



Rejoice!

Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Newsletter

Spring 2023



Dear Family and Friends,

"Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence..." (1Peter 3:15)

Often, we hear the familiar hymn sung at funerals, although we may not know it was inspired by Job in the Old Testament. A God fearing man, Job was afflicted with every possible suffering, yet trusted in God's goodness and fidelity. His friends questioned his hope, and Job responded...

"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last, he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God." (Job 19:25)

Yes, we believe, we know, we sing with conviction and certainty, that Our Redeemer lives. Like Job we see beyond our present sorrows and difficulties and know that we are made for Eternal Life, called to share in the very life of God. The theological virtue of hope engenders this trust and confidence in God, giving us a holy zeal to live for Him and to build up His Kingdom.

With summer looming and another school year rushing to its conclusion, the Sisters and I are looking forward to our summer retreat, summer fun, and summer evening walks around our property. Yet this summer will be wonderful for one more extraordinary reason. This summer the perpetually professed Sisters will meet to discuss various communal affairs, and to elect a new General Superior who will lead our community for the next 6 years.

Joy and excitement abound. We have multiple applications out to young women desiring to enter our Community next August. Also, next school year, 20 IHM Sisters will be teaching in the classrooms. Others will be teaching and giving spiritual direction at our House of Formation.

The Sisters and I are already discussing next school year, and I am most happy to be returning to the classroom filled with the hope and joy that Christ has won for us and calls us to proclaim to the ends of the earth.

In the Heart of Our Mother,

Mother Mary Magdalene, IHM

Mother Mary Magdalene O'Halloran, IHM
General Superior



Our Eucharistic Life

In conjunction with the National Eucharistic Revival, the Sisters encourage you to grow in your Eucharistic Life. Follows is a description of their own.



Every time the Sisters pray together, that prayer begins with the Superior beginning an aspiration “May the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus be everywhere praised and glorified,” to which the Sisters respond, “and may the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary obtain for us an increase of love for the Blessed Sacrament.” This aspiration, both Eucharistic and Marian, is a summary of the spirituality of the IHM Sisters.

The Eucharist is the “source and summit” of the Church’s life and mission, and is at the heart of each Sister’s life. The graces that come from living this Eucharistic spirituality affect every part of an IHM Sister’s life: faithfully fulfilling her vows, working in the apostolate, and living community life.

This Eucharistic spirituality is lived out by daily attending Mass and receiving Holy Communion, making a daily Eucharistic Holy Hour, and making frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

The Sisters’ devotion to and promotion of the Fatima message has become quite well-known, most especially for Our Lady’s revelation of and the spread of devotion to her Immaculate Heart and for the emphasis on praying for the conversion of sinners, which was one of the reasons the Sisters were founded by Fr. Joaquin Masmitja in 1848. However,

that is not the only similarity between the message of Fatima and the charism of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



The 1917 apparitions of Our Lady to the three shepherd children were preceded by visits from the Angel of Portugal in 1916. During these visits, the Angel was preparing them for Our Lady’s visits by introducing them to a more intense prayer life and to a greater devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Not only did the Angel bring them Holy Communion but he also taught them the Prayer of Reparation to the Blessed Sacrament, which the Sisters pray daily:

Our Eucharistic Life

*My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love
You. I ask forgiveness for those who do not
believe, nor adore, nor hope, nor love You.
Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy
Spirit, I adore You profoundly, and
I offer You the Most precious Body, Blood,
Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ present
in all the tabernacles of the world, in
reparation for the outrages, sacrileges, and
indifferences by which He is offended, and by
the infinite merits of his Most Sacred Heart
and through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
I beg the conversion of poor sinners. Amen.*

Eucharistic reparation takes place when one tries to repair the damage done by sins against the Eucharist, particularly outrages (acts of blasphemy and dishonor), sacrileges (failing to give proper honor to the Eucharist, such as receiving Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin), and indifferences (when the faithful fail to show proper respect or care towards Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament).

