

Getting to know you

August - September 2025

Saint Faustina Kowalska Saint Maximilian Kolbe

Celebrating the First Anniversary

It has been almost one year since the Enshrinement of our Relic Saints. We have received testimonies of favors granted and lives transformed by their presence. Another parishioner is sharing his story in this issue of the newsletter. We praise and thank God for his goodness to bring these blessings to us.

On June 5, 2024, we received the first-class relic of Saint Faustina during the mass at the Chapel of Merciful Jesus in Krakow, Poland. The Mother General, Sister M. Norberta Ruchala ISMM of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy wrote in a letter, "We thank you for inviting Saint Faustina to your parish and rejoice that it will now be under her particular protection and care. We believe that by means of her relic, her spiritual presence will contribute to a deeper understanding of the mystery of Divine Mercy among your parishioners. Thus, making Saint Faustina's desire in her "Diary" come true. I desire to go throughout the world and speak to souls about the great mercy of God. (Diary 491) This is my mission, which You, Yourself have entrusted to me, O Lord, in this life and in the life to come. (Diary 1325)"

On October 5, 2024, which is also the Feast Day of St. Faustina, our parish celebrated the Enshrinement of her first-class relic and with her, the first-class relics of Saints Maximilian Kolbe and Peter Claver.

We will commemorate this First Anniversary on the weekend of October 4 & 5. The 3 reliquaries will be placed near the Altar during all the Masses with special emphasis at the Saturday 7 pm Spanish Mass and at the Sunday 10 am Mass. At these 2 Masses those in attendance will be able to touch their religious sacramentals to the reliquaries so as to become a third-class relic. (A first-class relic is a part of the Saint's body. It could be their hair, nails, or bone fragments. A second-class relic is something the Saint owned like clothes, books, ink pens, even worn-out sneakers! Third-class relics are items that a Saint touched or any item that touched a first or second-class relic.) Due to other parish activities that day, we can only offer this during the 2 Masses mentioned above. We will have refreshments after the 10 am Mass on the plaza.



*Feast of St. Faustina,
and
First Anniversary of the
Enshrinement
of*

**St. Faustina Kowalska
St. Maximilian Kolbe
St. Peter Claver**

Oct. 4 & 5

**The 3 Relics will be near
the Altar at all the
weekend Masses.**

You will have an opportunity
to touch the reliquaries on
Oct. 4 at the 7 pm Spanish Mass
and Oct. 5 at the 10 am Mass
(only).

Bring your rosary or other
sacramental to touch and create
your own 3rd Class Relic.

Refreshments on the plaza
after the Sunday 10 am Mass.

For more information call Joe & Merle Delatorre 858 566-0777

Keep in mind that the Relics of our special Saints are available to visit and venerate every day when the church is open. They are in the shrine / Children's Liturgy room on the right side of the church. Request our Saints to intercede and pray for your needs using the prayer slips that are available there.

St. Kolbe will take your place, by Phoebus Lee

"My wife! My children!" I cried as I fell to my knees, weeping after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. In December 2023, at the age of 46, my mind spiraled into terrifying, uncharted territory. It felt as though death himself was staring me in the face, suffocating me with his breath. "Oh no... is this happening? This has to be a dream," I thought as I collapsed to the floor.

Immediately, I prayed to Jesus with the deepest desperation for help. Through mysterious ways, as the news spread among family and friends, I began to feel His presence. Despite my endless tears, a small sense of comfort arose. I never felt hatred or rage, but a heavy, lonely darkness engulfed me. My wife kept me grounded, reminding me to focus not on what I couldn't control, but on what I could — remaining in God's presence. She embraced me with her warm heart, though I knew inside her own heart trembled as we faced an unknown road ahead.

My life shifted. God became the focal point of each day. Soon, I began to feel myself being "moved" — I realized it was the Holy Spirit. I had never prayed the Rosary before, but suddenly I found myself praying it every night, asking for forgiveness and healing. Without planning, I was drawn to St. Peter Claver, where I went to confession with Father Riz — a priest I had never met. I don't even remember my last confession before that day. He embraced me when I shared my cancer diagnosis.

All this time, I had been living "asleep," blinded by worldly distractions and desires. Now my senses felt alive, and I began to see and feel the presence of Jesus everywhere.

By God's grace, I survived chemotherapy, radiation, and eventually a Whipple surgery. I lost over 30 pounds and recall looking in the mirror at a frail, bony figure — like a prisoner in a concentration camp. And yet, I was grateful. Many with pancreatic cancer never even have the chance for surgery. Though this disease is often called a "life sentence," I continue to

defy the odds, carrying my cross through the powerful prayers of family, friends, coworkers, and even strangers.

