

THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL A CASE OF FALSE PROPHECIES AND LIES

The appearances of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Rue de Bac, Paris, in 1830 show that the veneer of credibility that the Church casts over her ability to authenticate apparitions is totally artificial. The information comes from The Evidence for Visions of the Virgin Mary.

The visionary was a nun called Catherine Laboure, aged 24 who entered the convent the same year she had the first visions. She was hardly a few days in the convent until she claimed that she had a vision of the heart of St Vincent de Paul. All the accounts agree that she was desperate to have a vision of the Blessed Virgin and often prayed to her guardian angel and St Vincent de Paul that this would happen. Before the first Marian vision, Catherine was convinced that her wish would be granted and went to bed on the night of the 18th July 1830 convinced her prayer would be answered. An angel woke her up and she followed it to the chapel. Mary came to her and sat in the director's chair and gave her several prophecies that never came true. The Archbishop of Paris was to die by violence and this never took place. Mary next appeared on November 27th of that year when she showed Catherine how she wanted a medal to look. She told Catherine to have the medal struck and that it would be a great source of grace. A prayer was to be pressed on the medal as the Virgin wished, "O Mary Conceived without Sin, Pray for us who have Recourse to Thee". The medal became famous for its miraculous powers and got nicknamed the Miraculous Medal.

The false prophecies, the fact that the devotion of the Miraculous Medal made it easy for Pius IX to lead the Church further away from the Bible and reason by making it obligatory to believe that Mary was conceived without original sin all prove that the vision was not from Heaven. Against the rule of St Francis de Sales that visions should not be desired, Catherine was rewarded by her desperate wish to see Mary with a number of apparitions of her. This sanctions her sinful desire. Francis declared in the Church approved book, Introduction to the Devout Life, chapter 37, that there is much vanity and deceit in desiring visions and ecstasies for they are so dangerous to the soul. He did not approve, he said, of people desiring things that they did not need in their calling. Nobody saw Catherine having her first vision so she could have been lying or deluded herself. The second was not noticed though she was in chapel praying with the community but they did think she was in ecstasy. Little attention was paid to her trance and she was not tested for fakery. She hid her identity for years so the people knew there was an alleged visionary they did not know who she was. So there was no way of knowing if she was insane at the time she had her visions. She would need a lot of contact with people to be able to work out if there was any psychosis there. But she was a recluse from the outside world as nuns are. Apparitions are more convincing when they are spontaneous.

The Miraculous Medal apparitions prove that the Church is lying when it says it only accepts an apparition as true and of divine origin when there is no logical alternative for there are more convincing apparitions. The conversions worked by the medal only prove that the story behind the medal turned people on not that the story was true. And the conversions cannot be attributed solely to the medal. When people prayed for sinners to convert they appealed to a lot of different devotions and saints. The argument that the apparitions were true because of the alleged fruits is itself a fraud and another indication that the apparitions were satanic for they led to lies and delusion. When the blood of Jesus is the fountain of grace in Catholicism one would expect Mary to have a medal done for it instead of herself for it is better to stress the foundational things. Most people only wear about one medal and she is making sure that it is one of her own. Odd. These things create so many puzzles that it is wiser to not believe in them at all.

The false prophecies of St Catherine Laboure

St Catherine Labouré, a novice, claimed that she had visions of the Virgin Mary in the chapel of the Daughters of Charity convent Rue du Bac in Paris. The Miraculous Medal was revealed to her during these visions. The Miraculous Medal is a major devotion in the Roman Catholic Church.

One of Catherine's superiors recorded that Catherine was fond of making predictions about the future that never happened.

"Sister Catherine expresses her ideas to me with the simplicity of a child. When reality would not confirm her predictions, she would calmly say to me, 'Ah, well, Sister, I was mistaken. I thought I had told you the truth. I am quite content that one knows the truth.'"

Catherine saw Jesus on June 6, 1830 who supposedly indicated to her that the king, Charles X would abdicate near the end of July that year. There is no evidence that this prophecy was made before the event. That makes her claims suspect.

