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SAINT FAUSTINA KOWALSKA – LONELINESS IN GOD

Święta Faustyna Kowalska – samotność w bogu

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Entry

Although this April it will be over 30 years since beatification and 24 years since canonization, still present interest in the figure of St. Sister Faustina Kowalska from the Congregation of Our Lady of Mercy. She is constantly captivated her simplicity, childlike, limitless trust in God and heroic love. Saint Faustina, through her „Diary”, reveals to everyone the incomprehensible merciful love of God for every person¹. Her life was the life of a person fulfilled in love, and therefore happy despite many physical and spiritual sufferings. She trusted completely in Merciful Love and shaped her entire life in its spirit.

1. Amazing girl

Helena Kowalska was born on August 25, 1905 in the village of Głogowiec², in the Włocławek diocese. Two days later she was baptized in the church in Świnice Warckie. She was the third of ten siblings. The Kowalski family was poor but very religious. The mother raised the children and the father worked hard to support them³. Even as a child, Helenka helped around the house, looked after the younger children, and grazed the cows. She never refused to help anyone and was exceptionally humble⁴. She always listened to her parents and willingly followed all their orders⁵.

From an early age, Helenka experienced extraordinary spiritual experiences. From the very beginning, the girl sensed that God was inviting her to a life different from the one she saw with her parents. In the seventh year of her life, Helenka heard the voice of God in her soul for the first time, inviting her to a more perfect life. It happened in the church, during prayer to the Lord Jesus exposed in the Holy Sacrament. At that moment, God's Love spread to her and filled her little heart⁶. However, no one could explain to her what actually happened and what it meant.

Two years later, in 1914, Helenka made her First Holy Communion. It was a great experience for her and from that moment on she wanted to continue to be with the Lord, she prayed and sang a lot. In 1917, a short period of education began for the girl - she began studying at the school in Świnice Warckie. Although she was a talented and diligent student, she only completed 3 grades.

2. Young years and a strong calling

In 1921, at the age of 16, Helena went to Aleksandrów Łódzki, where she took a job as a housewife and caregiver for the Bryszewskis' son. In this way, she was supposed to help her large family support themselves. After a year, she returned home and told her parents that she intended to join a convent. Her parents did not want to give up their best child and, citing the lack of money for a dowry, they refused to consent. Helena accepted this decision with humil-

¹ E. Czerwińska, *Św. Faustyna Helena Kowalska*, Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal, Warszawa 2013, s. 7.

² K. Bukowski, *Słownik polskich świętych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza IMPULS, Kraków 1995, s. 93.

³ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, Dom Wydawniczy RAFAEL, Kraków 2018, s. 5.

⁴ A. Witko, *Święta Faustyna i Boże Miłosierdzie*, Wyd. AA, Kraków 2016, s. 37.

⁵ E. Czerwińska, *Św. Faustyna Helena Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 17-18.

⁶ W. Kluz OCD, *Sekretarka Miłosierdzia Bożego*, Wyd.. Księgarnia św. Jacka, Katowice 1997, s. 11.

ity and obedience and after a short stay in her hometown of Głogowiec, she left for Łódź. There she lived with her uncle Michał Rapacki and worked for three Franciscan tertiaries. From February 1923, she helped run the house of Marcjanna Sadowska.

In the summer of 1924, an event took place that completely changed Helena's life. Together with her sisters, she went to a dance in the „Wenecja” park in Łódź. She wrote in her diary: „The moment I started dancing, I suddenly saw Jesus next to me. Jesus, martyred, stripped of his garments, covered with wounds, who spoke these words to me: How long will I suffer you, and how long will you deceive me?” (Diary 9). At this point, Helena stopped dancing and stopped hearing the music and the people around her. This meeting caused the cheerful, active girl to „drown forever” in God⁷. Helena quickly left the party and went to the nearest church, the Cathedral of St. Stanisław Kostka. There she fell prostrate before the Blessed Sacrament and asked the Lord to tell her what to do next. In response, she heard: „Go immediately to Warsaw, there you will enter a monastery” (Diary 10). The girl, obedient to Jesus, gave all her things to the sisters and set off for Warsaw in one dress.

