

## ***THE SHRINE***

### **Its Application to the Shrine of Our Lady of South Carolina Our Lady of Joyful Hope**

**by Rev. Stanley Smolenski**

The Vatican documents *The Shrine* and *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* define the nature of shrines: “The term ‘shrine’ designates a church or other sacred place to which the faithful make pilgrimages for a particular religious reason, with the approval of the local Ordinary” (Code of Canon Law c.1230). The purpose, characteristics and means of a shrine are specified and include:

- A specific charism that defines the particular message or emphasis of the gospel. “Every shrine can be seen as the bearer of a specific message, since it vividly makes present today the foundational event of the past which still speaks to the heart of pilgrims.” (*The Shrine* 1) “Each shrine needs to develop a suitable catechesis...; emphasis should be placed on the specific aspects linked to the memory of each particular shrine, to its own particular message, to the ‘charism’ entrusted to it by the Lord and recognized by the Church, and to the heritage of traditions and customs, frequently very rich, that have taken place there.” (*The Shrine* 10)

The particular charism of the Shrine of Our Lady of South Carolina, Our Lady of Joyful Hope, is Eucharistic and Marian, in particular the rosary, in her special relationship with the Eucharist, as taught by Pope John Paul II in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* 53.

- A foundational event of a shrine that directs the charism of the shrine. “Every shrine can be seen as the bearer of a specific message, since it vividly makes present today the foundational event of the past which still speaks to the heart of pilgrims.” (*The Shrine* 1)

The foundational event of the Shrine of Our Lady of South Carolina, Our Lady of Joyful Hope, can be considered to be the blessing of her icon and especially the entrustment of the Diocese of Charleston to her maternal care. This occurred at the Diocesan Celebration of the Year of the Rosary on 5 October 2003 by Bishop Robert J. Baker. The shrine in Kingstree can be considered as a votive chapel to commemorate that event and as a means of developing the spirituality inherent in the icon and its consecration.

- A specialized shrine staff: “To this end, a shrine needs the presence of pastoral workers capable of helping people to enter into dialogue with God and to contemplate the immense mystery that enfolds and attracts us. The significance of this ministry of the priests, religious and communities in charge of shrines must be stressed, and consequently the urgent need for them to receive proper training for the service they are called to provide. At the same time, encouragement should be given to lay people trained to carry out the work of catechesis and evangelization associated with the life of the shrine. In this way shrines too will express the wealth of charisms and ministries that the Holy Spirit awakens in the Lord’s Church, and pilgrims will benefit from the varied witness given by different pastoral workers.” (*The Shrine* 10)

The spirituality of the Kingstree shrine is centered on the Eucharist, that is, the Paschal Mystery of the Altar, according to the teaching of the magisterium of the Church, in particular that of the Servant of God Pope John Paul II. *Optatam Totius* 8 presents the paschal mystery as a model for priests for their own sanctification and that of their people: “Priests should so live the paschal mystery themselves that they can initiate into it the flock committed to them.” *The Code of Canon Law* (c.387) obliges bishops to promulgate it in their diocese: “Mindful that he is bound to give an example of holiness, charity, humility and simplicity of life, the diocesan Bishop is to seek in every way to promote the holiness of Christ’s faithful according to the special vocation of each. Since he is the principal dispenser of the mysteries of God, he is to strive constantly that Christ’s faithful entrusted to his care may grow in grace through the sacraments, and may know and live the paschal mystery.” Since a spirituality of the paschal mystery should be central in the diocesan plan of pastoral care, the Eucharistic charism of the shrine of Our Lady of South Carolina – Our Lady of Joyful Hope enhances such a development in the Diocese of Charleston for both the clergy and the laity.