It seems that rather than a prophecy, she had a vision of Jesus whose finery fell off and she took that to symbolise the abdication of the King. See page 115 of Marian Apparitions, The Bible and the Modern World (Donal Anthony Foley, Gracewing Publishing, 2002). "Our Lord appeared to me in the Blessed Sacrament, in the form of a king with a cross on His Breast. At the gospel it seemed to me that the cross slipped under the Feet of Our Lord, and that all His kingly jewels fell to the ground. Then I was filled with the gloomiest thoughts about our earthly king being dethroned, and despoiled of his royal garments" - page 27. See the book, Venerable Sister Catherine Laboure. Burns and Oates and Washbourne 1920. She was no better than a fortune-teller. Had she been wrong she would have said, the apparition was true but my interpretation is faulty. That is not a very good start for a would-be visionary.

It is only the visions of Mary that the Church has authenticated. But we cannot simply just ignore the other apparitions. If God does miracles and is behind science as well then he will not do a miracle that he has not organised a scientific assessment of. To disagree is to admit that science and Catholicism are incompatible. It would be to say Catholicism is indeed superstition. Had her visions been real at all they would all be subject to examination to see how believable they are.

She saw a priest say Mass in a dream. She said the priest told her God had a plan for her. She woke wondering what it all meant. She took the dream as a vision. She claimed that she saw a picture of St Vincent de Paul in a hospital and said this was the priest she saw in her dream. This episode will later prove significant.

The first apparition of Mary supposedly took place on the night of the 18 July 1830. Catherine had prayed to St Vincent de Paul to ask the Virgin Mary to appear to her and she went to bed believing she would see her that night.

Catherine went to bed and fell asleep. An angel in the form of a five year old male child came for her when she was in bed and led her to the chapel to meet Mary. The chapel was beautifully lit up. Mary took a seat in the spiritual director's chair. Catherine placed her hands in the Virgin's lap.

Catherine wrote, "At first, I doubted if it were really the Blessed Virgin I saw, though the child had said, The Blessed Virgin is coming. It would be impossible for me to say how inwardly convinced I felt that it was not the Blessed Virgin I saw, when suddenly the child spoke, no longer as a child, but as a strong man with stern words. Looking again at the Blessed Virgin, I flew to her feet, and knelt on the altar steps with my hands resting on her knees. Then passed the sweetest moment of my life, which it is impossible to describe. She told me how to act in regard to my Director, and several other things that I may not repeat, also that in my troubles I was to come (pointing with her left hand to the tabernacle) and throw myself at the foot of the altar, and place my heart there where I would receive all the consolation I would need.

[A true visionary will not keep anything back. The authorities need to be told all in order to decide whether the vision could be from God or not. When Catherine met the woman, she said she thought it was St Anne the mother of Mary. "A lady was sitting-just like St Anne, only it wasn't the face of St Anne. I doubted if it was the Virgin Mary - see page 168, The Cult of the Virgin Mary, Psychological Origins, Michael P Carroll, Princeton, New Jersey, 1986. The vision was modelled on the picture of St Anne in the chapel, it wore the same colour of dress as Anne in the picture - ibid page 169. So many apparitions seem to be directly inspired by something the visionary has seen already - just like dreams would be. Liars would weave truth into their tales to help them keep to the same story. If you have not seen Mary but say you have and describe some picture of her or somebody like her that makes your story more solid].

I asked her the meaning of what I had before seen, and she explained it all to me. . . . She then said: * My child, Almighty God wills to entrust a mission to you. You will have much to suffer. but you will be able to bear it, by remembering that you are working for the glory of God.

[In fact this is a false prophecy. Catherine did not have to suffer much - she was only an ordinary person with ordinary problems. Nobody knew she was having visions only her spiritual director. She only told others in the year she died. She had a tranquil and ordinary and healthy life ending in a peaceful painless death. Want proof? A Sister, in one of her letters, thus refers to Catherine after her death: "Having passed six years with Sister Catherine, and having worked for a whole year with her, it might reasonably be supposed that I could give a great number of details, full of interest and edification; but I myself am astonished at being compelled to say that the life of this good Sister was so simple, so uniform, that I could see nothing remarkable. I must own to you, dear Sister, that, in spite of hearing the report, that it was she who had been so privileged by the Blessed Virgin, I could hardly believe it for her life seemed just like that of anyone else.]

