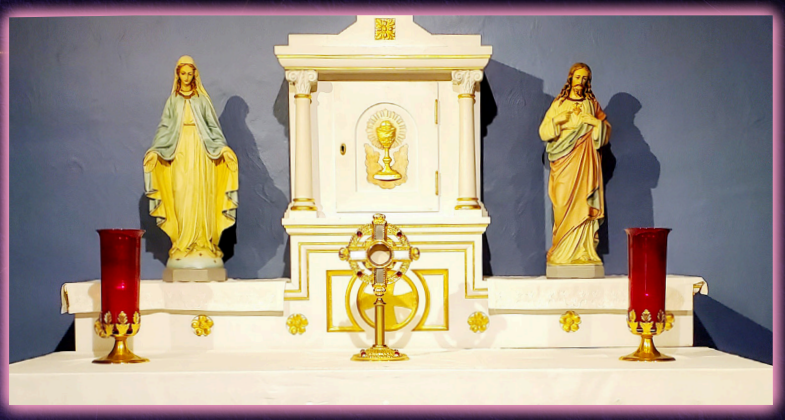
NEWS FROM

# Mother of America Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration Chapel



## at the Marian Center for Peace

## LENTEN SEASON 2026

## Beyond the Pew: A Deacon's 25-Year Journey

By Deacon Jon Anderson

I wasn't raised Catholic, but I met a devout Catholic when I was in college. We were later married in the Catholic Church and raised our children in the Catholic faith. I even attended Mass with my family. Not receiving much more than a ten minute homily every week, I sat in the pew for twenty-five years. Then, in 2010, I had a serious motorcycle accident. When I realized how fragile life is, I knew it was time to get to know Christ before I see him . . . but how?

My wife, Trisha, was an original adorer when the Marian Center for Peace was established. One day I had to find out, "Where are you going every Monday night from 8-9pm?" I began to go with her. I found it to be a place to pray - something I never did unless I needed a favor. "But," I asked, "why are we sitting in front of what looks like a cracker?" My wife simply said, "Because in that wafer of bread is the Presence of Jesus." I thought, "If that is Jesus, I will believe, too."

So now what do I do for an hour? To begin, I let Him do the talking. I had a New Testament that was given to me when I was a teenager. Every time I opened it, I read something about my life that needed to change. I highlighted verses and made notes. I started to embrace my belief, "This really is Jesus!" We were becoming friends. I felt his presence. I felt humble. My heart was softening. I was being changed.

Going to Mass began to have more meaning. It still took four more years to desire full communion with the Catholic Church. The point is, every time I am before the Blessed Sacrament, a miracle in my life takes place. I wouldn't be Catholic, let alone a Deacon, if it wasn't for the Marian Center.

Even though I am blessed to be at the altar with my Priest, I find I still need to touch base in a very intimate way with my Jesus, face-to-face. Would you rather call a friend, or visit a friend in person? That's how necessary it is to stop in often, and gaze at the One who saved my life. Jesus is radically available 24/7.

Ministerial life can be exhausting. The Marian Chapel is a vacuum of peace. It is like a retreat, where Jesus will say, "Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest for a while."

## Handicapped Accessibility PROJECT UPDATE

The parish talks are completed, and we are very thankful for the generous donations received. Some contributions were made to the parishes, some directly to the Marian Center, and some anonymously. Because we did not have names for every gift, it made it impossible for us to thank everyone. Please allow us to thank you through this newsletter.

The drawings are being submitted to the government for approval or adjustment. Once approved, the project can be quoted accurately. At that point, we will know if we have received enough donations. If not, we have had a donor ask us how much more is needed. We will report back to them when we know the amount if more is needed. If you have not donated to this important project yet, and would like to do so, there are envelopes at the Marian Center and at each parish in the Deanery.

## Lessons from Saint Faustina

The diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, titled *Divine Mercy in My Soul,* is a profound record of her mystical experiences and conversations with Jesus Christ. It serves as a powerful testament to God's boundless mercy, inviting all souls to draw near to Him regardless of their struggles. Here are two particularly powerful quotes from the book:

- Jesus said, "My image already is in your soul. I desire that there be a Feast of Mercy. I want this image, which you will paint with a brush, to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter; that Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy."
- Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska prayed, "O Jesus, eternal Truth, strengthen my feeble forces; You can do all things, Lord. I know that without You all my efforts are in vain. O Jesus, do not hide from me, for I cannot live without You. Listen to the cry of my soul. Your mercy has not been exhausted, Lord, so have pity on my misery. Your mercy surpasses the understanding of all Angels and people put together; and so, although it seems to me that You do not hear me, I put my trust in the ocean of Your mercy, and I know that my hope will not be deceived."