Two sentences from the Constitutions (the rule of life) of the IHM Sisters are applicable to not only religious sisters, but could be a source of inspiration to all Catholics: “By daily uniting themselves with Christ the Sisters seek with Him to honor the Father and to strengthen their bond of unity with Him and with one another;” and “They should daily seek refreshment and strength by receiving their Eucharistic Lord in Holy Communion so that they may walk with Him in fidelity to all He commands.” Jesus present in the Eucharist is the Master of our House, our strength, our source of unity, our nourishment, our Love, and our Life. Upon Him and our union with Him all depends.

The Church’s teaching on the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is of utmost importance because true devotion flows from true doctrine. Knowing the teaching, however, isn’t the same as living the Eucharistic Life. Living a Eucharistic life is more than a duty or a series of devotions to accomplish daily—it is a dynamic relationship with a Person, Jesus Christ. Because it is a relationship, it can constantly grow and deepen. Living a Eucharistic Life is living a life permeated with the Presence of Jesus, a life in relationship with Him. The Eucharist is a Person, the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ, to Whom we have given our life and our everything.



General Chapters are an Ecclesial Event

This summer will mark another historical event for the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We will be celebrating our Fifth General Chapter.



General Chapters have a long history in religious life, sanctioned by the Magisterium of the Church. The Chapter's beginning, in the earliest ages of religious life as we now know it, i.e., was in the fourth century. By the sixth century with the flourishing of religious life under St. Benedict and his famous Rule, the Chapter was held on a daily basis during which the Superior read and explained a section of the Rule; thus it was primarily for the on-going formation of the monks. Eventually these meetings, still retaining the formative aspect, included consultation between the Superior and the monks, discussions regarding the present and future needs of the community, and had a prominent presence of liturgical prayer.

General Chapters are an Ecclesial Event

Because of its prayerful context and its effective means of consultation, the Chapter became an important event in the development of practices in religious life.

While chapters were still a daily or weekly event in many religious institutes, by 1215, the General Chapter – no longer merely the reading of a portion of the Rule and an exhortation by the superior – had become a meeting of a representative body of members as a decision-making assembly in which the members would contribute, discuss, and decide on the laws and direction of the community. At this point in history, the Church mandated that General Chapters be a part of the governmental structure of religious institutes.

A key player in this development was St. Dominic. The newly founded religious order, the Order of Preachers, i.e., the Dominicans, found the Chapter to be a great assist as they determined their interior governmental structures and their way of life as itinerant preachers. Dominic, aware of the Holy Spirit's presence and action amongst his brethren, encouraged the members to participate fully in the proceedings of the Chapter.

Because religious life is essential to the life and holiness of the Church, the General Chapter, whose aim is to reinvigorate and promote the holiness of the members and their apostolic work for the salvation of souls, is not just a business meeting or a prayer meeting of the individual communities, but an ecclesial event, affecting the entire Church. To be such an event, it must be surrounded by prayer, properly planned and prepared, and celebrated with thoughtful and conscientious participation.

The law of the Church, the Code of Canon Law, describes the work of the Chapter to be

- The protection and preservation of the religious community's spiritual inheritance from the founding gift of their founder/foundress
- The promotion of any legitimate renewal needed to maintain and grow that gift which is known as the charism of the institute
- The treatment of matters of importance that effect the entire institute
- The enactment of legislation that promotes these purposes
- The election of the general administration (i.e., the institutional governance) of the religious community

This description conveys the reality that the General Chapter is not a response to problems; it is not convened to prevent an eminent disaster! It is a normal, scheduled convocation, ensuring the life and authentic development of the community according to our time-tested, ecclesiastically approved spirituality, life, charism, and apostolic work which is a share in the Church's mission; in a word, to ensure the life and authentic growth of our charism in all of its expressions.

This is another expression of the reality of the General Chapter

being an ecclesial event, not just one concerned with the individual religious community. The founding charism of our community was given by the Holy Spirit to the entire Church, entrusted to us! Therefore, it is not ours to manipulate, change or eradicate, but, being entrusted to us, we must, as its guardians, ensure its continued growth, health and authentic application to the needs of the Church today. The healthy, organic preservation and growth of our IHM charism will benefit not only us the members, but also the entire Church!

