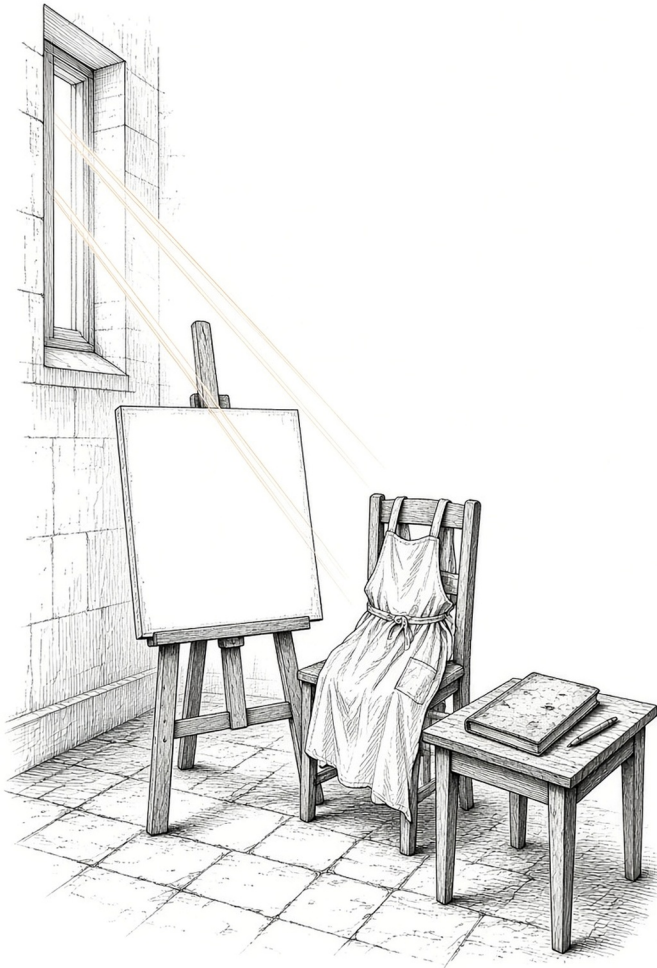




SILENT HOMILIES

Not in the Beauty of the Brush

*Faustina Kowalska, and the mercy
that would not stay hidden*



Silent Homilies

Little Treasures



SILENT HOMILIES

Not in the Beauty of the Brush

*Faustina Kowalska, and the mercy
that would not stay hidden*

*A small book of forgotten facts,
short stories, and quiet hope.*

Before You Begin

Most of us meet her already framed. Two rays. A short prayer on a thousand holy cards. A convent chapel in Łagiewniki with a queue. The risk of a finished devotion is that we forget the woman behind it.

She could not paint. She had three years of school. She was sent to the kitchen, the garden and the porter's hatch. She cried when the first picture came back from the studio, because it was not as beautiful as the One she had seen.

Helena Kowalska was born in the village of Głogowiec on 25 August 1905, the third of ten children of a poor farm. She died in Kraków on 5 October 1938, thirty-three years old, of tuberculosis that had reached her lungs and her digestive tract. In the thirteen years between the convent door and the cemetery she was a cook, a gardener, a shop assistant in the sisters' bakery, and a portress. The Diary that now fills shelves was written because a busy confessor asked her to put things down, and because she believed she had been told to write.

This little book is not the Diary. The Diary is a world. It is a walk through rooms the holy cards do not show: a dance in Łódź that ended a girl's ordinary plans, convent doors that would not open, a cell in Płock, a painter's studio in Vilnius, a picture hung for three days over a street at the Gate of Dawn, a chaplet given in the night, a notebook she once burned because a false voice told her to, a ban from Rome that lasted almost twenty years, and a pope from the next hill in Kraków who called her canonisation the happiest day of his life.

Read it if you have only ever known the image. Read it if you pray the chaplet and have never wondered who first heard the words. As far as the world is concerned, the rays came last. The kitchen came first.

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Chapter 1

A Third Child in Głogowiec

Głogowiec is a village west of Łódź, in flat country. A traveller can pass it without knowing its name. On the morning of 25 August 1905, around eight o'clock, Marianna Kowalska gave birth to a daughter. The two previous births had nearly killed her. This one was, she later said, strangely easy, and she took the ease as a small sign.

