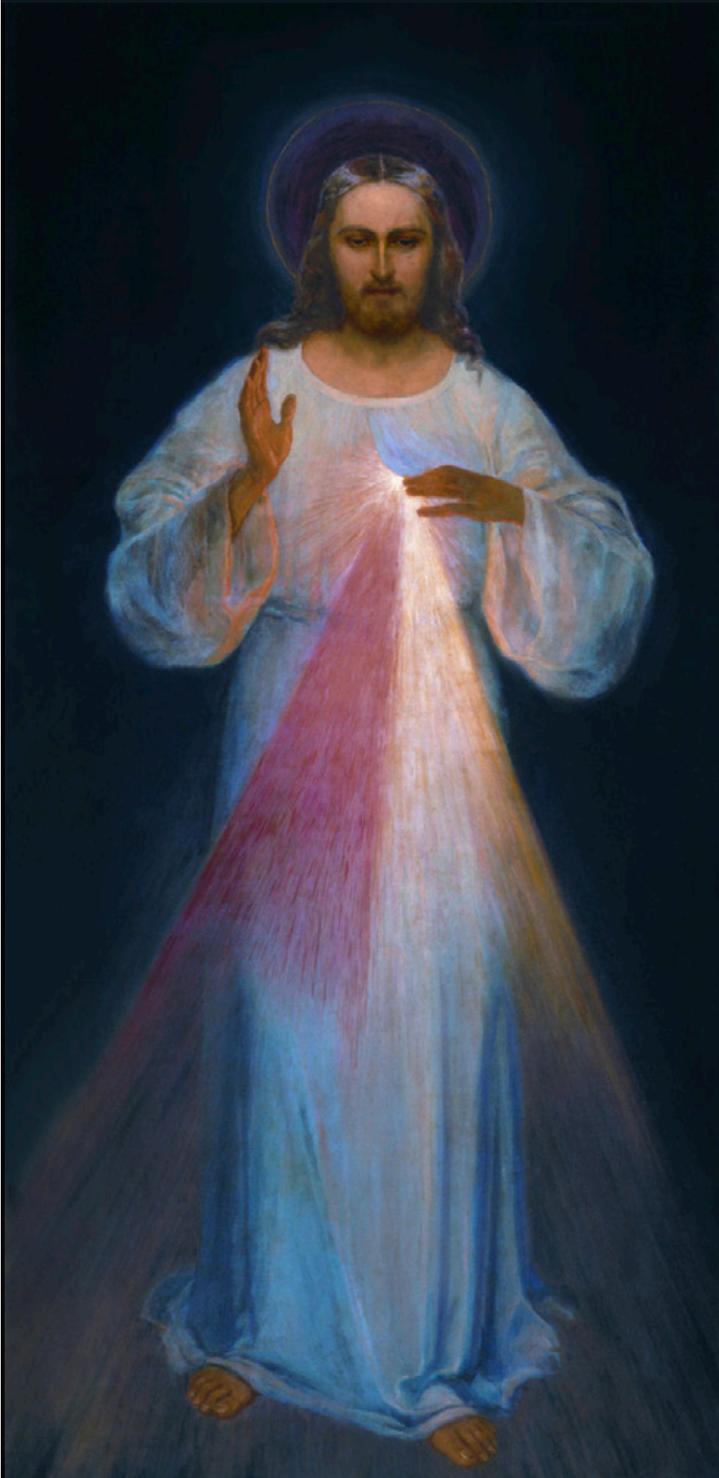




## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

*“Humanity will not find peace until it turns trustfully to Divine Mercy.”*

-Christ to St. Faustina



On the evening of Feb 22, 1931, Christ appeared to St. Faustina a devoted Polish nun of the Sisters of Mercy. She was enthralled with Him, according to her diary, He said, “I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the Fount of My Mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet (*Diary of St. Faustina, 699*).”

Jesus asked St. Faustina to have an image painted of him standing with two rays coming from his chest, with the words, “Jesus, I trust in You” underneath. The rays represented the blood and water that poured out when he was pierced by the lance after his crucifixion. Jesus instructed St. Faustina that this image would be a reminder to all mankind of God’s endless mercy. Jesus said it should also be a reminder to us that we are called to show God’s love and mercy to others as well.

Jesus told St. Faustina to share His message with the world, “I am giving you three ways of exercising mercy toward your neighbor: the first by deed, the second by word, the third by prayer. In these three degrees is contained the fullness of mercy, and it is an unquestionable proof of love for Me (*Diary, p742*).”