The same Holy Spirit who bestowed upon our founder and foundresses the charism of our community, continues to bestow that charism and to work in and through the individual members of the community. The topics brought to discussion are submitted by the professed members of the Community; through them, the Holy Spirit brings to light that which would be advantageous to discuss and consider for the good of the community.

As mentioned above, it is also the responsibility of the General Chapter to elect the general administration of the religious community. According to our own rule of life, the length of terms is six years. The General Superior can serve two terms in sequence. After two terms, a total of 12 years, she is not eligible for re-election. Consequently, according to our rule, we will be electing a new General Superior this summer. Following that election, we will then proceed to elect the remaining members of our administration: the Vicar General, the remaining members of her General Council (two more Sisters), the General Treasurer, and the General Secretary.

As we prepare for the next "chapter" in the life of our religious institute, we ask your continued prayers that we, the individual members of the Chapter, be able to see clearly what the Lord is asking of us and how He is directing us so that we fulfill His holy will, for the increased good of the Church, our community, and each individual Sister. Assured as we are of your interest and prayers, we thank you ahead of time!

*Please pray for the Sisters as they prepare for
and celebrate their Fifth General Chapter.*

*Perhaps you could offer for us the Third
Glorious Mystery: the Descent of the Holy
Spirit, and a Memorare to the Immaculate
Heart of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit?*

IHM Celebrates 25 Years in Hutchinson

On March 19, 1997, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary made a decision. In 1997 the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary had been in the Diocese of Wichita for almost 21 years. In that time the number of Sisters had grown from three – our foundresses from the California Institute of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary: Mother M. Joanne Brummel, Sister M. Eileen MacDonald, and Sister M. Giovanni – to 13 Sisters, from one teaching Sister to seven. Since the year of our arrival, we had been teaching exclusively at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School and living on the campus. We became known as the “Carroll Sisters”.



From left to right: Sister Marie Therese, Sister Mary Dolores, Sister Mary Clare, Sister Veronica Marie, Sister Mary Agnes, Sister Mary Faustina, Sister Mary Catherine, Sister Mary Margaret, Mother Mary Magdalene, Sister Joseph Mary, Sister Cecilia Marie, Sister Mary Ann, Sister Maria Jacinta, Sister Marie Bernadette, Sister Mary Grace, Sister Mary Elizabeth, and Sister Mary Guadalupe

In 1997, Sister M. Giovanni was our General Superior and still teaching part time at BC (at the age of 83!) After God, Our Lady and her community, she loved teaching more than anything else! Bishop Eugene Gerber would ask her on a yearly basis, to consider sending Sisters to Hutchinson to teach at Trinity Catholic Jr/Sr High School and, perhaps in the elementary schools, St. Teresa and Holy Cross. Having such a small community with only seven teachers, we simply did not have enough Sisters to fulfill the request.

IHM Celebrates 25 Years in Hutchinson

As Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, community life, that is, family life, is essential. We not only teach together, we pray together, have our meals together, spend time together as a family each evening, have nightly Scripture discussions, and much, much more. Our family life is part of our consecrated life. To divide the community into two different locations, with such small numbers seemed problematic.

If we were to send four Sisters to Hutchinson, enough to have a community life, that would leave the convent at Bishop Carroll somewhat depleted. Additionally, we would then only have three Sisters to teach at Bishop Carroll. This would be challenging on many fronts.

In March of 1997, the Sisters were again considering Bishop Gerber's request. The happy thought came to them, that they wouldn't need to send four teaching Sisters to Hutchinson, but could, instead move the novices and the novice mistress to Hutchinson to provide community life for two teaching Sisters. That would enable the Bishop Carroll convent to have five Sisters and the Hutchinson convent to have three professed Sisters (two teachers) and the novitiate! On March 19, the Solemnity of St. Joseph, the Sisters decided to make the big move!

Bishop Gerber was thrilled and immediately started making arrangements. The most important prerequisite for the Sisters was that the Sisters be able to have Holy Mass everyday together before school started. The pastors in Hutchinson agreed that they could arrange their Masses enabling this to be a reality. By August all was set! Sister Mary Catherine would be teaching at Trinity and Sister Mary Margaret would be part time at both St. Teresa and Holy Cross. The Sisters were given the use of the rectory for two years until a suitable house in the neighborhood became available. We moved in on August 4, 1997, the feast of St. John Vianney.