Two days later the child was carried along the country road to the parish church of St Casimir in Świnice Warckie and baptised Helena by Fr Józef Chodyński. The register still holds the hour, the witnesses, and the father's age.

Stanisław Kowalski farmed a few hectares and worked as a carpenter. There would be ten children. Not all of them lived. Helena grew up in a house that knew the rosary and the cost of bread in the same sentence. She had three years of village school. That is the whole of her formal education. People who later opened the Diary and found a theology of mercy written in an untrained hand sometimes forget this first fact. The sentences were not polished in a library. They were written by someone who had learned to write just enough.

At seven, during Vespers, with the Host in the monstrance, she felt for the first time what she later called an understanding of divine things. At the same age she heard, inwardly, a call to a more perfect life. A child can be mistaken about such things. The Church does not canonise a seven-year-old's feeling. She canonises the life that grew from it. Helena made her First Communion at nine. She was already the girl the family could least afford to lose to a convent.

If you go to Głogowiec now you will find a house, a plaque, and the quiet of a place that has become a shrine. That is allowed. It is better to remember five hectares, ten children, and a mother who had already almost died twice. Mercy, in this story, does not begin in a basilica. It begins where most of the world's children still begin: in a room that is too small for the number of people in it, and in a parish two kilometres down a dirt road.

A Small Reflection

We often assume that God waits for better conditions: more education, more space, a quieter house. Helena's story begins in a room that was already full. Three years of school were enough for a Diary that the whole Church now reads. That does not mean study is useless. It means God is not trapped by our lack of it. If you think you have nothing in your hands except ordinary work and a short prayer, you are closer to the start of this story than you may like to admit. The question is not whether your beginning looks impressive. The question is whether you will stay faithful in the room you actually have.

A short prayer

Lord of villages that do not expect a saint, bless the houses where there is not enough, and the children who learn You before they learn a long book. Amen.

Chapter 2

The Doors That Would Not Open

Helena knew, early, that she wanted the convent. Her parents knew it too, and refused. They were believers. They were also poor. A dowry for a religious house was a real sum, and they had already named her their most useful child. She argued that Jesus would settle the money. Her father was not moved.

For a time she did what obedient daughters did. She went out to work as a housekeeper, first in Aleksandrów, then in Łódź, and tried to put the call down like a piece of sewing she could finish later.

In July 1924, at a dance in Łódź, the later life began in earnest. She saw, while the music was still going, the suffering Christ, and heard that she was to leave this life and enter the convent. The vision is easy to decorate. The next morning is harder and more useful. She packed. She went to Warsaw, a city she did not know, and began knocking on doors. Congregation after congregation looked at a girl with no dowry, little schooling and no introduction, and said no. The no is part of the story. A vocation that never meets a closed door is often only a mood.

She worked another year in Warsaw as a housekeeper to gather a modest trousseau — the small kit a candidate was expected to bring. On 1 August 1925, the eve of Our Lady of the Angels, she crossed the threshold of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy on Żytnia Street. The congregation's work was with girls in difficulty, not with mystics. Helena wrote that it seemed to her she had entered Paradise. Paradise, in this case, looked like a house that trained women to cook, to garden, to keep a gate, and to live under a rule.

The closed doors behind her matter because they keep the later fame from looking inevitable. Nothing in 1925 guaranteed a Diary, an image, a feast, a pope. There was only a rejected girl who kept walking until one house said yes, and a congregation that thought it was receiving another pair of hands for the kitchen.

A Small Reflection

A closed door is not always a final answer. It is also not always a test you must smash. Helena waited, worked and knocked again. Some good things do not arrive on our timetable. That is hard to accept in a culture that treats delay as failure. The Church is slower. Parents are sometimes slower still, and not always wrong. If a door you wanted has not opened, the next faithful act may be ordinary work in the meantime. Waiting is not the same as giving up. It is also not the same as forcing the lock.

A short prayer

Christ who knocks and is knocked for, stay with everyone who has been told they are not enough, and with every door that still has to learn how to open. Amen.