After arriving in the Capital, lost and full of anxiety, she turned to Our Lady for help. She immediately heard words in her soul to go outside the city to a certain village where she would find a safe place to stay. So she did and found shelter. The next day, Helena returned to the capital, where in one of the churches she prayed for the revelation of God's will. She heard a voice telling her to go to a certain priest from whom she would receive the help she needed⁸. The girl did exactly that. The surprised parish priest of St. James in Warsaw, Fr. Jakub Dąbrowski gave her the address of his pious friends, Aldona and Samuel Lipszyc, living in Ostrówek, in the Klembów commune, who needed help with children. Having a roof over her head allowed her to continue searching for God's will. She went to various monasteries, asking to be accepted, but unfortunately, due to the lack of a dowry, she was refused everywhere. Finally, Helena Kowalska stood in front of the door of the house of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy at street Żytnia. The superior of the Warsaw house, mother Michaela Moraczewska, seeing her neglected appearance, initially intended to send her away, but she thought that love of neighbor required giving her a chance and talking to her at least for a moment. During the conversation, she saw something in Helena that intrigued her⁹.

3. Consecrated life

The obstacle to Helena's immediate entry into the convent was her poverty and lack of dowry. Her superior advised her to stay on duty and earn a modest allowance, and during this time she would become even more sure of her vocation. The girl worked obediently throughout the next year as a maid for Aldona Lipszycowa. In June 1925, on the octave of Corpus Christi, she took a vow of eternal chastity¹⁰.

On August 1, 1925, on the eve of the feast of Our Lady of the Angels, the long-awaited moment came and Helena Kowalska again reported to the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy at street Żytnia in Warsaw. This time it was accepted¹¹. In her „Diary” the girl wrote: „I felt extremely happy. It seemed to me that I had entered the life of paradise. One prayer of thanksgiving arose from my heart” (Diary 17)¹².

Three weeks later, Helena, seeing that there was little time for prayer in this monastery, decided to join another order with more strict rules. In the evening, when she was praying in

⁷ L. Grygiel, *Święta Siostra Faustyna. Posłanniczka Bożego Miłosierdzia*, Wyd. Jedność, Kielce 2008, s. 23-24.

⁸ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 7.

⁹ *Ibidem*, s. 9.

¹⁰ L. Grygiel, *Święta Siostra Faustyna. Posłanniczka Bożego Miłosierdzia*, op. cit., s. 25.

¹¹ Z. Bauer, A. Leszkiewicz, *Wielka księga świętych*, Wyd. PINNEX, Kraków 2003, s. 202.

¹² M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 9.

her cell, she saw the tortured face of the Lord Jesus who said: „You will cause me such pain if you leave this Order. I have called you here and nowhere else, and I have prepared many graces for you” (Diary 19)¹³. The girl immediately apologized to Jesus and changed her decision.

The quite strict fasts, spiritual experiences and hard, often excessive work practiced at home and on duty must have had an impact on Helena Kowalska's health. The superior sent the postulant and two sisters to Skolimów near Warsaw to improve her health¹⁴. In Skolimów, Helena asked the Lord Jesus for whom she should pray. The answer to her question was a vision of the Guardian Angel who led her to purgatory. She saw a place that was foggy and full of fire. There were many suffering souls there. They prayed, but it brought them no relief or help. Helena asked these souls what their greatest suffering was and the answer was the longing for God¹⁵. From then on, Helena prayed more often and more fervently for the souls in purgatory, to relieve their suffering as much as possible.

