

Divine Mercy Inspires Vocations

Aside from promoting Eucharistic Adoration and the devotion to The Divine Mercy, the Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy (EADM) also strives to support, promote and pray for religious vocations. For the past 5 years, EADM Hawaii has made every effort to carry out these missions. The apostolate in Hawaii is pleased to report that a couple of seminarians have been inspired to enter the priesthood after attending Divine Mercy conferences it has organized. In addition, a few men who previously attended Divine Mercy events are now discerning on religious vocations.

Seminarians Inspired by Conferences

The Diocese of Honolulu (Hawaii) recently has seen an increase in priestly vocations. With the latest addition of Makana Aiona, the son of Hawaii’s Lieutenant Governor James Aiona, the count now comes to a total of 9 seminarians, a number the diocese has not seen in many years. The Hawaii Catholic Herald reports on two seminarians’ decision to enter the seminary and mentions Divine Mercy conferences as sources of inspiration for their calling.

The following 3 interviews were taken from the Hawaii Catholic Herald:

- 1. Makana Aiona:** “I was a mechanical engineer and I quit my job just because I felt I needed to and didn’t know why. I started seriously thinking about the priesthood after going to a Divine Mercy conference where they asked every guy there to pray about whether a priestly vocation was something for them. Through prayer I kept hearing the same words over and over, ‘*Become a priest.*’ That’s not what I wanted to hear, so I prayed again and got the same response. When I read [seminarian] EJ [Resinto]’s testimony on the diocesan vocations website, he said the same thing I’d experienced, that people had told him he had priestly qualities. I’m still not absolutely sure about becoming one, but seminary is how I’ll find out if this is where God’s calling me.”



- 2. EJ Resinto:** “I started to seriously think about my vocation when I realized that culinary arts wasn’t for me. I always knew that the Lord had a plan for me from when I was an altar boy at 7-years-old, but it’s been about a year and a half of serious discerning. Through attending many retreats like Basic Christian Community and the Divine Mercy Conference, being more involved in my parish and the diocese, and with the support of my family, friends and fellow parishioners, I figured this might be my calling.”



A Call to Become a Deacon

A Divine Mercy devotee and member of the EADM Cenacle, Joseph Soon of St. John the Baptist Parish, shares his calling to become a deacon for the Diocese of Honolulu.

3. **Joseph T. J. Soon:** “A lot of thought and discernment went through my mind after I attended the Divine Mercy Crusade organized by EADM Hawaii with guest speaker Fr. Santan Pinto of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity. He spoke of the Divine Mercy of Jesus, and how Christ wants the whole world to come to know the infinite depths of His mercy, and for us Christians to pray for souls who have no one to pray for them and souls who are lost especially hardened sinners, and bring them to His ocean of mercy. Finally, after many prayers and participation in Perpetual Adoration, the call came on the Feast Day of Divine Mercy 2007. When I was praying in silence after I received Holy Communion, a voice clearly spoke to me. *‘The only way you can bring souls to my mercy is to become a deacon.’* From then on, I never looked back on what I should do with my life.”



A Divine Mercy Priest Shares His Story

On July 11, 2009 the Diocese of Honolulu held a vocations retreat where 24 young people participated and 10 are parishioners of Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC) where there is Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Last year during a Divine Mercy Conference held at OLGC, Fr. Donald Calloway, the Vocations Director for the Marians of the Immaculate Conception talked about Eucharistic Adoration and the importance of adoring God’s Mercy. The conference also celebrated the 10th year anniversary of Perpetual Adoration in that parish. The youth session of that conference drew over 200 participants consisting of teenagers, young adults, parents and their younger children. They listened intently to the amazing conversion story of Fr. Calloway as he shared how the Lord through the Blessed Mother inspired him to leave his wanton ways and called him to become a Divine Mercy priest. After that session, Fr. Calloway was pleased to talk to a few young people about vocations. Some have expressed interests but asked for prayers as they discern their calling. Fr. Calloway also was a guest speaker during the 2006 Divine Mercy Conference where he shared his conversion story and talked about how Pope John Paul II, the Great Mercy Pope had also inspired many holy vocations among men and women.

By the Fruits You Shall Know

Bishop Larry Silva, who has acknowledged and blessed the works of EADM Hawaii, dedicated the Diocese of Honolulu to The Divine Mercy on Divine Mercy Sunday 2006. Quoting an article from the Hawaii Catholic Herald, it was believed that Honolulu was the first diocese to dedicate itself to The Divine Mercy. Bishop Silva explained in a letter to all the priests in Hawaii the reason for the dedication - *“I want to do this with one special intention in mind,”* he wrote, *“an increase of local vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life in Hawaii”*. He urged all pastors to have Divine Mercy Sunday celebrations in their own parishes. *“I would like to encourage you to consider some celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday in your parish, joining in prayer for this special intention for an increase of local vocations,”* he said.

“Trust and have faith in the good works of God”, the Bishop said as his closing remarks during the 2006 Divine Mercy Conference organized by EADM Hawaii. He encouraged the conference attendees to be hopeful in the mercy and love of God even though statistics show a bleak and dark future in the dwindling number of vocations, as well as decrease in mass attendance where parishes has had to close. His final remarks left each one with words to ponder on ***“We do not live by statistics but by faith in the good works of God.”*** It may very well seem that Bishop Silva is now seeing the fruits of his own trust and faith in God with an increasing number of vocations.

Jesus, I trust in You.



Bishop Larry Silva during the 2006 Divine Mercy Conference with two guest speakers who are also Vocations Directors – Fr. Donald Calloway of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception and Fr. Patrick Torres of the Missionaries of Charity Fathers.

Submitted by:
Rose Balayan, EADM Hawaii Facilitator
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Read updates to the above story on next page.
Updates as of January 2018

As of January 2018:

1. Makana Aiona discerned for the vocation of married life and is now a husband and a father. He is a teacher at Damien Memorial School and was previously the Coordinator of Young Adult Ministry of the Diocese of Honolulu.
2. EJ Resinto is now Fr. EJ Resinto, a priest of the Diocese of Honolulu. He was ordained on July 2016. He currently is the Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Ewa Beach, West Oahu.
3. Joseph Soon is now Deacon Joseph Soon. He was ordained on January 2015 and currently serves at the Blessed Sacrament Church in Honolulu.

Note: There were a number of individuals who have attended our Divine Mercy events in previous years and now have become priests, deacons, religious and lay leaders. Praise God!

Notice the altar server next to Fr. Patrick Torres, Vocations Director for the Missionaries of Charity Fathers... that was high school senior from Kauai, EJ Resinto during the 2006 Divine Mercy Conference at the Hawaii Convention Center. He is now Fr. EJ Resinto, a priest of the Diocese of Honolulu. He was ordained on July 2016. He currently is the Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Ewa Beach, West Oahu.