Chapter 3

A Name Taken in Warsaw

In the congregation she received the name Maria Faustina. Faustina is not a family name. It is a religious name, chosen in the old way, so that a new life would have a new word to answer to. On 30 April 1926 she took the habit. The novitiate was in Kraków. First vows came on 30 April 1928, in the presence of Bishop Stanisław Rospond. Perpetual vows followed in 1933. Thirteen years, all told, from the door on Żytnia Street to the grave in Łagiewniki.

The work did not change because the vows were spoken. She was sent where she was needed: Kraków, Płock, Vilnius, and the smaller houses in between. Cook. Gardener. Assistant in the bakery shop. Portress — the sister who sits by the hatch and decides who comes in. To the community she was a sister who did her duty and did not ask for a pulpit. A few noticed she prayed longer than the timetable required. Most saw the apron.

This is worth sitting with. The message that now fills basilicas was trusted first to a woman whose official task was to keep the soup and the gate. The Church has a long habit of doing that: of putting a revelation in a kitchen and waiting to see whether it will survive the peeling of vegetables. Faustina's Diary is full of the ordinary hours. That is not a defect of style. It is the proof that the extraordinary did not excuse her from the potatoes.

If you only know the rays, you can imagine a nun in perpetual ecstasy. The sisters who lived with her remembered someone who could be tired, ill, misunderstood, and still on time for the next duty. Holiness that cannot carry a pot is a theory. Hers had to carry one.

A Small Reflection

We divide the day into “spiritual” work and “ordinary” work, and then we treat the second kind as leftover time. Faustina’s congregation did not. The hatch, the garden and the soup were the life. Prayer had to live inside them. If God is only allowed to speak when the dishes are done, most of us will hear very little. The next duty in front of you may be the place where trust is actually learned. An apron is not an obstacle to holiness. For many people it is the habit they already wear.

A short prayer

Lord who hid thirty years in Nazareth, bless every vocation that looks like housework, and keep us from despising the hatch where the world knocks. Amen.

Chapter 4

The Cell in Płock

In Płock, in the house by the Old Market, she worked in the bakery shop and in the kitchen. On 22 February 1931, in her cell on the first floor, she saw the Lord Jesus in a white garment, one hand raised in blessing, the other opening the garment at the breast. Two rays came from the opening, one red and one pale. She was told to paint the image as she saw it, with the signature Jesus, I trust in You, and to have it venerated first in her chapel and then in the world. She was also told, in time, that the Sunday after Easter was to be a feast of Mercy.

She could not paint. She tried, and the attempt was what you would expect from a cook. For two years the command sat on her like a stone she could not put down and could not lift. A vision that asks for a picture is a hard vision to give a woman with no money, no art, and no permission to leave the house on her own errand. The delay is part of the mercy. God did not require her to become an artist overnight. He required her to tell the truth to the next confessor who would listen.

Płock is easy to skip on the way to Łagiewniki. It should not be skipped. The most reproduced Christian image of the twentieth century began in a provincial cell above a bakery shop, on an ordinary February evening, in a congregation that had not asked for a new devotion. The red ray and the pale ray were not designed by a committee. They were described by a sister who then had to go downstairs and sell bread.

When people later argued about whether the image was beautiful enough, they were repeating Faustina's first grief in a louder room. She had already wept over the gap between what she saw and what a hand could make. The answer she was given then is still the only answer that keeps the devotion from becoming an art contest. The greatness is not in

the colour or the brush. It is in the grace.

A Small Reflection

We often refuse a task because we cannot do it perfectly. Faustina could not paint the face she had seen. She still had to tell someone. The first obedience was not artistic talent. It was honesty. Many of us are waiting to become qualified before we begin the next good thing: a conversation, a prayer, a work of mercy. Grace does not wait for the perfect likeness. If it did, most of us would never start. The shop downstairs still had to open. The vision did not cancel the bread.

A short prayer

Jesus, I trust in You — even when I cannot make what I have seen, and even when the next duty is the shop downstairs. Amen.