From Skolimów, Helena Kowalska returned to Warsaw, where she completed her postulancy. The then mistress of the postulancy, Mrs. Janina Olga Bartkiewicz, who led the postulants with a strong hand, always said about Helenka that she had her own special inner life and must be a soul pleasing to the Lord Jesus. In turn, sister Szymona Nalewajk, who was with her in postulancy, admired her for accepting all comments and humiliations with humility, without discussion. These character traits were provided by her living faith and the great need to become like Jesus who trusted the Heavenly Father, even on the cross.

Helena spent the last months of her postulancy in the novitiate house in Kraków, where she arrived on January 23, 1926. The novice mistress at that time was Mother Małgorzata Gimbutt, a prayerful person, zealously practicing mortification, quiet and humble, who raised the young sisters entrusted to her primarily by the example of her life. It was she who prepared Helenka for the so-called investiture and guided her in the first months of the novitiate¹⁶.

The monastic robes wearing ceremony took place on Friday, April 30, 1926. During the ceremony, Helena fainted twice. Sister Klemensa Buczek, who helped her put on a nun's robe, was convinced that these fainting spells were the result of experiences related to leaving the world. However, the reason for Helena's fainting was something else. For a brief moment, she experienced the suffering that would affect her in the future. She then understood what she was taking on by joining the convent. As she later wrote in her „Diary”: „At the moment of putting on the robe, God let me know how much I would suffer. I saw clearly what I was committing myself to. It was one minute of suffering. God has again flooded my soul with great consolations” (Diary 22)¹⁷. Helena received the name Maria Faustina and later chose the predicate „from the Blessed Sacrament”. From then on, all her notes and notes were signed by Sister Maria Faustina of the Blessed Sacrament.

4. Dark nights and visions

At the end of the first year of novitiate, darkness came to the young nun's soul. She later wrote in her „Diary”: „I feel no comfort in prayer, meditation comes with great effort, fear begins to overwhelm me. I go deeper into myself and see nothing but great misery. I also see clearly the great holiness of God, I dare not lift my eyes to Him, but I throw myself into the dust at His feet and beg for mercy. Whatever I read, I do not understand, I cannot think. It

¹³ E. Czerwińska, *Św. Faustyna Helena Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 49.

¹⁴ E. K. Czaczkowska, *Siostra Faustyna. Biografia Świętej*, Wyd. Znak, Kraków 2012, s. 113-114.

¹⁵ E. Czerwińska, *Św. Faustyna Helena Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 51.

¹⁶ <https://www.faustyna.pl/zmbm/biografia/?wide=true#more-1149> (online access: 25.01.2024 r.).

¹⁷ E. Czerwińska, *Św. Faustyna Helena Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 56-57.

seems to me that my prayer is unpleasant to God” (Diary 23)¹⁸. Faustina's condition lasted for about a year and a half, causing her great suffering. Previously, she had experienced the constant closeness of Christ, but now she suddenly lost it, it seemed to her that he had abandoned her. At the same time, she was aware of her own powerlessness and inability to change this state. She was afraid to receive Holy Communion, but obedient to her confessor, she did not miss even one. Her torment was not only spiritual, but also physical. Faustina was losing strength and the traces of suffering were clearly visible on her face¹⁹.

In these dark nights of the spirit, there were moments of light and joy when God made her feel His love or when Our Lady herself consoled her with the words: „I know how much you suffer, but do not be afraid, I sympathize with you and I will always sympathize with you” (Diary 25). These words gave Faustina great strength and courage. The ceremony of taking the first monastic vows, presided over by Bishop Stanisław Rospond on April 30, 1928, was also a day of extraordinary joy. Sister Faustina's parents also came to the monastery in Łagiewniki²⁰. It was their first meeting in several years. They found their daughter happy and joyful, which convinced them, and from then on they accepted her life in the monastery.

