

Human Beauty, Divine Mercy

St. John Paul II said that we discover our true selves only by sincerely giving ourselves to others. We the fallen know also that we can offer ourselves badly; we grasp, we grope, we withhold. To bridge the gap between the original beauty of God's purposes for our sexuality and the brokenness we behold today, we need divine mercy.

How blessed am I to have served the saints in both Lithuania and Poland, two lands which have 'housed' and honored St. John Paul II and St. Faustina Kowalska, who 80 years ago received from the Spirit the image of Jesus releasing blood and water for us as the sign and seal of God's all-surpassing mercy.

I was honored to join with Vilma and her group of amazing Living Waters leaders in Lithuania; we started our time there in Vilnius, home of the Chapel of Divine Mercy which houses the painting of the original image St. Faustina received from God. While we prayed, I 'sensed' that the water levels of God's mercy were rising from the small chapel (in the spirit of Ezekiel 47) and beginning to flow onto the main street then throughout Lithuania.

My hunch proved correct as we gathered with remarkable 'lay' healers, bishops, and priests and asked Jesus to pour out His Spirit on the work of Living Waters there. I have not experienced that kind of 'flow' before; God strengthened me to prophesy continuously over restored ones who now offer their lives to heal the broken. Such humble beauty! Lithuania elevated my vision of the Church working in harmony to release her deep wells of mercy for afflicted ones.

The respect of St. John Paul II resounds throughout Poland; how blessed I was to testify with the Living Waters teams there of the integration between the human body and Spirit that the pope emeritus describes beautifully in his 'Theology of the Body.' After I testified in Warsaw of how Jesus (through His merciful members) helped me to emerge from the disintegrating impact of homosexual lust, I discovered that St. Faustina's niece was in the audience, rejoicing in God's 'living water' for the sexually broken.

In Cracow I was honored to address a room full of priests-to-be at the seminary where St. John Paul taught (as Bishop Karl Wotyla). I had a strong sense that these men needed to be lovingly challenged to grow in their own sexual integration. They had great intellectual questions but I felt that unless they could articulate their own experience of God's mercy as a key to chastity (a catholic word for sexual and relational wholeness), they would miss out on reaching a generation who insist on flesh-and-blood witnesses of the better way Jesus opens for us.

How privileged am I to walk in the footsteps of Jesus' friends. I cannot recall a more demanding itinerary and the mercy that enabled me to trust Jesus every step of the way. He gives us back our beauty as we surrender to His mercy.