Chapter 5

A Priest Who Asked for a Notebook

In May 1933 she was sent to Vilnius. The confessor assigned to the sisters was Fr Michał Sopoćko, a priest of the diocese, later a professor, later still a blessed of the Church. She recognised him, she said, from a vision. He did not recognise a prophet. He recognised a problem. He had her examined by a psychiatrist. The verdict was that she was sound, and one of the better sisters in the house. Only then did he begin to listen in earnest.

He was a busy man. The long accounts in the confessional were more than the timetable could hold. So he told her to write the experiences in a notebook and bring him the pages. That is how the Diary began as a human document: not as a book planned for the world, but as a way for a prudent priest to test a soul without keeping a queue waiting. Jesus, in her telling, had already called her a secretary and told her to write. The two commands met in cheap exercise books.

There is a darker earlier chapter. Before the surviving notebooks, she had written other pages and burned them. A voice she took for an angel had told her to destroy the record. She later understood the voice as an enemy of the work. The first notebooks we have date from July 1934 in Vilnius. Everything before that is ash and memory. The Diary is therefore not a complete archive. It is what obedience managed to save after a fire.

Sopoćko would pay for the painting, preach the first sermon, suffer a ban, and live long enough to see the ban lifted. Without him the kitchen remains a kitchen. With him the kitchen still remains a kitchen — he never took her out of it — but the pages leave the house. A good director does not make a mystic famous. He makes sure she is not alone with a

voice.

A Small Reflection

Not every inner voice deserves trust. Faustina needed a priest who was slow to believe and unwilling to leave her untested. That slowness protected her. It also protected the Church. Private experience is not the same thing as public teaching. A notebook given to a confessor is safer than a secret kept only in the heart. If something important is happening in your prayer, the Catholic instinct is not to build a private world. It is to find a wise person and tell the truth. Discernment is not unbelief. It is love with a backbone.

A short prayer

Blessed Michał, who asked for pages instead of an hour he did not have, obtain for us confessors who are slow to believe and unwilling to leave a soul untested. Amen.

Chapter 6

The Painter Who Could Not Make Him Beautiful Enough

Sopoćko lodged in a house where a painter also lived. Eugeniusz Kazimirowski had trained at the Academy in Kraków and in the studios of Munich, Paris and Rome. He was not a specialist in visions. He was a working artist who agreed, for a fee, to try. From January 1934 Faustina was allowed to visit the studio twice a week with her superior, Mother Irena Krzyżanowska, and describe what she had seen. When the figure would not come right, Sopoćko himself stood in so that the hands of Christ would have a priest's hands to copy. The picture was finished in June or July 1934.

Faustina cried. Who will paint You as beautiful as You are? The complaint is in the Diary and it is not vanity. She had seen a face and been given a canvas. The gap between them felt like failure. The answer she recorded is the sentence this little book takes for a title. Not in the beauty of the colour, nor of the brush, lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace. The first picture was not a masterpiece. It was a vessel. A vessel does not need to be as beautiful as the water.

That first canvas is not the one most pilgrims photograph in Kraków. The famous image in the Łagiewniki chapel is later work by Adolf Hyla, painted during the war at the sisters' request. Kazimirowski's original — the only one made under Faustina's eye — hung in several Vilnius rooms, disappeared through the wreck of the century, and is now venerated in the Sanctuary of Divine Mercy in Vilnius. People who think there is only one picture are looking at a family, not a single portrait.

Stand in front of whichever copy your parish owns and remember the studio. A cook describing rays to a tired painter. A priest holding still so that the hands would be right. A woman in tears because the oil was not the vision. Grace does not wait for the perfect likeness. If it did, no one would have a picture at all.

A Small Reflection

We confuse the gift with the wrapping. An imperfect picture can still carry mercy. An imperfect parish, an imperfect family, an imperfect prayer can do the same. That is not an excuse for carelessness. It is a warning against despising what God is actually using. Faustina wept because the canvas was not the vision. Many of us refuse to love what is in front of us for the same reason. The vessel is not the water. If we wait for a perfect vessel, we may never drink.

A short prayer

Lord who allowed a poor likeness to carry a great mercy, teach us not to despise the vessel because it is not the vision. Amen.