In Krakow, Sister Faustina experienced many apparitions of the Lord Jesus. In the chapel in Kraków-Łagiewniki she experienced experiences with the Holy Trinity five times. She saw Baby Jesus six times, in January 1928, during Holy Mass, she even took Him in her arms, and He said: „I feel good with your heart” (Diary 1481). The young nun also met souls in purgatory. Satan also came to her and tried to deceive her soul, but the sign of the cross immediately drove him away. Sister Faustina's calm, self-control and balance infuriated him²¹. Her visions were sometimes shocking, like the vision of hell and heaven, about which she wrote: „One day I saw two roads: one wide road, strewn with sand and flowers, full of joy and music and various pleasures. People walked along this road, dancing and having fun - they reached the end without realizing that it was over. But at the end of this road there was a terrible abyss, that is, the abyss of hell. These souls fell blindly into this abyss; as they went, they fell. And there were so many of them that it was impossible to count them. And I saw another road, or rather a path, because it was narrow and covered with thorns and stones, and the people who were walking along it had tears in their eyes and suffered various pains. Some fell on these stones, but immediately got up and moved on. And finally there was a beautiful garden, filled with all kinds of happiness, and all these souls entered there. They immediately forgot about their sufferings” (Diary 153)²².

Faustina had spiritual contact with many people, even though she was in her cell at that time. She saw praying her future spiritual director, Father Józef Andrasz. She noticed the efforts of Fr. Michał Sopoćko and the suffering he endured because of his concern for the work that God entrusted to her. Thanks to the gift of bilocation, she was present with a dying person in her hometown. She supported her with prayer and suffering in her transition from earth to eternity²³.

After her temporary vows, Sister Faustina left Kraków, where she returned after 5 years. During these 5 years, working in various congregations, she continued her religious formation in the spirit of obedience and humility. On February 22, 1931, in the monastery in Płock, Sister Faustina experienced another extraordinary vision. In her „Diary” she wrote: „I saw the

¹⁸ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 12.

¹⁹ E. Czerwińska, *Św. Faustyna Helena Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 66-67.

²⁰ W. Kluz OCD, *Sekretarka Miłosierdzia Bożego*, op. cit., s. 23.

²¹ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 12-15.

²² <https://teologiapolityczna.pl/sw-faustyna-fragmenty-o-piekle> (online access: 15.01.2024 r.).

²³ M. E. Siepak, *Śladami objawień św. Siostry Faustyny Kowalskiej w Sanktuarium Bożego Miłosierdzia w Krakowie – Łagiewnikach*, Wyd. Misericordia, Kraków 2015, s. 58-59.

Lord Jesus dressed in a white robe. One hand was raised in blessing and the other touched the robe on the chest. Two great rays emerged from the opening of the robe on the chest, one red and the other pale. I looked at the Lord in silence, my soul was filled with fear, but also with great joy. After a while, Jesus told me: Paint a picture according to the drawing you see, with the caption: Jesus, I trust in You. I want this image to be venerated first in your chapel and throughout the world” (Diary 47). Creating the image of Merciful Jesus is the first specific task of Apostle of Divine Mercy. It is intended to be not only an „illustration” of the mystical experiences of the Polish nun, but also a material sign reminding people of God's mercy. The Lord Jesus gave her detailed instructions regarding the image he ordered her to paint. He explained that the two rays coming from His heart signify blood and water: the pale ray symbolizes the water that justifies souls; red and blood, which is the life of souls²⁴. Jesus' wish was for the words to also be included in the painting: „Jesus, I trust in You”. Their task is to remind people of the essence of God's mercy and the hope that flows from it. According to Christ's words, the image is a „vessel” through which people can draw graces from the „source of mercy”, therefore it must be painted.

5. In Vilnius

On May 1, 1933, Sister Faustina's perpetual vows ceremony took place. It was chaired by Bishop Stanisław Rospond. In a fervent prayer, the young nun commended to Jesus the entire Holy Church, her Congregation, her family, all sinners, the dying and the souls suffering in purgatory. She gave thanks for the incomprehensible dignity of the bride of the Son of God and asked Our Lady for special protection. As a sign of perpetual wedding, she accepted a wedding ring with the name engraved: Jesus, from the hands of the Bishop²⁵. From that moment on, her relationship with God was as strong as never earlier.