Prayer heals. I began to notice what I once called "coincidences" were really God speaking. These are known as "signal graces," reminders that God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the saints, and our Blessed Mother are always present and communicating with us. His love surrounds us like the air — always here, never gone.

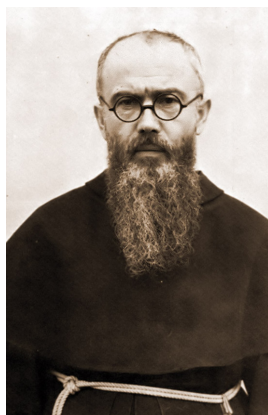
Growing up Catholic, I admit I was lukewarm: Mass once in a while, confession rarely, prayers only when I needed something. I believed I was too busy for God. But suffering has a way of stripping away illusions. When we face trials like cancer, we either fall into darkness — cursing God and life — or we open our eyes to a new light, a new perspective, and see Jesus through those "signal graces."

One powerful grace for me came through Saint Maximilian Kolbe. I didn't truly understand the saints before. Then a parishioner introduced me to the relics at St. Peter Claver and told me how St. Faustina's relic helped heal his wife. The day before a scan, I was overwhelmed with "scan-xiety" and found myself praying the Rosary in church. My prayer led me to the relics of St.

Faustina, St. Peter Claver, and St. Maximilian Kolbe. As I read about St. Kolbe's life, chills ran through me. That night, without planning, I listened to the Hallow app — and the episode was on St. Maximilian Kolbe. I knew God was speaking.

St. Kolbe, a prisoner in Auschwitz, volunteered to take the place of another man who cried, "My wife, my children!" Kolbe died so that man could live. In prayer, I heard God whisper to me, "Phoebus, Saint Kolbe will take your place so you may live longer in this world." I was overcome with gratitude and love.

Even more, I later learned that in May 2024 — the same month as my Whipple surgery — Father Riz and parishioners traveled to Poland, receiving not only St. Faustina's relic but also St. Maximilian Kolbe's. At nearly the same time I was in surgery, his relic was on its way to our parish. His gaunt



appearance during starvation reminded me of my own reflection during treatment. Chemotherapy is poison — a form of chemical warfare, like mustard gas. In his final days, others cursed and despaired, but Kolbe led them in prayer and song, turning agony into worship.

His witness reminds me that God works even in suffering. He prunes us, refines us, and shapes us into something new. The question is whether we will resist and cry, “Why me?” or embrace His presence and say, “Thank you, Lord, for this moment to feel You.”

And so my prayer is: “Lord, I believe... continue to help my unbelief. Jesus, I trust in you.”

Prayer to St. Maximilian Kolbe

O St. Maximilian Kolbe,
faithful servant of Christ and child of the
Immaculata,
you showed the world the greatest love
by offering your life for another.
You embraced suffering with courage,
turning darkness into light through prayer
and praise.
Teach me to carry my own cross
with trust in God’s will.
Strengthen my faith in moments of fear,
fill my heart with charity in times of trial,
and help me to see God’s presence
in every circumstance.
Through your intercession,
may I grow in love for Jesus and His Blessed Mother,
and live each day with hope, courage, and peace.



**St. Maximilian Kolbe,
martyr of love,
pray for us all.
Amen.**

Phoebus Lee
Militia of the Immaculata (MI)
Knights of Columbus 9410

We invite you to share your experience of an answered prayer or religious experience through the intercession of our Saints. Please contact Joe and Merle Delatorre at 858-566-0777 & 858-776-0481. You can also send us an email to stfaustinarelic@gmail.com.

Hour of Great Mercy

Jesus said to Saint Faustina:
**At three o’clock, implore My
mercy especially for sinners.**

...

**This is the hour of great mercy
for the whole world. (Diary 1320)**



We invite you to pray

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy
*as a group, inside the church, in the
Children’s Liturgy Room/Reliquary Shrine*

EVERY FRIDAY at 3 pm

Open to EVERYONE. Come as often as you can.

In our previous issue, we featured an article about the Hour of Great Mercy. During this hour, we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 pm while meditating on the Passion of Jesus. We reflect on His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, the scourging at the pillar, the crowning with thorns, carrying the cross, and His crucifixion. As we pray, we are invited to contemplate each moment of Christ’s suffering—allowing these reflections to deepen our appreciation of His mercy.

A group of people gather inside the reliquary/children’s liturgy room at 3 pm every Friday. The group started with 4 people eventually grew to 11, then up to 21 people praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet. People either state their intentions aloud or express them quietly.

As we meet each Friday at 3 pm to pray, we make new friends and pray for each other. Come and join us when you can. Everyone is welcome.

