

I. Introducing the celebration of the Apostolate’s birthday and Mother Teresa, now St. Teresa of Calcutta. It is not just coincidence that a larger than life mural of Mother Teresa dons the wall inside The Life Center, and is the first thing you seen when entering the confines of the Apostolate. The similarities and connections between the Apostolate and Mother Teresa are intense, and extremely important for the future of our culture, and our survival, but the one similarity you might think we are going to talk-about, Mother Teresa’s anti-abortion work, is not going to be the subject of my remarks. Perhaps the Bishop is, I don’t know, but far more informative for you in terms of seeing the connections between the Apostolate and Mother Teresa and why she insisted on sharing her canonization with our birthday – because you know her feast day with be September 5th, tomorrow, the day she passed – I will instead focus my remarks on the similarities between Mother Teresa’s and the Apostolate’s calling from Jesus, the similarities regarding how they got started, the similarity of our charisms, the similarities of how we speak to the world (our willingness to speak the truth bluntly), and the similarities of our methodology in bringing about peace.

II. The Bishop and the Similarities Between Mother Teresa’s Apostolate and the Calling, Approval and Start-up of the Apostolate of Divine Mercy:

- A.** It’s nothing short of an amazing miracle that four years ago today, when the Bishop approved of the concept of this Apostolate, that this parking lot was busy with a construction company as this building was occupied by and owned by Forsey Construction. And next door to it, was a bustling abortion clinic doing 13. 5 abortions per week. We’d only have – as sidewalk advocates ad during 40 Days for Life campaigns – maybe 2 saves per year out here. In the last three years, though, since Bishop consecrated the adoration chapel, we have had 102 known saves. [And among 6 different abortion clinics along the I-90 corridor here, in 2012 there were over 3,315 abortions occurring. That number, four years later is 0. When God goes head-to-head with Satan, Satan scores “0.” And the doctor, running three of those abortion clinics, Dr. Klopfer, is now Mr. Klopfer, since he had his license stripped last week. He’ll be doing “0” abortions.
- B.** We celebrate today, what Bishop Rhoades gave to his diocese on September 4, 2012, but the process started before that, obviously. It started in adoration chapels, particularly in St. Anthonys and the convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. That’s where I heard my call, my call from Jesus that he thirsted. The Lord there urged me because of this thirst to do more and to ask the community to do more to quench his thirst. Like Mother Teresa’s call, to go to those that are being ignored the most, God was urging me to go to the doorstep of hell, where Satan’s greatest sacrament was occurring, and evangelize. The Lord was directing me to bring Him to this place where nobody wanted to go, but He wanted to be on the front lines to make a difference and to make it possible for us, his vessels to make a difference.
- (1)** Nobody wanted to do this messy work and care for those that no wanted. What is so difficult about this work God was calling us to do? I’ll tell you very few people survive for very long in actual sidewalk advocacy, especially when it gets adversarial, which, if you steal an abortionists’ patients, he or she is going to call in reinforcements. Without the Real Presence within a close proximity, and a chapel on the premises, its impossible to survive in that work very long because everyone you are dealing with hates you. Even the folks “on your side,” don’t

like what you are doing because abortion is one of those things you do under cloak of secrecy. It's just so messy, so dangerously demonic – you are just not supposed to be there. Most folks, even those considered “the good guys” saw the Apostolate, and specifically the TLC Advocates, The Life Center Advocates, as wasting their time and just causing problems for mothers that could not be converted on the abortionist's doorstep because they have made it past all the other safety nets already. Trying to convert a mother or others on the abortionist's doorstep with escorts in your face and usually a hostile male, female, parents, teacher, pimp, or someone forcing the abortion. Rejection and humiliation is the usual outcome. If you talk plainly and clearly and don't budge from the truth, you are going to get some heat, at least at first, and most people don't enjoy that.