Initially, the superior wanted to keep Faustina in Krakow, but eventually she sent her to a facility in Vilnius, from where a request for a gardener came. In Vilnius, Sister Faustina took care of the garden. She was waiting for the promised priest who would help her realize God's will related to painting the image of Merciful Jesus. When the week of confession came, Faustina saw the priest whom she had known from her visions before she came to Vilnius. This priest was Fr. Michał Sopoćko, who later saw Faustina's uniqueness, ordered her to write down her visions and experiences, thanks to which the world-famous „Diary” was created. The priest, wanting to help Sister Faustina, asked the Vilnius painter Eugeniusz Kazimirowski to paint a picture of Merciful Christ.

When, after a few months, the painting was completed and the visionary saw it, she burst into tears. Devastated, after returning to the monastery chapel, she complained to the Lord Jesus: „Who will paint you as beautiful as you are?” (Diary 313). In response, she heard: „The greatness of this painting is not in the beauty of the paint or the brush, but in my mercy” (Diary 313)²⁶. Then Faustina calmed down and decided that it should stay that way.

After completing the painting works, Fr. Sopoćko hung the painting in a dark corridor of the Bernardine nuns' monastery next to the church of St. Michał. He could not hang it in the church without the Archbishop's permission because the painting had new content. Sister Faustina did not like this. In April 1935, she gave Fr. Sopoćko's wish of the Lord Jesus to display the image for public veneration in the Gate of Dawn during the solemn triduum at the end of the Jubilee of the Redemption of the World. This wish was fulfilled and on April 26-28, the image of Merciful Jesus was placed in the window of the Ostra Gate gallery. Father Sopoćko then delivered a homily about God's mercy. During this sermon, Sister Faustina saw

²⁴ E. K. Czaczkowska, *Siostra Faustyna. Biografia Świętej*, op. cit., s. 221.

²⁵ <https://www.faustyna.bydgoszcz.pl/swieta-siostra-faustyna-kowalska> (online access: 20.01.2024 r.).

²⁶ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 20.

how Jesus took on a living form in the painting, and His rays penetrated the hearts of the people gathered at this ceremony²⁷.

6. New tasks

The joy of having Jesus' wishes fulfilled did not last long. Already in May 1935, Sister Faustina intuitively sensed that new tasks awaited her, which she was very afraid of. The day came when she heard the Lord's words in her soul: „You will prepare the world for My final coming” (Diary 429)²⁸. These words touched her deeply, but at first she kept them to herself.

The Lord Jesus, appearing to Sister Faustina, ordered her to found a new congregation and gave her „vessels” with which we can draw God's mercy. Forms of worship that derive directly from the message given to Saint. Sister Faustina through the Lord Jesus, are: an image of Merciful Jesus with the inscription „Jesus, I trust in You”, the Feast of Divine Mercy, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, the Hour of Mercy, and spreading the worship of Mercy.

On June 9, 1935, on the feast of Pentecost, in the evening in the garden, Lord Jesus gave Sister Faustina another task, which was to found a new congregation. He said: „You and your companions will beg for mercy for yourself and the world” (Diary 435). Sister Faustina, frightened, tried to dissuade Lord Jesus from this idea, enumerating her weaknesses that make her unable to accomplish this work.

Regardless of this, Jesus gave her courage and assured her that: „I myself will replenish everything that you lack” (Diary 435). However, Sister Faustina was not sure whether she understood Jesus' words correctly. Only during the conversation with the soul's guidance, Fr. Michał Sopoćka, revealed that God demands that she establish a congregation that will proclaim God's mercy to the world and implore it for the world. Jesus confirmed his will several times, and during the Holy Mass after Communion she received the blessing of the entire Holy Trinity for this work. It was such a great strengthening for her that she agreed to fulfill God's will²⁹.

