

## Report of WACOM Krakow, Poland Oct 1-5 2011

### Theme - *Mercy as the Source of Hope*



**Congress delegates in Krakow Divine Mercy Basilica with Cardinal Schonborn**

At the beginning of the second WACOM, convened under the motto ‘ Mercy as the source of Hope’ and held during early October in Krakow, Poland, delegates were greeted with these words from Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, Archbishop of Krakow; “Gathered here, like the Apostles in the Upper Room, we listen to the words of the Crucified and Risen Christ who brings us the Easter message and greets His disciples with the words: *Peace be with You!*” (Jn 20:21)

As the Christchurch Diocese delegate attending the congress, with my daughter Anna-Marie, we joined 3000 others who had journeyed from every continent and region to represent their mission in the Church to “Go and make disciples of all nations”.

This group, comprised of over 300 priests, 50 bishops, and several cardinals, as well as numerous religious, and lay men and women, wished to identify themselves more intimately with the teachings of St Faustina, Blessed John Paul II, and what the Church is now proclaiming as its mandate for the third millennium.

Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Wein , Austria explained this, saying, “Blessed John Paul summoned the Church to be more conscious and more motivated by this mystery of mercy.....Dioceses and parishes worldwide are invited to remodel their pastoral programmes by refocussing on the invigorating mystery of Divine Mercy. ....Mercy allows the Church to be what She is: a community of those who are open for the world and those who were granted mercy; those who are reaching with mercy out to the world; sacrament and parable of Divine Mercy..... Divine Mercy has the power to change the world. It is a Revolution of Love able to limit evil and sow goodness instead.

As Pope Benedict explains, *“It is the mercy of God become flesh in Jesus that alone can redress the balance of the world from good to evil, beginning with that small and decisive ‘world’ which is man’s heart”*.

Five days of prayer and pilgrimage followed, every day imbued with more insights into Divine Mercy and how, as Cardinal Schonborn proclaimed “Mercy ought to become the ‘paradigm’ of all evangelisation”. Such teaching could be witnessed in the pilgrimage delegates made to Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp praying in procession for both victims and perpetrators and where once St Maximilian also prayed and died. Such powerful witnesses of faith in Divine Mercy are urgently needed in today’s world lost in self. Also we journeyed to Wadowice, birthplace of John Paul, where an ecumenical prayer service was held on the steps of the exquisite basilica there, and where relics of John Paul are enshrined. The congress theme was also to return to the beginnings of Divine Mercy, at Lagiewniki, the Sanctuary of Divine Mercy, where Sister Faustina lived and worked and ultimately died and from where the message of mercy went out to the whole world as we can see in this prophetic message by Jesus to Sister Faustina; *“I bear a special love for Poland, and if she will be obedient to My will, I will exalt her in might and holiness. From her will come forth the spark that will prepare the world for My final coming.”*. (D 1732). This spark can now be seen as manifested in the lives of St Faustina, Blessed John Paul, St Maximilian Kolbe, St Benedicta, and all those who proclaimed and lived in Divine Mercy, the message for our times. Pope Benedict has been asked to consider St Faustina as a Doctor of the Church. Currently there are only 33 Doctors in the Church, so this would add impetus to the relevance and universality of Divine Mercy. If the breadth and depth of teaching at this event could be summarised it would be so; The message and mission of Divine Mercy is **Urgent**, to prepare the world for the Second Coming; it is **Universal**, for the whole Church and all people; and **All are called** to share in the work of being merciful and asking for mercy for ourselves and others.

*Pat Barrett (NZACOM National Coordinator)*



***“This spark needs to be lighted by  
the grace of God.  
This FIRE of MERCY needs to be  
passed on to the world.”***

Blessed John Paul II

“The teachings of Blessed John Paul and Pope Benedict give us clear clues on the direction the Church’s ship should take in these uncertain times at the beginnings of the third millennium...Merciful Love is the Face of God and the future of mankind.”

Bishop Domenico Cancian, Castello, Italy.

“The task to propagate the message of Mercy and win hearts for God will remain valid until the end of the world; *Go into all the world and preach Mercy!*”

Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, Archbishop of Krakow