And so began our time – now 25 years! – in Hutchinson. Much has happened during that time. One of our Sisters, Sister Marie Therese, even made her profession of vows at a Sunday Mass at Holy Cross on February 15, 1998. Her

family traveled from Rockford, IL, and were amazed at the vibrant faith displayed in the parish that day. There are many fond memories, too many to recount.

Many of our teaching Sisters have spent time teaching in the schools there. In addition to Sister Mary Catherine and Sister Mary Margaret, Sister Marie Bernadette, Mother Mary Magdalene, Sister Marie Therese, Sister Mary Elizabeth, Sister Joseph Mary, Sister Mary Ann, Sister Veronica Marie, Sister Mary Dolores, Sister Maria Jacinta, Sister Mary Faustina, Sister Mary Agnes, Sister Mary Grace, and now, currently, Sister Cecilia Marie, Sister Mary Ann and Sister Mary Guadalupe.

After opening a convent in Hutchinson and teaching in the schools there, the next school year, 1998-1999, IHM began teaching at Kapaun-Mt. Carmel. Again our pioneer Sister was Sister Mary Catherine. We have enjoyed teaching at the rival Catholic High Schools in Wichita, especially on game days!

As our number of teaching Sisters grew slowly but consistently we were able to expand to several elementary schools in addition to being in three of the four Catholic High Schools in our diocese. Five years ago we met another of our goals: we began teaching in Pittsburg, KS, both at St. Mary Elementary and St. Mary Colgan Catholic High School. We are pleased to be in each of the Wichita Diocese's four Catholic High Schools.

This next school year we are on the move again! We will be sending four teaching Sisters to the Salina Diocese; they will be in Hays at Thomas More Prep – Marian High School and Holy Family Elementary, teaching many students who have never before seen a religious Sister.

That leap of faith 25 years ago when we decided to expand beyond the campus of Bishop Carroll was just the beginning of many great adventures. All arranged in God's providence, we are grateful for all the opportunities we have been given to serve the great people of the Wichita Diocese, and, now, begin serving our neighbors to the north in the Salina Diocese.

*Thank you for all the prayers!
Keep reciting those Memorares!*



Hays, Here We Come!

God has continued to bless us! Our religious community was founded to pray for the conversion of sinners, thus shielding the Sorrowful Heart of Our Mother from further sorrow, and to form and educate the young, particularly in the mysteries of our Faith. How joyful it is to watch the number of our teaching Sisters increase, fulfilling educational needs throughout the diocese of Wichita, spreading the Gospel, love for the Church, the Eucharist, for the Immaculate Heart.



From left to right: Sister John Marie, Sister Mary Monica, Sister Rose Marie, and Sister Mary Agnes

Over the past 15 years or so, it has been one of our heart-felt desires to have a Kansan presence. Every year for the past 15 or so years we have been invited to the Salina Diocese, first by Bishop Edward Weisenburger and then carried on faithfully by Bishop Gerald Vincke.

The Salina Diocese has no teaching Sisters. The Catholic school children have never seen a Sister.

Hays, Here We Come!

God has been stirring our hearts ... Jesus has been knocking on our door. We have felt ourselves in the same scenario as St. Paul who, during the night, had a vision of a Macedonian who “stood before him and implored him with these words, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us’” (Acts of the Apostles 16:6-10). This year we will be sending four Sisters to teach in the Salina Diocese.

It seems fitting to us, to open a convent of teaching Sisters in Salina, especially in Hays. Over the last several years we have been blessed with five vocations from the Salina Diocese (one of those was from Kansas City, but via Fort Hays University.) Of those five, three of them will be returning next year to teach in their home diocese. The fourth Sister’s family is from the Hays area. The Lord seems to be preparing a rich harvest of religious vocations in the Salina Diocese; it will be exciting to see what the Lord has planned.

We love the Diocese of Wichita, but we see the need to help where there are no Sisters. We are following the example of our own diocese, which has for years helped other dioceses that have fewer priests per capita. As we are able, we will continue adding teaching Sisters to those already teaching here in the Wichita Diocese.