- (2) But the Lord asked for his operation to be set up outside of the comfortable confines of our own circles and venture into the devil's lair to set up. So, like Mother Teresa, I took my idea to the Church about this idea. That was in 2009 or 10 (wish I could keep my dates straight, but it as before Bishop Rhoades was even installed here). We met at the convent of the Franciscan Sisters. I didnt know the Bishop, and he didnt know me so I didnt want to blind-side the Bishop with this unusual idea. I tried to gradually tell him what this was all about. I told him that the Lord was urging me to revv-up the prayer and witnessing occurring outside the abortion clinic. “O.K., he said.” And then I told him that we had this little secret we do. He kind of looked at me with that face (oh jeeesh where is this going). “We pray.” I was getting a frozen stare by that point so I continued: “And, Bishop, if we pray before the Blessed Sacrament, and revolve all of our work around the Real Presence, we will shut the abortionist down.”
 - (3) In response, the Bishop asked: “do you have funds?” My answer was a quick “none.” “Have you done this before?” “No,” as I nervously laughed.” “Well, do you have a plan?,” he asked. “Not yet,” I said. At this point, I'm totally thinking the Bishop is going to immediately tab me as one of the pests in the diocese, put me in the “AVOID book,” and I'll never hear from him again. But much to my surprise – and really, to be honest, my dismay -- the Bishop pondered for a second and said, “that sounds like an idea we should look into.”
- C. And so we trudged into the due diligence stage, like Mother Teresa, and we sought to meet the requirements of the Church. And along the way, others were grafting on to the concept as they found out about it. An adoption agency and a natural family planning organization were added to 40 Days for Life and the centerpiece – the Chapel of Divine Mercy. Clearly the Holy Spirit was stirring all this up, but who knew for what reason.
- (1) I personally still thought the evolving idea was ridiculous, and there was no way it was really going to happen. I was just following God's directions because what he was asking was clear. And I got comfortable with the idea that the idea was never going to actually materialize, and I'd be able to return to normalcy. So after about two years of vetting, and looking at every building around here, there was really nothing else to do except give it all to the Bishop in a report and a proposal, and see what he would say.

- (2) I sheepishly provided all the information to the Bishop and ran away. And hid. And . . . I didn't hear anything, and so I peeked around the corner, and no one was there. Maybe the idea that had evolved into a report and proposal had stalled and possibly it was fizzling out. I had to of course take into consideration that the Bishop was very, very busy, even by today's standards. He's not just the Bishop to us-- he has many USCCB duties as well as Vatican posts so maybe a response was still on its way. But I also knew, from dealing with the Bishop during the two years of due diligence, that he gets back with you promptly; so when he didn't in this case, I began to think that maybe this was his way of declining to move the pidea to a reality. And I didnt want to upset that possibility so I kept my distance and just kept peeking around the corner to see if anyone was coming for me. As more time started to pass, I was thinking: "yes! I'm not going to have to do this after all!"
- (3) I'm not telling you that just for the comedic value – I really did not want to do this project. Life was complicated-enough with just 40 Days for Life campaigns, trying to engage in a vigorous faith life, 6 kids, a lot of coaching duties, etc. I didnt need a gargantuan and full time project on top of that. And so my defense to the Lord was: "Hey God, I did what you asked me to do. I'm in the clear here. You're gonna have to talk to the Bishop."
- (4) Probably should not have said that because just when I was getting really comfortable with the thought that I was in the clear, at the end of the summer of 2012, I got the letter from Bishop Rhoades. In a sense, the letter said "I approve, go buy a building, build a chapel, and house other pro-life ministries in the same building." It took a second for this to take hold. I had to force myself to grasp this new reality, and then I came out here [to Ironwood Circle] to see what buildings were still available. Nothing was available, and, ironically, the Bishop approves th plan, he looks to be all excited about it, and, I am going to have to tell him that I don't have a building in the vicinity of the abortion clinic to put the Apostolate in play. So my new plan was to go home and pray on it for a couple days before telling the Bishop so I could collect my thoughts and figure out what to day. Wouldn't you know it though, after two days passed, before I could write the Bishop (and I'm sure the Bishop will verify that I write long letters so it takes a second to write them), I received a weird email from a bank I didnt know. I opened it, and read that I could buy the Forsey Construction building for \$250,000 (which was always their asking price), **in 40 Days**, if I could close on **November 1st**. I knew right then that heaven was organizing this deal, and it was going to happen.