The Lord Jesus wished that the Feast of Divine Mercy will be celebrated in the Church throughout the world. He indicated the exact date of this holiday - the week after Easter. It was also Jesus' will that the holiday be preceded by a novena starting on Good Friday and consisting of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Jesus tied the promise to grant souls all graces to this holiday. He also promised to grant complete forgiveness of sins and punishments. He himself called this holiday „the last resort for souls”, saying: „I am giving them the last resort, this is the feast of My Mercy. If they do not glorify My mercy, they will perish forever” (Diary 965). This „lifeline” is not the Feast of Mercy itself, but turning with trust to God's Mercy, receiving the sacrament of penance, receiving Holy Communion and caring for an attitude of trust in God and mercy towards others. On March 23, 1993, Polish bishops sent a request to the Holy Father John Paul II to establish the Feast of Mercy. In response to this request, on January 23, 1995, Cardinal Antonio Javierre signed the decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, in which the Holy See allowed the celebration of the Feast of Divine Mercy throughout Poland on the second Sunday of Easter³⁰.

The Lord Jesus first taught his secretary the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and then ordered her to recite it for 10 days on an ordinary part of the rosary prayer in the following way: first the Our Father, the Hail Mary and I believe in God, then the formula on large beads: „Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and the Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world”; and on small beads the words: „For His painful Passion, have mercy on us and the whole world”; finally, at

²⁷ E. Czerwińska, *Św. Faustyna Helena Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 119-120.

²⁸ <https://www.faustyna.bydgoszcz.pl/swieta-siostra-faustyna-kowalska> (online access: 20.01.2024 r.).

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 33-35.

the end, three times: „Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world”. Together with this prayer, the Lord Jesus gave Sister Faustina promises related to this prayer, which concern the grace of a happy and peaceful death and all graces. The Son of God promised: „By reciting this chaplet, it pleases me to give everything they ask me for” (Diary 1541). The Chaplet of Divine Mercy is particularly pleasing to Jesus because those who pray with it unite themselves with His sacrifice on the cross.

Another vessel from which you can draw the graces of Divine Mercy is the Hour of Mercy, which is the celebration of the death of the Lord Jesus at 3 p.m. The Lord Jesus in revelation told her to meditate on His passion at the hour of His death. Four months later, he recalled his request and instructed us to implore God's mercy for the world and sinners at the Hour of Mercy. In return, Jesus promised graces and temporal gifts. The conditions for practicing the Hour of Mercy are to begin a prayer addressed to Christ, in which one reflects on His suffering, loneliness and abandonment in agony. This can be done by celebrating the Stations of the Cross, during adoration of the Blessed Sacrament or by saying a short prayer in the place where 3:00 p.m. will find us³¹.

The last formula for celebrating God's mercy, which the Lord Jesus spoke to Sister Faustina, is to spread the cult of Divine Mercy. Throughout the entire „Diary”, Jesus' request to proclaim His mercy to the world runs through like a refrain. The Savior told Sister Faustina that God had promised her and all those who would proclaim His mercy great graces. He also promised that: „Souls who spread the honor of My mercy, I will protect them throughout their lives, as a tender mother protects her infant, and at the hour of death I will not be their Judge, but a merciful Savior” (Diary 1075). Jesus promised special graces to priests who would teach the faithful about God's mercy for man³².

7. To the House of the Merciful Father

On March 25, 1936, Sister Faustina arrived in Walendów near Warsaw. She was there for a very short time and from there she quickly went to Derdy, finally arriving in Krakow on May 11. The Apostle of Divine Mercy was increasingly deteriorating. The doctors diagnosed her with tuberculosis. Her progressive illness meant that Sister Faustina was transferred to work at the gate, where with great love she welcomed the poor who came to the monastery every day for a meal³³.