## Increase your knowledge of Our Lady of Guadalupe's Image

The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe is fascinating, with hidden messages. Let us start our journey of insights by stating that the image in the chapel at the Marian Center is a relic.

The Church categorizes its relics by classes; first, second and third-class relics. The image in the Chapel of the Marian Center is a third-class relic. What does that mean? A third-class relic has been touched to a first or second-class relic. In this case, the image was touched to a second-class relic, the original tilma in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. A second-class relic is something worn by the saint or an item that the saint used, as in a piece of clothing, a rosary, Bible, or cross. Saint Juan Diego wore the tilma of which Our Lady's image is embedded. This makes it a second-class relic. A first-class relic is a piece of the saint's body, as in a bone fragment or piece of hair. In the case of the image in the Chapel at the Marian Center, the image was touched to the original image in Mexico City making it a third-class relic.

Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Saint Juan Diego in 1531. Her feast day is December 12. Mary's appearance in Mexico changed a pagan culture to one of Christian devotion to Jesus and to the Mother of God. The event changed the lives of 9 million Aztec Indians.

## The Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano

This famous Eucharistic Miracle occurred in 750 A.D. at the Church of St. Francis in Lanciano, Italy. A monastic priest doubted the Body of Our Lord being truly present in the consecrated Host. As he celebrated the Mass and said the words of consecration, he saw the host turn into Flesh and the wine turned into Blood. Those in attendance also witnessed the miracle.

In 1970, the Archbishop of Lanciano requested Dr. Edward Linoli, a professor of anatomy, histology, chemistry, and clinical microscopy, to perform a complete examination of the Eucharistic Miracle in 1971, twelve centuries later. What he concluded was:

1. The flesh was authentic consisting of muscular tissue of the heart (myocardium).
2. The Blood was truly blood.
3. The flesh and the blood are human; and with certainty they have the same blood type AB, the same type discovered in the Shroud of Turin.
4. The protein in the blood has the same distribution as normal fresh blood.
5. There were no signs of embalmment. Dr. Linoli concluded there were no signs of a hoax carried from the past centuries. The blood is human without embalmment.

Dr. Linoli's testing was verified by a scientific commission appointed by the World Health Organization. Fifteen months of study and 500 tests later, the commission declared the Flesh to be living tissue because of how it responded rapidly to the clinical reactions that are distinctive to human beings. Their studies could not come up with an explanation.

## Jesus in the Silence

We live in a world that demands our constant attention. Notifications, endless to-do lists, and the expectations of others often pull us in a thousand directions at once. Even Jesus faced this pressure; at the height of His early ministry, everyone was looking for Him. Yet, instead of rushing to meet the crowd, He chose to disappear into the silence. Mark 1:35-39 shows us why solitude wasn't an escape for Jesus, but rather the very source of His mission - and how His prayer life provides a blueprint for our own.

"Rising very early before dawn, He left and went off to a deserted place, where He prayed. Simon and those who were with Him pursued Him and on finding Him said, 'Everyone is looking for You.' He told them, 'Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.' So He went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee." ***Mark 1:35-39***

Jesus' prayer was unique. He did not pray because He needed God in His life—He was and is God. Yet, in His human nature, He regularly withdrew to be alone and to pray to His Father. Jesus' prayer reveals Who He is. He is the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity. As a member of the Trinity, Jesus prayed in solitude, not to become closer to the Father, for He and the Father are eternally one in essence; rather, His prayer expressed and revealed that perfect union to us. Unity with and love of the Father are at the center of Who He is.

By going off alone to pray to the Father, Jesus also models for us the way to the Father. His action is prophetic, calling us to set aside moments each day for nothing other than prayer. While we are called to pray continually throughout the day, this habit is nourished by intentional moments of silence in which we immerse ourselves in God's presence. In our fallen nature, daily moments of focused prayer are necessary for clearing the distractions of life, overcoming sin, and allowing God's grace to draw us into deeper union with Him.

**Jesus is waiting for you** - Come adore our Lord at the Mother of America Adoration Chapel at the Marian Center for Peace. Both substitute and full-time adorers are welcome and needed! Go to adorationpro.org/mother & sign up for one of our open hours or to be a sub.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