D. And so, like Mother Teresa, we walked into this thing with nothing other than blind faith and blind trust. When Mother Teresa received her canonical approval, she left the convent she was in and went straight for the street . . . alone and with nothing and not sure how it was going to come together. There were some lonely moments. Some isolated moments. But the Holy Spirit started moving others to this cause. The scenery

changed relatively quickly. Within a short period, we had \$250,000 to buy the building, and a bunch more was raised to do the renovations. Within a year, we had The Life Center, and we consecrated the altar in the fall of 2013. And from that point forward, we had adoration for every minute that the abortion clinic was open. We also had our ministries hovering around the Blessed Sacrament and around the abortion clinic every minute the abortion clinic was open. The Eucharist was our focus, and we were confident that it would only be a short time later that the abortionist would be closed. [We had not idea how dramatic it was going to be and that there would be all the saves to go with it, and that all the other surrounding abortion clinics would shut down and send their customers to South Bend, but we new South Bend would be closed.]

III. The Providence of Mother Teresa’s Canonization Being on the 4th Anniversary of the Apostolate, and Mother Teresa’s Spirituality, Charism, and Methodology as Embodied in The Apostolate of Divine Mercy:

- A. With the similarities with our calling, our purpose, and our start, it shouldn’t be a surprise that out of the 365 days available, Mother Teresa made sure the Bishop approved the Apostolate on what would become her canonization date. No one knew that at the time, in 2012, obviously, except those in God’s heavenly court. What we did know, though, is that Mother Teresa would play a big role in our spirituality, our charism, and, our methodology. Notice I did not say doctrine. I could have, but, since we already have our intellectual foundation from Scripture and the teachings of Saint John Paul II the Great, St. Fautina, and others. We often recite from *Evangelium Vitae* or the Diaries of St. Faustina as they apply Scripture to our plan of action. Mother Teresa does offer doctrinal advancement in areas like the family and feminism, beyond what we can delve in to today, but what we needed is a model on how to put it all into action. In other words, so you have this intellectual idea, now, how do we convert the culture with it. That’s where mother Teresa comes-in. She played a huge role with our spirituality, our charism, and our methodology of pursuing peace.
- B. It’s not a surprise that the first image you see when walking through the doors of The Life Center is a larger than life mural of Mother Teresa. She also dons one of the walls in the chapel. We had a modern day sent that went out into the streets to evangelize the least wanted persons in our community so of course she was our model. And the part of Mother’s spirituality that we most ardently coopted was her fervent focus on prayer. Silence and prayer. She said it often. So we got that covered, Mother, what next?
- C. We go from silence to prayer to faith. And we have so many ways to nurture the faith here. Adoration, Mass, events, the enormous and always growing Christian book library, novenas, etc. And it is that nurtured faith produces love. God is love. God is mercy. We then carry that mercy out into the streets, which I will return to in a second, but let me pause here on this concept of nurturing your faith. When you spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament, you are transformed. We have had that concept affirmed over and over here. Well duuuuhhh, if you sit with Jesus desiring to be transformed you are going to be transformed. That’s what renders you ready to serve like Him. And that’s where The Life Center and the Apostolate have visible fruits. We were willing to take the streets, as part of that service, and we witnessed to that Divine Mercy, to the mothers and others entering the abortion clinic. We didnt judge anyone, as mother Teresa said, “If you are busy judging someone, you dont have time to love them.”

Bingo. All love all the time. Unconditional love. Jesus helps you get there.