As we approach 50 years in the Diocese of Wichita (that will be in 2026) we have reflected on our apostolic work in the diocese. Since the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary arrived in the Diocese of Wichita in 1976, we have had Sisters teaching at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School; for 47 years the Sisters have been in the classrooms, halls and extra-curricular events of Bishop Carroll. From 1976 until 2007 we also lived on the campus. God has blessed our community with eight Sisters from among Bishop Carroll alumnae.

Twenty-five years ago we were able to accept Bishop Gerber’s persistent invitation to go to Hutchinson and we took our first step off the campus of Bishop Carroll and opened a convent in Holy Cross Parish. Throughout those

years, we have had Sisters teaching in St. Teresa’s, Holy Cross, and Trinity Catholic Jr/Sr High School. At present, we have three Sisters teaching at Trinity.

The next year, 1998, we started teaching at Kapaun-Mt. Carmel Catholic High School. Since our move into Kapaun-Mt. Carmel we have had two graduates join our Community. Currently, we have two Sisters teaching at Kapaun.

Shortly following our expansion to the third of the four Catholic High Schools in the diocese, several of our young Sisters in formation expressed keen interest in pursuing Elementary Education degrees. We have taught at St. Peter, Schulte since 2000 and shortly following that we sent Sisters to St. Margaret Mary and taught there for several years until circumstances dictated otherwise. We also had a Sister, for a short time, at St. Francis of Assisi, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, at St. Joseph, Wichita, at St. Catherine of Siena, at Blessed Sacrament, and at Resurrection.

Five years ago, we were able to fulfill one of our hopes: to be in all of the Catholic High Schools in the diocese, and we opened a house in Pittsburg, KS, serving both St. Mary-Colgan Catholic High School and St. Mary Elementary. We currently have five Sisters there, four teaching in the schools and one attending PSU.

Two years ago, we went west again when one of our Sisters began teaching at St. Joseph, Ost. This year we also have a Sister at Holy Spirit, Goddard.

All in all, right now we have 17 Sisters teaching in the four Catholic High Schools in the diocese and in five elementary schools: St. Peter, Schulte; St. Mary, Pittsburg; St. Joseph, Ost; Holy Spirit, Goddard; and Magdalen. We are committed to the Catholic Schools of the Wichita Diocese. Next year we will be adding to our roster of teaching Sisters two first-year teachers and one returning teacher; we will then have 20 Sisters teaching, in both the Wichita Diocese and the Salina Diocese.

“Do you not know that not only is Jesus resting and dwelling continually in the Heart of Mary but that He is Himself the Heart of Mary.” - St. John Eudes

Annual Novena to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

June 8 – 16, 2023

**7:00 each evening at the IHM Novitiate
House of Formation**

**3550 N 167th W
Colwich, KS 67030**

Marian talk by one of the IHM Sisters

Refreshments

Eucharistic Holy Hour with Novena Prayer

Benediction

Attend all or any of the evenings



If unable to attend, please join us in prayer:

O Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, ever Virgin! O Heart most pure, most noble, most perfect image of the adorable Heart of Jesus!

We humbly entreat you to intercede for us and to obtain for us the favors we petition for in this novena, if it be the holy will of God to grant them, and if not, to ask for us whatever graces we most need. (Pause for private intentions.)

We desire by this novena, which we offer in your honor, that you will always be, after the Heart of Jesus, the object of our love and devotion.

Through your Immaculate Heart we offer to your divine Son all our thoughts, words and actions of this day and all our days.

We pray for Francis, our pope, for our bishops, for our priests and for the conversion of all sin-

ners. We beg your powerful intercession for an increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Through your maternal Heart, we ask God's blessings upon our families, upon all who have been good to us for the Lord's sake, for all the living and the dead who are dear to us and for all for whom we have been asked to pray.

Hail Mary...

