. She wrote, “After a period of serious doubts and torments for my soul, I accepted that the Will of God be done. My soul was so overwhelmed with grace that I was unable to utter a single word.”

This is similar to St. Faustina as she realized doing God's will was paramount, and on one page she crossed out with a large X and wrote in entry 374, “From now on, my will no longer exists.”

Jesus told Elizabeth, “Ask for abundant graces. The more you ask, the more you will receive. Ask for others and do not fear that you ask for too much! Accept faithfully the graces that I ask of you for My Cause. Many ask repeatedly to share in My works, but when they must accept a sacrifice from My own hands, they are afraid of Me.”

Flame of Love is a grace that comes from Mary's heart that blinds Satan, making him powerless, and the flame puts our hearts on fire with the love of God! Our Lady told Elizabeth, “I place a beam of light in your hands; it is the Flame of Love of my heart. Add your love to this flame and pass it on to others.”

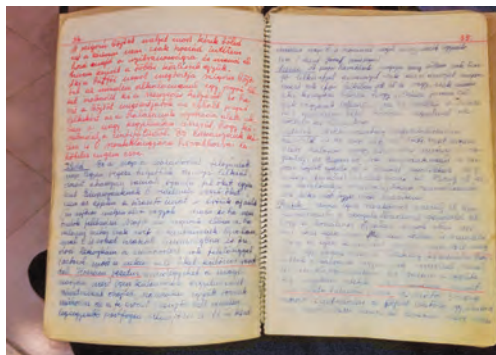
Elizabeth wrote, “In spite of all my efforts, O Lord, I see no progress in myself.” I can relate to that quote as in my own walk some days I make one step forward, and the next I make two steps backwards. But Jesus told her, “Do not worry! Begin anew each day. Our Mother will help you. Ask everything from her. She knows how to please Me.”

On another occasion, “The Blessed Virgin revealed that the light of her Flame of Love filled not only me, but all my family members, and the Evil One could not lead them into sin. That is why their souls are strengthened and prepared to receive even more graces.”

Our Lady told her, “I place a beam in your hands: it is the flame of love of my heart. Add your love to this flame and pass on to others, my little, my little one. Take this flame, my daughter, you are the first one I

am handing it to. It is the Flame of Love of my heart. Add your love to this flame and pass it on to others.”

The Flame of Love is a signal grace, a grace that may seem like a coincidence but can change our heart and lives and is recognizable. It is not just a message; this grace is obtained from Heaven from Our Lady's Heart and instills a passionate love for God. And Jesus told Elizabeth on Feb. 14, 1964, “I expand your heart by the power of My Divine Love.” The heat of the love of God that Mary's gives us expands our hearts to receive more grace. Mary's love for Jesus is so perfect and it is this intense love for her Son that she passes on.



This is similar to the story of St. Philip Neri, the apostle of joy, when on the day of Pentecost, 1544, he suddenly felt an intense joy while praying. He was bursting with God's love. The outward physical signs of this overflowing emotion were a combination of shaking, feeling warm, and his heart beating so fast that it caused the pew on which he was sitting to vibrate! After his death, his chest was found to be abnormally deformed, forming a protuberance where his heart had been, the ribs having been broken.

Our Lady told Elizabeth, “With this Flame full of graces that I give you from my heart, ignite all the hearts in the entire country. Let this flame go from heart to heart. This is the miracle becoming the blaze whose dazzling love will blind Satan. This is the fire of love of union which I obtained from the heavenly Father through the merits of the wounds of His Divine Mercy.”

Mary added, “We will put out fire with fire: the fire of hatred with the fire of love.” That quote struck me as similar to one of my favorite quotes from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Hatred cannot drive out hatred, only love can.”

The Divine Mercy message is about love as God is love, and we must let the rays of mercy penetrate our hardened hearts and turn our hearts of stone to hearts of love. Mary's love is so perfect as she is united to God's will, and she

wants to pass the Flame of Love to us.

The Flame of Love signals graces that blind Satan and sets people free! Jesus said, “The flame of love in the heart of My Mother is Noah's ark.” The Blessed Mother also told Elizabeth that she is in the process of accomplishing her greatest miracle.

There are three prayers in the prayer groups of reparation: In the Sign of the Cross one contemplates on His five wounds; adding an ejaculation to the Hail Mary regarding Flame of Love; and a Unity Prayer.

Elizabeth's diary ends with a petition from Our Lady: “My children, pray for one another without ceasing. Let the outpouring of my graces produce its effect in souls.”

Let us pray, fast, and live and lead a sacramental life and be like St. Philip Neri, filled with joy as our hearts are filled with the love of God!

For more information on Flame of Love, visit FlameofLove.us. Quotes taken from “The Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary — The Spiritual Diary” of Elizabeth Kindelmann, copyright 2019, The Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

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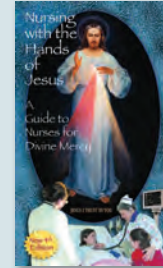
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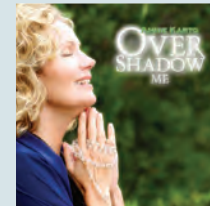
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Call EADM at 1-877-380-0727 for more information.

Consider scheduling a Day of Reflection. Dr. Thatcher gives talks that focus on Divine Mercy; St. Faustina and Praying the Chaplet for the Sick and Dying; and Mary, Mother of Mercy.

If your cenacle would like to have Dr. Thatcher speak at your parish, call the EADM office at 1-877-380-0727.



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