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**LORD IS MERCIFUL TO THOSE WHO
ARE WEAK**

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I thank the Lord for the opportunity to talk about the experience of Divine Mercy in the Full House Community.

“Full House” is a Lithuanian community which includes consecrated men, those seeking consecration, and people under rehabilitation. I founded the community 11 years ago in response to God’s call and our reality. Our vocation and mission is to work with youngsters with drug and alcohol dependence, as well as with other socially excluded people. Our community acquired the status of a legal person in 2001. His Eminence Audrys Juozas Cardinal Bačkis is our patron.

We lived near the parish for some time. Yet the local people were afraid of addicts, so we bought a homestead in a remote place in the Dzūkija forest 3 years ago. For the time being our living conditions are very modest, even poor. We made a chapel from an old stackyard. The chapel has been awarded a title of Divine Mercy by the local Bishop. A little barn (about several square meters) without windows houses 5 people and a bigger room of the main building houses 11. One part of an old cow-house serves as a refectory and the other part contains rooms for consecrated brothers as well as for priests under rehabilitation. Roughly 30 people constantly live in our community.

Poor living conditions make us merciful towards one another. We have to learn to accept one another’s limitations, have open hearts and patience to be able to overcome consequences of dependencies so evident in a man destroyed spiritually and physically. Every day we learn to become God’s children and one another’s brothers. Even more so, because a lot of our members do not have any relatives. I believe that the coming of those poor people to the community is a sign of God’s mercy, because they can be reconciled with the Lord, have their dignity restored and their personal life rooted in belief in God and unshakable trust in Divine Mercy. Their eyes and hearts can widely open and their lips can repeat Peter’s confession: “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life”.

For me, the community is an excellent school of Divine Mercy. My people need not only spiritual formation and human consolation, but also tendance. I am glad to see them start normal life after rehabilitation or decide to remain in our community and lead a consecrated life. And I am sad when I have them to bury. My children show me a lot of love, especially by saying: “Don’t leave me, because, except of you, I have nothing in this life!” There is no hypocrisy in our community. The light of Divine Mercy daily shine upon the darkness of every brother. My children witness to it in a book which is about to be published.

24 years old Dainius started snuffing glue as he was 9. Later he smoke grass, drank alcohol and took drugs. He was in prison between 14 and 24, coming out only for short periods. While in prison, Dainius continued taking drugs. He came to our community with trophic sores on his legs. Doctors refused to help him. One surgeon even suggested that he kill himself on the railing under a train so as not to torment himself and others. In spite of that, the young man’s understanding and courage are surprising. I remember his words: “I wouldn’t met Our Lord but for my legs, which heal thanks to God’s mercy and the goodness of people, after an apparantly hopeless situation lasting almost three years. Every morning, after getting up, I thank God for

His grace. And I ask him only one thing: to reduce my pain so much as to be able to go to the chapel to thank the Lord for His mercy“.

After doctors' refusal, we tried to cure Dainius' legs with salves and prayer. I believe that both were of help, prayer in particular. I am happy to tell that today Dainius feel almost no pain in his legs.

God is always ready to show his mercy to everybody. Our Lord has a wonderful plan for everyone and gives an opportunity to realise it. God desires to take us out of an abyss, as was the case of Aleksandras, a member of our community. This is his story: "One day I was fed up with drugs and decided to kill myself. For that, I chose the most popular method: to take a fatal dose. Having drunk a half litre of whisky I took a trefold dose. But I stayed alive. A miracle? I did not want it. When I came home, I wept crying: „Why ?! Why didn't it work? I don't want to live!“ I started considering another way of suicide. Yet I suddenly realised that people will need me. So I stopped thinking about suicide. But I continued taking drugs. My lifestyle brought about the divorce of my parents, my mother had to go to a lodging-house. After wandering about I found my way to the Full House Community, where I experienced God's mercy. I believe that the Lord set me free from my terrible addictions. The community needs me because after the temperance programme I started working as an assistant to a social worker. My task is to help other addicts who come to our community. And I also give lectures on Divine Mercy to a large number of pilgrims“.

Our Lord does not want to allow the evil spirit to force to death a young man who is at fault. At the moment of temptations God tries to knock at his heavy heart to prevent a person from self- destruction. One young man says he was persecuted by thoughts to kill someone or himself before coming to the community, but God's fear did not allow him to do so. In his desperation he pleaded God: "Lord, give me one more chance, have mercy on me!.." Like many others, he made his first confession in the Full House Community and thus his hope in life was restored. Today he is one of the brothers seeking consecration and, as he puts it, he wants „to give himself completely to God and the mission of the Full House Community. He says: "I would like to help people like myself to know better God and His mercy. I know that those who have experienced mercy want to share it with everybody as every person is very precious in the eyes of God“.

Karolis, also seeking consecration, has a similar story. This is what he remembers from the time he lived in the world of criminals and addicts: „My life had no sense so I decided to leave this world. With all my strength and courage I took a gun and put it into the throat. And a ray of Divine Mercy suddenly shine out. At that moment I heard a voice: „My dear child, if you do not want to live for yourself, live for others!“ Thus God transformed me completely, purified me in an instance, gave back courage to live, and showed a way to follow“.

Finally Karolis came to our community. He was strengthened, became a social worker's assistant and is seeking to become a consecrated member of our community. His life was not destroyed.

Sometimes God uses my own weakness as I pray for my poor children. I remember one addict who came the community several years ago. He almost had no faith and suffered from migraine since his childhood. After talking to him, I heard a voice in my heart: „Tell him that the Lord will cure his migraine

as a sign that God loves him and wants him to give himself to God. Put your hands on him and pray“.

I did what the Lord asked of me. The migraine disappeared for ever. Since then the young man started telling everybody that God exists and performs miracles.

To conclude I would like to tell you one extraordinary event in the chapel Divine Mercy of the Full House Community.

People from across Lithuania and even abroad come to our Sunday Mass. We pray for healing and deliverance from the evil one. An alcoholic woman and her addict son started visiting us more than one year ago. After some time they were happy to bring us a written witness about their instant liberation from their addictions. Today they are sober and grateful to God. One of the signs of gratitude next to the image of the Merciful Jesus, given to us by His Eminence Audrys Juozas Cardinal Bačkis, speaks about the miracle.

We are daily witnesses to miracles of Divine Mercy. Glory be to the Lord for his mercy and constant graces. They could be proved by a number of other miracles that I have not mentioned. I believe that the daily life of our every brother could be a hymn to Divine Mercy. The bigger is our poverty, the more our heart opens to God. And God does not delay to come through the open door of the heart in order to save, heal, liberate and give strength to lead a life of God's children.