E. Mother Teresa always connected her silence, prayer, and faith with her action. That sets off the chain reaction we needed to launch out into the street: She said often: The fruit of silence is prayer, and the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, and the fruit of love is service, and the fruit of service is peace. And if we can gaze into the present: What do we have here now? Peace. We have peace. Do you know what we had last year at this time and the previous 38 years? The pinnacle of hate. Death, mutilation, destruction. Family disintegration. 13.5 lives aborted per week. Today 0. But we are now we are conversing in a very civilized nature with the abortionist. That's peace.

(1) So what does that look like in practice? When mothers and others were entering the abortion clinic, often times after just flipping us off as they drove in, we would have 5 to 25 seconds to say something to them, and it usually went like this: "Mom, we are here because we love you. We want to help you. If you need medical, financial, legal assistance, we have it for you, no strings attached. If you are in a domestic violence situation or need protection, we have immediate assistance. What about adoption? Whatever you need to enable you to choose life, we have it. Come talk to us please." Even if they cursed, and the demonic raised Cain, we smiled back. And I'll tell you how ineffective it was. In three years, we convinced 102 mothers, scheduled to have an abortion, to keep their child. And most of the 102, occurred the last two years, after the altar was consecrated. In fact, at that time, in the fall of 2013, we had 22 saves so 80 more would occur over the next two years.

(2) And those are just the saves that we know about. How many drove by a chapel, and folks out on the street praying, and then just kept going. We saw it all the time. One of our participants at the Apostolate, who is in the adoration chapel right now, would stand on the side of the street and say nothing. But we received the most complaints about him. Why? Because he held a Crucifix. We'd see car after car look at that crucifix and keep driving around the circle. Let's be honest, you didn't come to the back of the circle unless you had an appointment somewhere and so if you kept driving, chance are you had an appointment with the abortion clinic. Dr. Klopfer was losing too many patients. And not only was losing patients, those patients were spilling the beans to us about what was happening inside the abortion clinic. That is how we were able to get the state to come in on a surprise visit and find 10 out of 10 informed consent violations. Now it took nine months and a heck of a lot of serious chastisement, ala Mother Teresa, same style, in order to get them to come out, but they did, and they shut him down because of it. That's a story we can tell you more about later in the evening, and we have a fun paper trail to help tell that story, including letters to the Vice President on the Republican ticket. It was that same evidence, and those same violations that led to Dr. Klopfer losing his medical license last week. And interestingly, we are now talking to Dr. Klopfer on a weekly basis, if not more, and that's a conversation for later as well.

(3) Please know that when you shine a light on something that has been in the dark for so long, everyone wants you to turn the lights off and tone it down. And, when you refuse to do so, you start ruffling feathers. I'm sorry to say the Bishop

had to experience some of this and receive complaints about us. But like Mother Teresa, we did not compromise the truth. We always spoke the truth. We didn't judge, and we always smiled, but the truth has a razor's edge. Mother Teresa didn't make everyone happy all the time either. It's a fact living out your baptismal promises that you are likely going to make others uncomfortable. One issue in particular, that ought to resonate with most of you here, is that we took a great deal of heat for placing a chapel next to the abortion clinic, our religious symbolism on the street in front of the abortion clinic, and our willingness to talk about God to mothers, escorts, Dr. Klopfer and everyone else entering the abortion clinic. So many in our society have been conditioned to see that as taboo, even the folks we consider to be on our side have succumbed to the rampant political correctness. PC has been such an effective tool for the devil where the truth and those things that are considered off-limits.

