

Dear Associates and Friends,

The Lord be with you.

We had a fierce wind and rain storm blow in without warning on a Friday afternoon in July. It lasted only two hours. One of our three phase electric lines lost power, and some branches were knocked down from trees here, but more damage was done in our area. The Douglas County Herald had pictures of a house covered with brush and branches.

The monk Fr. Bruno was ordained a priest on June 29th in Vietnam. He will offer Masses of thanksgiving and visit home, then arrive here on August 23rd. The three brothers Ambrose, Alphonse, and Gabriel came into Springfield Airport at 10:30 p.m. July 5th. Now they are settling in, getting acquainted, and taking part in our community prayer and work. Fr. Peter will receive some help at his jobs of cooking, laundry, and guest house.

Fathers Thaddeus and Basil received extensions for their Religious Workers visas, so Fr. Basil was able to renew his Missouri driver's license. Fr. Thaddeus is still waiting for a new R.1 Visa from the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, before he can return here. Br. Roberto traveled back to Our Lady of Divine Grace in Vietnam for a four year course of Theology there.

Our 4th of July picnic was enjoyed by our monks here, along with our Franciscan neighbors, Fathers Francis and Shane. This year the food was laid out inside our refectory tables, but we ate outside on chairs along the covered walk. That way the flies and ants did not get to share too much in the food. It rained that morning, but cleared up by noon. The neighbors had their fireworks that night down at the low water bridge over Bryant Creek. Br. Boniface had a ring-side seat at the grand fireworks display at his nursing home in Ava.

Br. Thomas completed his three week visit to our Motherhouse, New Melleray Abbey, near Dubuque, IA, plus a week at his brother's house in Wisconsin. He was impressed by the Iowa monks' coffin factory and industry.

Someone left the garden gate open. Deer got in and topped off the sweet potato greens. Fortunately the roots still flourish. Sometime later we were served a dish of greens at noon, which were quite good and tender. It turned out to be sweet potato tops. The deer knew a good thing when they saw one.



# KING OF DIVINE MERCY

The Feast of Corpus Christi, the Body and Blood of Christ, has been called a celebration of Holy Thursday in the light of the Resurrection. We can call the feast of the Sacred Heart a celebration of Good Friday in the light of the Resurrection. Pope Francis has made this Liturgical year a special Jubilee of Mercy. Our Lord's Sacred Heart is above all a symbol of Merciful Love.

In the garden of Gethsemani His Heart was sorrowful unto death. The hour had come for Jesus to make reparation to God for all the evil and sins of the world. The reality and power of darkness was so overwhelming that He prayed in anguish for three hours. In the end Jesus' love for His heavenly Father prevailed, and He identified with His Father's merciful love for His fallen sinful prodigal children. All through that night and the next day the events of His Passion added more suffering to His Sacred Heart. Jesus accepted each additional pain in turn, and transformed it all into His redeeming human and divine sacrifice. He offered worship of infinite value to God, and offered infinitely effective prayer for all of us. "Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing." A soldier pierced His Heart with a lance. Blood and water flowed out as a sign of death and life. His death is the life of the world.

The Paschal Mystery of God bringing life out of death, greater good out of evil, on the third day was so impossible for Thomas to accept that he had to put his hand into the wound of Our Lord's Heart, before he could believe.

During his public ministry Jesus asked, "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" In the late 1900's the power of darkness, the mystery of evil, was gathering heavy storm clouds over Europe. To fortify His faithful Our Lord Jesus came to a Polish nun, Sister Faustina. A prolonged Good Friday experience would soon overwhelm the European people, so Christ showed Sr. Faustina His Sacred Heart in the light of the Resurrection. He appeared to her as risen and glorified with two rays of light streaming from His pierced side. A red ray of light and a white ray of light symbolizing the graces of forgiveness and divine life which flow from His Sacred Heart. Our Lord revealed Himself to her as King of Divine Mercy. He taught her the prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, King of Mercy, I trust in Thee." He taught her the Chaplet, or Rosary of Divine Mercy, and asked that people pray it, especially remembering 3 o'clock in the afternoon, as the Hour when He proclaimed, "It is finished."

Pope St. John Paul II in particular approved and spread devotion to Our Lord as King of Mercy. He canonized Sr. Faustina and established the Octave Sunday after Easter as the Feast of Divine Mercy. This devotion does not replace the earlier revelations of the Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque. Rather, it is a continuation and further development. Our Lord Jesus is applying the same mystery and message of His saving love to a new life situation in the world and in the Church. He promised to be with us always. He asks us to cooperate with Him in His ongoing mission by our own lives of reparation and merciful love, trusting in His Sacred Heart.

In the Sacred Heart,

Your Ava Monks