It took three years for St. Faustina to get someone to paint the image of Jesus as the Divine Mercy. And almost 70 years for the Sunday after Easter to be

*continue...*

dedicated to the Divine Mercy as Jesus asked. Divine Mercy Sunday added to the Church calendar in 2000 by Saint Pope John Paul II.

The Divine Mercy is one of the most popular devotions in the world. A great reminder that the work God starts with us trusting God even when we do not understand.

On Divine Mercy Sunday, get out your rosary and pray the **Divine Mercy Chaplet** – make it even more special and do it at 3pm - the Hour of Mercy.

Together we pray: JESUS, I TRUST IN YOU!

- Holding your Rosary, make the Sign of the Cross with the Crucifix.
- On the first bead, begin with an optional opening prayer (such as this shortened version of St. Faustina's Prayer for Sinners, Diary p72): God will not deny His mercy to anyone. Heaven and earth may change, but God's mercy will never be exhausted. Oh, what immense joy burns in my heart when I contemplate Your incomprehensible goodness, O Jesus! I desire to bring all sinners to Your feet that they may glorify Your mercy throughout endless ages.
- On the next three beads, pray one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and the Apostles Creed.

- Next, on the large bead, pray: Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.
- On the 10 small beads, pray: For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.
- Repeat steps 4 and 5 for the next four decades of the Chaplet.
- Conclude by repeating three times: Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.
- End with an optional closing prayer: Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion—inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Amen.
- With the Crucifix, make the Sign of the Cross.

For more resources on the Divine Mercy go to: [WWW.THEDIVINEMERCY.ORG](http://WWW.THEDIVINEMERCY.ORG)

## KEEP THE JOY OF EASTER ALIVE FOR THE LITTLE ONES

One of the best parts of little ones in your life - whether they are your own, your grandchildren, the neighborhood kiddos, or the kids at church - is the opportunity to help them grow in faith and love Christ. The win-win is that when we share that love we can grow right along with them, as we all should strive to be lifelong learners.

Shining Light Dolls, a Catholic company FaithInWV has often shared, is a great resource. Check out their website to download free April coloring sheets featuring the saints of the month and the Holy Eucharist. There you will also find info on their free Catholic Saint of the Day app, so you can start your day with the inspiration of the holy souls that set the example for us all. April saint features include St. Casilda of Toledo (April 9), St. Bernadette (April 16), St. Agnes of Montepulciano (April 20), St. George (April 23), and many more.

Find them online at: [SHININGLIGHTDOLLS.COM](http://SHININGLIGHTDOLLS.COM)

*Happy Easter!*



# THE STORY BEHIND THE DIVINE MERCY PAINTING

Did you ever wonder who the artist was who created the image of the Divine Mercy? We know of God's great plan to have called upon and appeared to St. Faustina. We know Christ charged her with the task of finding the artist to bring her vision – His image – to life. That is all most of us know about the painting.

So, here is a little bit about the story behind the Divine Mercy Painting.

It was St. Faustina and her spiritual director Father Michael Sopoćko, who after three years found an artist willing and able to take on the project. Father Sopoćko paid Polish painter Eugeniusz Marcin Kazimirowski to create the original image of The Divine Mercy.

Agreeing to tackle to job, Kazimirowski also agreed to being directed by St. Faustina every step of the way, including starting over several times until the image was exactly like her vision and then adding the words Christ desired – “*Jezu ufam Tobie* (Polish for Jesus, I trust in You)”.

Kazimirowski completed the painting in 1934.

The Church and faithful around the world are grateful to Kazimirowski for bringing us the original painting and ultimately saving souls - for Christ said, “I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over its enemies already

here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I myself will defend it as my own glory.”

The Kazimirowski painting was first exhibited to the public April 26–28 at the Church of the Gate of Dawn in Vilnius, Poland.

In 1937, on the Sunday after Easter (later instituted as Divine Mercy Sunday by Pope John Paul II) the painting was put on display beside the main altar in St. Michael's Church in Vilnius. However, in 1948, the Soviet government closed St. Michael's Church and painting remained hidden until 1951, when a guard was bribed with money and two women were able to take the painting and have it concealed it in an attic for several years until it was presented to a priest for safekeeping. The painting eventually made it to a parish church in Nova Ruda, Belarus, where once again it was displayed and venerated by the local parishioners.

That's not where the sacred image would remain. In 1970, the Soviets closed that church so they could use the building for storage. The painting remained on the wall and secretly parishioners would make their way into the Church to continue silent veneration. In 1986, the original painting was replaced by a copy. The precious original was then carefully transported back to Vilnius, where it was restored. Unfortunately, that significantly changed its appearance. In 2003, the painting was professionally restored to its original look. In 2005, it was moved to its current location, above the main altar in the Sanctuary of Divine Mercy in Vilnius.