- (4) One story in particular symbolizes it all really when in the beginning of the Apostolate, three years ago let's say, people outside the Apostolate were complaining that we should remove Our Lady of Guadalupe and other religious symbolism from the Prayer Peninsula and even prayer witnesses. For those that don't know, the Prayer Peninsula on the other side of the abortion clinic but we rented it and built a sidewalk there so we could do sidewalk advocacy. Hard to do sidewalk advocacy without a sidewalk. I was told point blank in very forceful terms that it was proven that you can't get a save – save a child and mother from abortion – with religious symbolism or by talking about God.. Himm. God clearly didn't like the direction of things, and so the very next abortion day after some vigorous debate on the subject of our methodology, one of our really modest TLC Advocates, she won't want me mentioning her name, but she had a save by just standing out on the Prayer Peninsula with a giant Crucifix. The mother came right up to her to initiate the conversation. The Cross speaks. Go figure, these mothers have consciences and God can work through them.
 - (5) We had other similar moments over the years, and, again, I apologize to the Bishop when he'd get a complaint. But that razor edge of the truth can cut. Nonetheless, it all stayed under control because of the entirety of Mother Teresa's methodology, charism, and spirituality that we were modeling. We delivered our message with a smile. That wasn't always enough, though, but we never compromised or apologized for the truth. As long as we were going before Jesus, we were willing to be instructed by Jesus, we consulted the Word before we did or said anything, and we were willing to give God all the glory for the fruits we receive in Jesus' name, we were always confident things would be under control. That's why it never got as bad as it could have.
- D.** And then, when you trust in the Lord so deeply as Mother Teresa did, God can really work through you. He doesn't call us to be successful; he just calls us to be faithful as Mother Teresa would say, but by being faithful, He can do with us what he wants to do with us. And, in this case, he used the Apostolate, embracing Mother Teresa's charism, as part of His plan to get rid of abortion in this diocese. When Bishop Rhoades approved the Apostolate, four years ago to this day, there were abortion clinics all over the place – Niles, Michigan just a few miles away, Gary, Fort Wayne, two in Toledo right along the I-90 corridor here. The Niles clinic closed almost immediately after the

Bishop approved the Apostolate. The Toledo clinics closed and sent their clients to Dr. Klopfer. Then Fort Wayne closed and Dr. Klopfer sent his patients to South Bend. Then Gary closed and Dr. Klopfer sent his patients to South Bend. In 2013-2014, Dr. Klopfer's business was going gangbusters. And in just a year and half later it would all be over and we'd have peace. You can see what the Lord was doing. He wanted it to end here, where He was, and where we were, willing to be His vessels.

III. Join Us and Contribute to Mother Teresa's Legacy Before the Peace Is Extinguished as We Know It:

- A.** You want to join this fight. You have to join this fight. Our culture is descending in a vortex towards the abyss at an incredibly fast pace. "Ours is the first generation that, having demanded the right to kill its children through elective abortion, is now demanding the right to kill its parents through doctor-assisted suicide." We have debased life to the point now where everything has more value than the human body and the human person. Relationships are only for exploiting conduct. Mother Teresa's legacy has to be taken on by us.
- B.** Mother Teresa's canonization is just what our culture needs. So many of us long for a better environment, a culture of life, a civilization of love — but are confused about how to bring that about amidst such a turbulent political and cultural climate. The Apostolate is the answer, and God needs you to follow in Mother Teresa's footsteps, which you can do here. I'll tell you how to do that, and what's in your packet after the Bishop and his liturgy team lead us through this wonderful service you have in your program here.
- C.** We need people to run this place and deal with me. For four years, I am still looking for an assistant.... go figure. We need prayer warriors, we need vessels for the Lord to engage in our evangelization initiatives, and we need donors to pay for it all. This Apostolate, as a resource for the Church, is where you come to learn learn how to fight the culture of porn. The culture of immodesty. The hook-up culture. That is why the Church needs this Apostolate to thrive. Saint Mother Teresa is just what the world needs. An Apostolate like this is a perfect way to bring Mother Teresa to the world. It really is an incubator of Mother Teresa's. It is the emergency room for the consequences of our culture's promiscuity, it is a prayer machine, and a manufacturing plant for the works of Mercy. South Bend could be the model for the rest of the world on how we can turn back the ever encroaching culture of death. We have the best in Bishops, and we have this Apostolaate as a proven menace to the culture of death. Why not be inspired by and follow in the pat of Mother Teresa of Calcutta and her profound understanding and radical living out of the truth. But don't wait until its too late and the hole we have allowed to be dug is too deep.