Immaculate Heart of Mary, *pray for us.*

Refuge of Sinners, *pray for us.*

O Mary conceived without sin, *pray for us who have recourse to you.*

May Mary's Heart Immaculate, *be forever praised.*

After the novena the talks will be available on our website: SistersIHMofWichita.org

Remember the Sisters

THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD AND THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITY TO BE HAD

BY MRS. BRONWEN LEWIS

It's been a little more than a decade since the Sisters' bold decision to purchase 80 acres of land in Colwich, and it has been a little more than seven years since the dedication of the House of Formation for the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita. The dedication marked a milestone for the Sisters. "Build it and they will come." True for Kevin Costner, and so true for the Sisters, whose numbers continue to increase.

The Sisters did not embark on something new, but something historical: to establish the first motherhouse property in the state of Kansas in over 150 years!

Who are the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita? They are a contemplative and active religious community. Which means, they pray...A LOT! Their apostolate is to pray for the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of priests, and their active apostolate (meaning, out in the world) is to teach.

For nearly 175 years, starting in Spain, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary have been teaching the Faith to the young so that they, in adulthood, could teach their own families. Their students have become priests, fellow Sisters, and faithful parents to a new generation of Catholics.

As vocations increase, so does the number of teaching Sisters in the Catholic schools. The Sisters were invited to the Wichita Catholic Diocese by Bishop David Maloney in 1976. Bishop Eugene Gerber as Bishop of Wichita asked the Sisters to focus on providing teaching Sisters to the four diocesan high schools. Bishop Thomas Olmsted encouraged the Sisters to build a Motherhouse. Bishop Michael Jackels was a great encouragement to the Sisters, and is quoted as saying, "The best teacher cannot give what an IHM Sister gives in a school. That is the religious witness that comes from their consecration which is supported by their community life and their personal prayer." Bishop Carl Kemme says, "It is not unreasonable to think in 10-15 years, the Sisters growth would be nearing 100 vocations."

I believe Catholics with the ability should consider giving to the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita, or make a plan to give.

The Sisters biggest expense outside of health insurance is

education. To teach in Kansas you must hold a secular degree as well as maintain a teaching certificate. The expense of credentialing and educating the young Sisters weighs heavily on the Community. If you have ever considered endowing a scholarship at your alma mater, maybe you could consider creating an educational endowment for the Sisters.

In previous articles I have asked that you consider making a planned gift to the Sisters toward the construction of a long-awaited Motherhouse. Each day I pray that God will inspire someone to build their Motherhouse, to meet another milestone in the Church in our diocese and our state. I pray that it will be you!

Fulton Sheen said, "The secret to all knowledge is to remember when God made His revelation to this earth He made it to the shepherds --not to the effete -- to the very simple people who were conscious that they did not know everything - when they came to the crib --- they found there...the university -- the summation of all art -- the summation of all science -- wisdom incarnate...God in the form of man!"

Jesus is the greatest teacher in the history of humankind, and the greatest university is the Catholic Church. You know the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary...you know their authenticity of teaching the truth of the Holy Catholic Church: her teachings, her sacraments, and Jesus in the Eucharist. Just like colleges and universities, our religious communities need our "boosters" to endow, build, plan, and give!

We know that the things of this world are of this world and that heaven is our real goal, but until we get there...please know there is no better place to give than to the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita. I believe this with all my heart!

SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY OF WICHITA

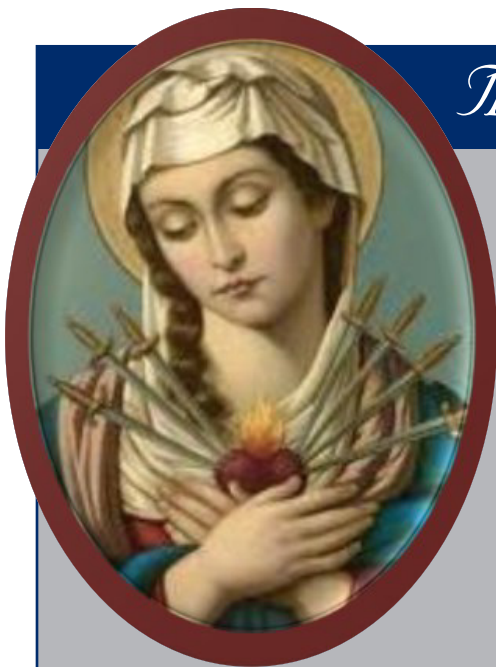
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