Like the faithful who risked much to preserve the original Kazimirowski painting, let us all be just as persistent with finding Christ. May we forever find peace and comfort in the Holy Face of Jesus. Proclaim, “Jesus, I trust in You!” His plan is greater than our own.



# LOUDFENCE “A SIGN OF HOPE” COMING TO THE DIOCESE

By Adam Marquart

On Sunday April 7th, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston will be the first diocese in the United States to host LOUDfence, a campaign of awareness and reconciliation for victims of abuse. Since 2020, Cumbria native Antonia Sobocki has been organizing LOUDfence events across the UK and throughout the world. She began

the movement “to work with churches to actively foster a culture which is pro-safeguarding and truth telling” and “to promote the much-needed Ministry of Survivor Care in the church.” The LOUDfence is a concrete way for the church to invite survivors of abuse to share their own voice with the

voices of support and prayer in the church. When Antonia presented Pope Francis with a ribbon from LOUDfence in September of last year, he expressed it was “a sign of hope” and instructed her to spread it throughout the church.

Saint Gregory the Great once said “It is better that scandals arise than the truth be suppressed.” Glory to Jesus Christ that more of the truth of abuse in the church has been revealed. Undiagnosed diseases become terminal without treatment. There can be no healing where there is no acceptance of pain. To heal, one must confront one’s own wounds. The denial or neglect of the

pain and of the problems causing it does not make any of it go away. When we neglect our wounds and try to run from them, the pain just gets worse. Henri Nouwen wrote “I am convinced that healing is often so difficult because we don’t want to know the pain. Although this is true of all pain, it is especially true of the pain that comes from a broken heart.” The LOUDfence is one way we

as a church can face these wounds and begin to heal.

The ceremony on April 7th will follow the 10:30am mass. Antonia will present Bishop Mark Brennan with a ribbon as she has done with other bishops who have hosted this movement. Outside the church, ribbons



with messages of support, prayer, and awareness will be tied to the gate of the prayer garden. These ribbons are the voices of so many survivors of abuse. They are the voices of support and prayer from the people of God. The LOUDfence coming to the Diocese is a sign that these voices matter to the Church in West Virginia. It is a sign that we desire to listen to these voices so that real dialogue and real reconciliation may begin. If you have been abused or know of any abuse, contact the Safe Environment Office at (304) 233-0880. Please pray for healing of survivors of abuse and for the repentance of their abusers.



**LOUDfence**

A SIGN OF TOGETHERNESS,  
HOPE, AND ACTION

# Plan to attend



## What is LOUDfence?

An international organization that started out of compassion to support faithful Christians who had been abused, as well as the faithful who care and pray for healing, hope, and change.

LOUDfence is a way to bring a hushed and taboo topic into a healthy conversation and act of solidarity as a step forward.



## Ceremony after Mass?

Faithful will tie ribbons to represent prayers, hope, and healing for victims of abuse in Christian churches. Inspired by the gospel, LOUDfence works with churches around the world to actively foster a culture for safeguarding and truth telling. Being a safeguarder is being one to stand at the foot of the cross, helping others to literally live out the values of the gospel.

## Mass & LOUDfence

### Ceremony

**10:30 am, April 7**

### Cathedral

### of St. Joseph, Wheeling

#### Celebrants

**Bishop Mark Brennan  
of the Diocese**

**of Wheeling-Charleston**

**& Bishop Paul Mason of England**

**SOLIDARITY**

**COMPASSION**

**SUPPORT**

# SACRED ART IS INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE EYES OF WV'S CHRISTOPHER SANTER

His art will not only captivate you, but it will also bring you to your knees as your mind wraps around the sacred image that is before you. The longer you peer into the painting the more enthralled you become, noticing more – words, scripture, subtle background images. Christopher Santer's art invites you to grow deeper in faith.

Santer grew up in the Parkersburg area, and his family has been members of St. Margaret Mary Parish for more than 50 years.

Attending Catholic school was a priority for Andrea Santer and the late Dr. Michael Santer, Jr. They sent all four of their children to Parkersburg Catholic schools.

A graduate of the PCHS Class of 1985, Chris Santer was blessed with remarkable artistic ability at an early age.

“I was able to draw what I was looking at fairly accurately even often seeing the linear perspective even when I didn't really understand it,” he said.