Register Now!

<https://www.ctlka.org/congress>

DIVINE MERCY CONGRESS

Nov. 8 & 9 2025

at the Divine Mercy Shrine of the
Archdiocese of Los Angeles

Christ the King Church
624 Rossmore Ave.,
Los Angeles, CA 90004

- *Bilingual: English and Spanish*
- *Powerful talks by renowned speakers*
- *Testimonies, workshops, and fellowship*
- *A special Divine Mercy Chaplet*

Registration: \$35 per person; \$50 per couple,
(husband & wife)
includes lunch and 1 drink both days.

Let us Pray to Our Lord

- ✚ For our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, that through the guidance of the Holy Spirit he leads the Church to ever greater holiness and peace.
- ✚ For all priests, deacons and clergy, may the Holy Spirit always guide them.
- ✚ For Father Adrian San Juan, may he always be remembered in our hearts. May he rest in peace.
- ✚ For the health and healing of all the sick.



- ✚ May our departed loved ones rest in peace.
- ✚ For peace and safety of the parishioners and community of Simi Valley and the whole world. May those facing conflict, fear, or loss find comfort and hope.
- ✚ For the hungry, the poor and those seeking shelter.
- ✚ For Peace, Love, Faith and Trust in the mercy of Jesus.

Jesus, I Trust in You.

Please hear our prayers. Amen.

Fulfilling Saint Faustina's Dream

As we read on page one, Saint Faustina desires to travel spreading her Message of Divine Mercy.

Our Saint Faustina first-class Relic will be traveling soon, very soon!

Laura Diaz, our Director of Faith Formation, corresponded with Bishop Slawomir Szkredka about having our Saint Faustina Relic as part of the 2025 Santa Barbara Regional Congress. Guess what.... with no hesitation, the Bishop responded, "Absolutely!"

For the first time, our Saint Faustina's Relic will be traveling outside our parish. The Santa Barbara Regional Congress will be on Saturday, October 25, 2025 at San Buenaventura High School in Ventura, California. It is an all-day event attended by key members of every parish in our region — Priests, Deacons, parish leaders, faith formation catechists, volunteers and other parish ministers.

More than 400 participants joined the 2024 Santa Barbara Regional Congress, and at least the same number of participants is expected this year.

Aware that the parish of Saint Peter Claver received the Saint Faustina First Class Relic on the condition that we share it with other parishes, it was determined that this event would be the best time to introduce our Saint and her Holy Relic to our Region. So Saint Faustina will be part of the 2025 Regional Congress in Ventura and our group will bring her there.

At the time we were presented with Saint Faustina's First Class Relic, Mother Superior Norberta also wrote: *"May the presence of Saint Faustina's Relic fill the hearts of all your parishioners with joy, for the Lord Jesus said: 'For your sake, I grant blessings to this whole vicinity (Diary 719), for your sake I will bless the earth (Diary 431).'"*

Announcements & Upcoming Events

- ✚ **First Friday, Oct. 3**
 - 7:30 am – First Friday Mass
 - 7:00 pm – Mass and Adoration with Divine Mercy. Chaplet in Song. Confession available until 9 pm.
- ✚ **First Saturday, Oct. 4**
 - 7:30 am – First Saturday Mass, Holy Rosary, and meditation.
 - 5:00 pm – Holy Mass – Relics of Saints Faustina, Maximillian Kolbe & Peter Claver will be present at the Altar.
 - 7:00 pm Spanish Mass – Relics will be present at the Altar with the opportunity to venerate and touch your sacramentals to them.
- ✚ **Sunday, Oct. 5**
 - 8:00 am, 12:00 noon, & 5:00 pm – Holy Mass – Relics of Saints Faustina, Maximillian Kolbe & Peter Claver will be present at the Altar.
 - 10:00 am – Holy Mass – A special celebration honoring St. Faustina's Feast Day and commemorating the first anniversary of the Relics' Enshrinement. Relics will be present at the Altar with the opportunity to venerate and touch your sacramentals to them. Refreshments provided at the plaza after Mass.
- ✚ **Every Monday** at 8:15 am – Confession
- ✚ **Every First Thursday** at 4:00 pm – Confession
- ✚ **Every Saturday** at 3:00 pm – Confession, at 6:15 pm Confession, (Spanish)
- ✚ **Every Friday** at 3:00 pm – Hour of Great Mercy: Divine Mercy Chaplet at the reliquary.
- ✚ **Every First Wednesday** of the month at 7:00 pm – Holy Mass.
- ✚ **Every Wednesday** at 7:00 pm – Our Mother of Perpetual Help Novena at the church.

We invite you to attend any or all the events our parish offers and encourage you to bring a friend.