Chapter 7

A Picture Hung Over a Street

The first public showing was not in a basilica. It was in Vilnius, at the Gate of Dawn — Ostra Brama, Aušros Vartai — where a beloved image of Our Lady already looked down on a street. From 26 to 28 April 1935, in the three days that closed the Jubilee of the Redemption, Kazimirowski's picture was placed in the window of the shrine above the gate, high enough to be seen by people passing underneath. Sopoćko preached. It was the Sunday after Easter, the very day Faustina had been told to mark. The devotion left the convent the way most true things leave a convent: through a liturgy, in public, under obedience, with a priest willing to use his own name.

Faustina was in the city. She saw the picture from the street like anyone else. The Diary records both joy and the old grief that the image was still not what she had seen. The combination is healthy. A visionary who cannot bear the ordinary mediation of paint and pulpit will soon invent a private church. She did not. She went back to the rule.

A picture hung over a street is a theology. It says that mercy is not only for the sisters who already pray. It is for the people going to market, for the ones who look up because something unusual is in the window, for the city that has not bought a ticket. Vilnius in 1935 was a complicated city of Poles, Lithuanians, Jews and Belarusians. The rays were shown to all of them at once, which is what rays do.

If your parish has the image in a side chapel where only the devout go, you might try, once, putting it where a person who is not looking for it might still see it. Not as a stunt. As a memory of a gate.

A Small Reflection

Mercy that stays only with the already devout is incomplete. The first public act of this devotion was a picture over a street. People who were not looking for it could still see it. That is a hard lesson for parishes that hide their best things in rooms the public never enters. It is also a hard lesson for private faith. If trust in Jesus never leaves the chapel of our own thoughts, it has not yet reached the street. Looking up is allowed for people who did not plan a pilgrimage.

A short prayer

*Jesus at the gate, who did not wait for a perfect church before You
looked down on a street, look down on ours. Amen.*

Chapter 8

Beads Given in the Night

On 13 and 14 September 1935, in Vilnius, she was taught a chaplet. The words are now so familiar that it is easy to forget they arrived as a dictation in the dark, at a time when Europe was already preparing the next wreck. The chaplet offers to the Father the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of the beloved Son, in atonement for the world. It is a short prayer. It is also a very old prayer in a new rhythm: the Mass, reduced to a breath that can be said on ordinary beads when a priest is not at the altar.

She was given, as well, the Hour of Mercy — three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of the death on the Cross — as a time to remember the Passion and to ask for mercy for the whole world. A cook already knows three o'clock. It is not a mystical hour on a timetable. It is the sag in the day, the time when the kitchen is between meals and a sister might be tempted to think that nothing important happens. The devotion takes that sag and nails it to the hour the world was saved.

None of this was a replacement for the sacraments. Faustina's own life was built on Confession and the Eucharist. The chaplet is what you say when you cannot get to the altar and the world is on fire anyway. That is why it travelled so far, so fast, among people who were not nuns. It fits in a pocket. It does not require a shrine. It requires a willingness to say that the Son's offering is still the thing the Father will hear.

If you already know the beads, say them once this week at three, even badly, even in a queue. The first hearer of the words was a sister with a notebook and a cough. You do not need better conditions than she had.

A Small Reflection

We wait for a better hour in which to pray. Three o'clock is often the worst hour: tired, in-between, unimpressive. That may be why it was chosen. The chaplet does not ask you to feel holy. It asks you to offer Christ, not your mood. A short prayer that can be said in a queue is not a lesser prayer. It is mercy fitted to the life most people actually live. If the only prayer you can manage today is imperfect and brief, it still belongs to the same hour.

A short prayer

*Eternal Father, we offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity
of Your dearly beloved Son — on the beads we actually have, in the
hour we actually inhabit. Amen.*

Chapter 9

The Congregation That Did Not Arrive

From 1935 she believed she was also being asked to found a new congregation, a house specifically for the mercy she had been shown. She wrote a rule. She was shown, she said, a building in Vilnius — later she walked to 12 Świętojańska Street and recognised it. The foundation did not happen in her lifetime. This is one of the facts the holy cards omit, because it looks like failure. It is more interesting than success.

