



## DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE - SOUTH BEND

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Mr. Shawn Sullivan, Esq.  
1717 East Wayne Street  
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Dear Shawn,

I write to thank you and all the members of the Apostolate of Divine Mercy in the Service of Life, Marriage, and Family for your service to the Gospel of life and especially for your prayers in the Divine Mercy Chapel for the protection of all human life from the moment of conception to natural death. I thank God for the closing of the abortion clinic in South Bend. We can never underestimate the power of prayer, especially the Mass and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. I am very grateful to all of you who have spent, and continue to spend, time in prayer in the Divine Mercy Chapel for the cause of life.

I was happy to learn of the expanded mission of the Apostolate of Divine Mercy to now include also the promotion of marriage and family life through prayer and evangelization initiatives. This makes much sense since, as Saint John Paul II taught: “the family is truly the *sanctuary of life*, the place in which life, the gift of God, can be properly welcomed and protected against the many attacks to which it is exposed, and can develop in accordance with what constitutes authentic human growth. Consequently the role of the family in building a culture of life is *decisive and irreplaceable*” (*Evangelium Vitae* #92).

Pope Francis has given the Church this extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy with the hope that it will inspire us to bring the goodness and tenderness of God to everyone. I thank you for all that you and the Apostolate do to witness to God’s mercy which is, as the Holy Father teaches us, “the very foundation of the Church’s life.” I pray that you will continue to serve the Gospel of life, the Gospel of Mercy, in all your activities. I hope that the Apostolate will touch the hearts of all whom you serve with the joy of God’s mercy. Pope Francis says: “In our parishes, communities, associations, and movements, in a word, wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy” (*Misericordiae Vultus* #12). I pray that the Apostolate and the Divine Mercy Chapel will continue to be such an “oasis of mercy” in South Bend.

May the great apostles of Divine Mercy, Saint John Paul II and Saint Faustina Kowalska, intercede for you so that the Apostolate’s works of mercy will bear abundant fruit in the service of human life, marriage, and the family! May God bless you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+ Kevin C. Rhoades*

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades  
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend

KCR / dl