It would be a safe bet of his siblings and classmates that Santer would be the likely winner of any poster or art contest just like he was for the annual Mountwood Nature Festival Art Show at Mountwood State Park from third through seventh grade.

When he was a junior in high school, he started realizing that he could make a career out of his love for art. He began working on projects for a college portfolio.

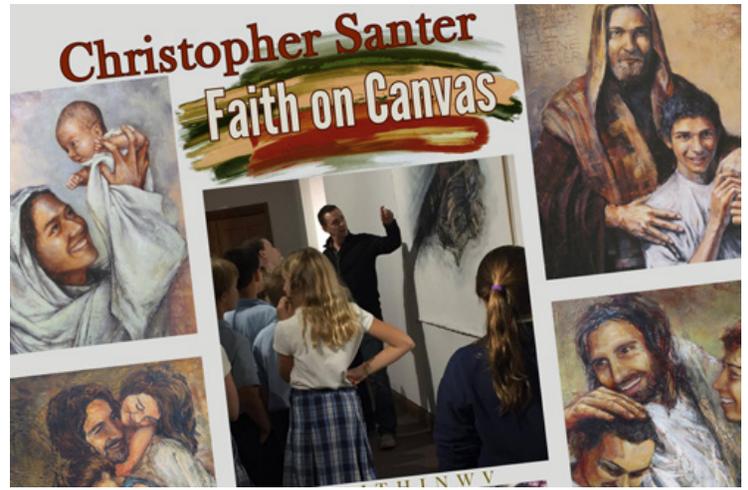


He enrolled at the University of Dayton. Initially he directed his studies toward becoming an illustrator for commercial design. During this third year at the university, he had the opportunity to work full-time at an ad agency. He went ahead and took a semester off to give it a go.

However, the experience “revealed that maybe that was not the area of arts and creativity I really wanted to be in.”

So, Santer made the most of the situation. He continued to work at the agency not only to save money to continue on

at DU, but also to afford him the chance to study in Europe for nearly four months.



Studying abroad “was life-changing, and it really pulled me towards fine arts, having been immersed in the great cultures of Europe, and devouring all the art history, architecture, and beauty found there.”

After graduation, Santer moved to Chicago, working as a freelance artist for two years. When he finally landed the job, he had hoped for at a Chicago design studio that specialized in architectural rendering, something in him was pulling him away. He turned it down.

He chose to head back to school and earn a Master of Fine Arts degree from Ohio University. God was definitely redirecting Santer's steps.

The summer before moving to Chicago began a sort of season of conversion, he said. It was a moment in his life where God was calling him to dive headfirst into his faith.

“That season ends up being a true marker in my life, a before and after point that transformed my path,” he said. “The Lord led me in steps of deeper conversion and trust.”

He felt called to work for the Church through NET Ministries, a Catholic youth missionary organization.

“I thought at that point, it was likely the last transition period in my life where I would be able to give a full year as a missionary (for NET Ministries),” he said.

As God would have it, Santer worked for NET Ministries for four years, culminating in a position for them at their headquarters in Minnesota.

Saint Paul's letter to the Romans (8:28) emphasizes that God has great plans for those who love Him and cooperate with His grace for greater good, so we can grow in faith,

*continue...*

hope, and charity as we go deeper with Him and bring Him to others. Santer witnessed that in his own life and strives toward that daily.

“The desire to serve had been put on my heart,” he said. “My life had been transformed by the grace of God, simply by my turning to the Lord with my whole heart and surrendering my life to Jesus, finally abandoning the thought that I was in control and knew the path of my life. It was in this abandonment that I first learned to truly trust God and to listen. As a result, I wanted to share what God had done in my life with others, and particularly the youth, hoping I could be a part of what led them to such a discovery but maybe sooner than I had gotten there.”

NET Ministries is a great cure from stage fright and fear of public speaking, Santer said with tongue in cheek.

“While serving with NET I had to be upfront either giving a talk, leading a retreat, or performing in some way almost every day for nine months with a new group of teens every day,” he said, adding, “That will have an effect on you!”

In all seriousness the number one gift traveling with NET was “that it solidified my trust in God in a different way. I found myself often arriving at a prayer that I still use to this day, and that is: *‘Dear God, I trust that you are at work here, through me, and I pray only that which is truly from you be remembered.’*”

No matter where the road took him, Santer was never far from his charcoals and paints. His first commissioned art was for Fr. John Lester in 1987. It was a detailed pen drawing of the interior of Saint Francis Xavier’s Catholic Church in Parkersburg.

While the majority of his work in the ‘90s and 2000s would be contemporary art for gallery exhibitions once the faithful laid eyes on his paintings for the Church things began to shift.