On April 21, 1938, Sister Faustina was hospitalized in Prądnik for the second time. At the end of August, she was in such a bad condition that her sisters asked the priest to administer the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. On September 22, Sister Faustina was placed in the monastery infirmary under the so-called number one. Sisters were placed there waiting to go to the Heavenly Father's house. Sensing her imminent death, she said goodbye to this world and her sisters. When he came to say goodbye to her, Fr. Michał Sopoćko, said that she had already given him everything and now she only wanted to be with the Lord.

On October 5, 1938, in the convent of the congregation in Kraków-Łagiewniki, Sister Faustina said to her fellow sisters: „Today the Lord Jesus will take me away”³⁴. She asked for a priest and confessed. In the spirit of mortification, she gave up the means to relieve suffering. At 10:45 p.m. Sister Faustina left for the Heavenly Father's house with a smile on her face. On October 7, after two funeral Masses and the last farewell, the coffin with the body was placed in the congregation's tomb in the monastery cemetery³⁵.

³¹ *Ibidem*, s. 37.

³² *Ibidem*, s. 38.

³³ *Ibidem*, s. 42.

³⁴ A. Witko, *Święta Faustyna i Boże Miłosierdzie*, op. cit., s. 91-92.

³⁵ S. Obirek SJ, *Ludzkie oblicze nowej Świętej*, Wyd. WAM, Kraków 2000, s. 113.

The memory of Sister Faustina continued uninterrupted. This is evidenced by the crowds of pilgrims who came to the grave of the Secretary of Divine Mercy already during World War II. The cult of Sister Faustina and the Merciful Lord Jesus intensified even more after the beginning of her information process regarding beatification in the Archdiocese of Kraków and after the transfer of her mortal remains to the monastery chapel, which took place, on November 25, 1966. After recognition, they were placed under the floor of the sisters' chapel³⁶. In 1968, the beatification process began in Rome.

On March 7, 1992, John Paul II issued a decree on the heroic virtues of Faustina Kowalska, and on December 21, 1992, he issued a decree on a miracle through her intercession, which was experienced by an American - Maureen Cahill Digan. Sister Faustina's coffin was reopened, her remains were recognised, and they were placed in the side altar of the sisters' chapel under the famous image of the Merciful Lord Jesus³⁷.

On April 18, 1993, on the Feast of Mercy, the Holy Father John Paul II announced Sister Faustina blessed. During the homily in St. Peter's Square in Rome, the Pope emphasized that Her mission does not end with death, but will only begin, will last and bring amazing fruits. 7 years later, on April 30, 2000, the Holy Father John Paul II included Sister Faustina among the saints of the Catholic Church. The canonization ceremony took place on the Feast of Divine Mercy, in St. Peter's Square in Rome³⁸. During this ceremony, the Holy Father John Paul II established the Feast of Mercy for the entire Church.

Conclusion

There is certainly no country in the world today where the image of Merciful Jesus has not reached. The Feast of Divine Mercy is also known all over the world and celebrated by crowds of believers. The Chaplet of Divine Mercy is recited even in African dialects, and the prayer at the moment of Jesus' agony on the cross, called the Hour of Mercy, is becoming more and more popular. Initiated by the Sister Faustina, the Divine Mercy Movement, includes various congregations, associations, brotherhoods, apostolates as well as ordinary people who have decided to continue her mission. This movement brings the message of Mercy to the world through good deeds and prayer. All this thanks to a modest, humble, and essentially lonely girl with a huge heart, full of trust and love for the Lord Jesus.

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³⁶ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 44.

³⁷ M. Pabis, *Święta Faustyna Kowalska*, op. cit., s. 46.

³⁸ <https://www.faustyna.bydgoszcz.pl/swieta-siostra-faustyna-kowalska> (online access: 20.01.2024 r.).

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