A true visionary can be wrong about the packaging. The Church did not receive from her a new order in 1936. She received a mission that other people, after her death, would have to house. Congregations and associations of Divine Mercy came later, in other rooms, under other superiors. The delay protected the message from becoming a private empire with her name on the door. She remained a sister of Our Lady of Mercy, in the kitchen of the house that had accepted her when she was nobody.

There is a tenderness in that unfinished errand. Not every command is for this week. Some are seeds that will not break the soil until the woman who heard them is under it. Faustina did not live to see Łagiewniki become a basilica, or Vilnius recover the first picture, or a Polish pope give the Church a Sunday. She lived to see a notebook, a flawed canvas, a chaplet, and a cough that would not go.

If you have been given a work that will not fit in your lifetime, you are in her company. The test is not whether you finish it. The test is whether you keep the kitchen while you wait.

A Small Reflection

We measure a life by visible results. Faustina did not see the results that now fill posters. She saw the part that belonged to her afternoon. That is a hard mercy. Some work is ours to begin and not ours to finish. Parents know this. Teachers know this. Parish priests know this. The danger is to abandon the ordinary duty because the large plan has not arrived. The kitchen was not a consolation prize. It was the place where the unfinished mission stayed honest.

A short prayer

Lord of unfinished houses, keep us faithful to the part of the errand that belongs to this afternoon, and willing to die before the basilica is built. Amen.

Chapter 10

The Illness They Could Not Hide

Tuberculosis took her slowly and then quickly. It reached the lungs and the digestive tract. Twice she was sent for months to the hospital on Prądnik Street in Kraków, a place for the infectious, where a sister could be both patient and still, when she had strength, a presence in the ward. The Diary of those months is not a medical chart. It is a woman learning how to offer a body that no longer obeyed the timetable of the kitchen.

She died on 5 October 1938 in the Kraków house at Łagiewniki, thirty-three years old, thirteen years a religious. They buried her in the common convent tomb in the garden. In 1966, when the informative process for beatification required it, the remains were moved into the chapel. The first grave was not a shrine. It was a row with the other sisters. That, too, is a theology. The secretary of mercy was not given a separate hill in the first generation. She was given the same earth as the cooks who had never seen a ray.

People like a saint to die in a memorable sentence. Some last words are recorded; others are the words of those who stood near. What is sure is the date, the disease, the age, and the fact that Europe was twelve months away from the next war. The message she had been given was about to meet a century that would need it more than Płock had needed it. She would not be there to explain it. The pages and the picture would have to walk without her.

A short life is not a failed life. Thirty-three is the age the Church already knows how to read. She did not choose it. She filled it. That is enough for a cook.

A Small Reflection

We want to see the fruit of what we plant. Many of the most important plantings are harvested by other people. Faustina died before the war that would make her message feel urgently needed. She also died in a common grave. Hiddenness followed her to the end. If your own work, illness or duty feels unfinished and unnoticed, you are not outside the story of the saints. You may be inside the part they actually lived: the part before the chapel and the queue.

A short prayer

Christ of the hospital ward and of the common grave, stay with the dying who will not see the fruit of what they were asked to plant.

Amen.

Chapter 11

The Ban, and the Day It Lifted

After her death the devotion spread, and then it met a wall. In 1959 the Holy Office issued a notification that forbade the spreading of the devotion to the Divine Mercy in the forms proposed. Sopoćko was silenced in the matter. Images came down. For almost twenty years a sister's notebooks and a priest's preaching were treated, in official rooms, as a problem. The reasons were mixed: faulty translations, theological caution, the ordinary slowness of Rome, the fear of private revelation running ahead of the bishops. A Catholic booklet should not pretend the ban was only wickedness. The Church is allowed to be slow with a cook's visions. Slow is how she avoids swallowing every voice.

The ban was lifted in 1978, the same year a cardinal from Kraków became pope. That coincidence is not a conspiracy. It is a geography. Karol Wojtyła had known Łagiewniki as a young priest and as an archbishop. He had lived the occupation that Faustina's prayers had already named as a field for mercy. As pope he beatified her on 18 April 1993 and canonised her on 30 April 2000, the first saint of the new millennium. After the rite he told someone who had worked for the cause that it was the happiest day of his life. He gave the Church Divine Mercy Sunday on the Sunday after Easter, the day she had been told to mark in 1931.