In graduate school, Santer served on the building committee at St Margaret Mary for the parish’s addition. He used his education and passion for art to help his home parish.

“It was providential that my graduate work would bring me back closer to Parkersburg and I really enjoyed working with Father Edward Bell on that committee,” he said.

Santer was involved in planning the patterns of the old stained glass into the newer designs. It was also during that time, he would be challenged to create a piece of sacred art that would stir joyful emotions across generations. Father Bill commissioned the 26-year-old Santer to paint Christ with children (1993) for the new cry room.

It was a 3x5 ft painting and parishioners were soon asking for print copies so they could display it in their homes.

That led to Parkersburg Catholic High School’s commissioning of Christ with teenage youth “The Good Shepherd” in (1998).

It was there on those canvases that not only Santer could share his love for Christ and his faith, but through those canvases the faith and hope of others would grow.

In 1999, Santer painted the Magnificat for St. Joseph’s Catholic hospital in Parkersburg, and in 2000 a portrait of St Joseph and Jesus. By then Santer launched [pacemstudio.com](http://pacemstudio.com), a website with prints available of the four aforementioned paintings.

Santer would eventually complete a 10x10 ft painting for St Maron’s Maronite Catholic Church in Minneapolis, a 12-ft painting for the Providence Academy chapel in Plymouth, MN, and a series of saints’ portraits in charcoal for NET by 2006. Two years later, Saint Paul seminary in St. Paul Minnesota had Santer begin work on a larger series of saints which now boasts of more than 100 portraits – all showcased on his website.

His largest work is in WV, a mural painted on the flood wall in Parkersburg, at Point Park measures 400-feet wide and 25- feet high.



If you ask Santer, “Who inspires your art”, he won’t hesitate in saying, “First and foremost it’s the Holy Spirit. I’ve always been able to visualize ideas quite well and I sense the Holy Spirit guiding me as those images come together in my mind.”

His most recent painting, *The Crucifixion*, is 11 feet tall, was without a doubt the doing of the Spirit.

“It’s been on my heart for a few decades to paint the crucifixion, and I was getting closer to starting one on a smaller scale, just for me,” he said, but it came to be after he was approached to tackle it professionally on a grand scale.

“I painted the body of Christ almost exactly as I have seen it in my head for nearly 30 years,” he said. “I ended up handling the background without it being the landscape but rather filling all of the space with rays that emanate from the cross containing 54 of the names of God from scripture. This was a solution to the background that came right around the time that I made the proposal, and it became 100% clear that that’s what I was to do with the painting, to complete the vision that started 30 years ago.”

While the color and layering of Rembrandt and the loose

*continue...*



DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY  
SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

**First Reading: Acts 4:32-35**

Luke tells us that the first Christians were of one heart and mind, sharing their faith and their life.

**Responsorial: Psalm 118**

“Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.”

**Second Reading: 1 John 5:1-6**

Whoever is begotten by God conquers the world.

**Gospel: John 20:19-31**

Eight days later Jesus came and stood in their midst, greeting the disciples – “Peace be with you.” Divine mercy!

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we show God’s mercy to all who need it most, especially those who are doubting God’s presence in their lives, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For an end to violence and abuse of children, so that every soul may enjoy the peace that Jesus offers, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all those who struggle with evil addictions, that Jesus’ redemptive presence heals our broken world, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For the prayers raised in our diocese, the US, and around the world as part of the LOUDfence ceremony this weekend be lovingly received by God for Divine Mercy as we walk together in hope and healing, let us pray to the Lord. . .

*Lord hear our prayer*

WV CATHOLIC RADIO  
BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU

Berkeley Springs - Hancock, MD	FM	96.3
Berkeley Springs	FM	107.9
Clarksburg-Bridgeport	FM	97.5
Dunbar - Charleston	AM	1450
Eastern Panhandle - coming soon	FM	88.5
Grafton - Clarksburg	AM	1190
Montgomery - Beckley	FM	89.7
Purgitsville	FM	98.7
St. Marys - Parkersburg	FM	105.3
Star City -Morgantown	FM	89.7
Summersville	FM	91.3
Wheeling - Martins Ferry, OH	FM	90.7
Weirton - Steubenville	FM	97.9

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*Liturgy of the Hours*  
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

[EBREVIARY.COM](http://EBREVIARY.COM) LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to view a PDF version of the Liturgy of the Hours.



MASS ONLINE

Saturday 6pm Masses will continue to be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and will be available on our website each Sunday at [DWC.ORG](http://DWC.ORG).