He liked to say that there is nothing a human being needs more than Divine Mercy, and that anyone may look at the image, hear what Faustina heard — Fear nothing; I am with you always — and answer, Jesus, I trust in You. He died on 2 April 2005, in the first vespers of the feast he had given. The cook and the pope from the next hill now share a calendar the way they once shared a city.

The ban is worth remembering because it keeps the devotion humble. What God gives through a private revelation the Church may still test. What the Church tests she may still, later, receive with both hands. Trust, in this story, is not credulity. It is patience with a process that can last longer than the visionary's life.

A Small Reflection

Faith is not the same as swallowing every claim at once. The Church was slow. That slowness wounded people who already loved the devotion. It also protected the Church from treating private revelation as if it were the Creed. Both things can be true. If a good thing in your life is being tested, the test is not automatically persecution. Sometimes it is the slow work of truth. Patience here is not weakness. It is the difference between trust and gullibility.

A short prayer

Lord of the slow official letter and of the sudden lifting, teach us neither to despise caution nor to call every delay a betrayal. Amen.

Chapter 12

Living After the Two Rays

A devotion this large can become unusable. You cannot live inside a basilica queue. You can do what she did before anyone printed the image. Keep the hour you actually have. Say the short prayer when you are afraid, not when you feel holy. Trust God enough to write the truth in an ordinary notebook if someone wise has asked you to. Stay at the hatch. Do not despise the kitchen because a vision once visited the cell upstairs.

You can also refuse two cheap portraits. One is the holy card that never coughed and never burned a page by mistake. She coughed. She burned pages. She cried over a painting. The other cheap portrait is the private mystic who needs no Church. She went to Confession. She obeyed a superior to the studio and back. She died under a rule she had not written. The rays belong to the Church now, or they belong to no one.

If you live far from Łagiewniki, the image in your parish is enough. If you live near it, go once without needing to stand where she stood. Three o'clock will arrive in your town whether or not a shrine bell rings. The chaplet will fit in the same pocket as your keys. The signature on the picture is not a slogan for other people. It is a sentence you are allowed to say when the next thing that happens is too much.

When the house goes dark — and a life contains more than one such hour — the question she leaves is not whether you have seen rays. It is whether you will trust the One who is with you always, in a kitchen, in a hospital, in a city that has not yet seen the next war. She learned that with three years of school and a notebook that survived a fire. You do not need a better education. You need the same sentence.

A Small Reflection

The point of knowing Faustina is not to collect her story. It is to borrow her sentence when your own day is ordinary or afraid. Jesus, I trust in You is not a motto for people who already feel safe. It is a sentence for kitchens, queues, hospital wards and unfinished work. If you remember only one thing from this book, remember that the woman who first heard those words still had to go downstairs and sell bread. The trust was not instead of the ordinary life. It was inside it.

A short prayer

Jesus, I trust in You. Keep the sentence in our mouths when the picture is imperfect and the day is ordinary. Amen.

A Last Word

A village register. A dance that ended a plan. Doors that said no. A name taken in Warsaw. A cell above a bakery. A priest who wanted pages. A painter who could not match a face. A picture over a street. Beads in the night. A congregation that did not arrive. A common grave. A ban. A Sunday that outlived both the cook and the pope who loved her.

That is enough of her for one sitting. The Diary is still there if you want the rest. You do not need the rest before you can use the sentence she was given.

May the kitchens keep a place for a notebook. May the confessors keep a little time they do not have. May every parish image remember the first poor canvas. And may whoever next says the short prayer mean it.

St Faustina, pray for us.

Blessed Michał Sopoćko, pray for us.

St John Paul II, pray for us.



Silent Homilies
Little Treasures

A word of thanks

If these pages have helped you see St Faustina as more than an image on a card, a small gift on the Silent Homilies website would be received with real gratitude. It is never asked as a condition of reading — only as a kindness, if you wish and if you can.

Printing tip

*This booklet is designed in A5 format. For best results print double-sided on A5 paper (or print two pages per A4 sheet and cut).
Recommended paper: 80–100 gsm for a pleasant reading feel.*

Written to be read in one or two sittings.