"You will recognise what comes from God, and you will be uneasy until you have told it to him who has charge of directing you. You will be contradicted, but fear nothing, for you will be strengthened. Tell your Director everything, fearlessly, and with confidence and simplicity."

[The director had forbidden Laboure to even mention her experiences to him before- Foley page 114. This conflicts with the command of the Virgin. Catholicism teaches that all must be told because of the danger of being led astray by oneself or

by Satan or both. Yet disobedience to the director is never allowed. The Church says that the voice of the Church suffices and that apparitions must complement that authority and uphold it. The only plausible deduction is that Mary would not appear to anybody whose director would forbid her to protect herself.]

"You will see certain things; give an account of them exactly as you will be inspired in your prayers. Times are very bad. Misfortunes will fall on France - -the throne will be abolished the entire world will be convulsed by misfortunes of all kinds (the Blessed Virgin looked very sad when saying that); but come to the foot of this altar, whence graces will be shed on all who will ask with confidence and fervour. They will fall both on the great and on the little. My child, I love to bestow my favours in a special manner on this community, which I love so much. I am sad; there - are great abuses, the rule is not observed, regularity is wanting, and there is a great relaxation in the two communities. Tell him who directs you that, though he will not be Superior, he will one day be charged in a particular manner with the community, and he is to do his utmost to restore the rule in all its vigour; tell him, from me, that he must watch over useless reading, the loss of time, and the visits. When the rule will be restored in vigour, another community will wish to be united to yours. This is against the ordinary custom, but that community is dear to me so tell them to receive it. God will bless the union, and all will enjoy a great peace, and the community will increase. But great misfortunes will come. The danger will be great, but have no fear, for Almighty God, and St. Vincent, will protect the community . . . (the Blessed Virgin was still sad), and I myself will be with you; I have always watched over you; I will grant you many favours. The moment will come when all will seem to be lost; then I shall be with you; have confidence. You will recognize my presence, and the protection of God, and of St. Vincent, over the two communities. But it will not be so with the other communities; they will have victims . . . (the Blessed Virgin had tears in her eyes when saying this to me). "Among the clergy in Paris there will be many victims. . . . His Grace the Archbishop will die. My child, the cross will be despised, blood will flow in the streets (here the Blessed Virgin could no longer speak; her face showed her sorrow). My child, she then said to me, the whole world will be in sorrow." At these words I thought, When will it be ? and I understood clearly Forty years and ten, and after that peace. I do not know how long I stayed there; all I know is that when she left, it seemed as if some light was extinguished, or rather as if a shadow vanished, by the side of the tribune, in the same direction as she had come.

Here is a similar version of what Mary said, "Tell all that takes place within you with simplicity and confidence. You will see certain things; you will receive inspirations in prayer. Give an account of everything to him who has charge of your soul. Tell your spiritual director all that passes within you. Times are evil in France and in the world. Great troubles are about to happen in France. The danger will be great. But do not be afraid. The good God and St. Vincent will take care of the Sisters of Charity and the Priests of the Mission. My child, The cross will be treated with contempt. It will be hurled to the ground and blood will flow. Many priests will be put to death. The Archbishop will die. The streets will run with blood. My child, the whole world will be filled with trouble and sorrow. My child, the good God wishes to give you a mission. Later I shall let you know what it is. You will have much to suffer. But do not be afraid. The days are evil. Terrible things are going to happen in France. The King's throne will be overturned. The whole world will be filled with trouble of every kind. But come to the foot of this Altar often. Here many graces will be given to everyone who asks for them. They will be given to the rich and to the poor, the great and the lowly. You will have the protection of God and Saint Vincent. I always will have my eyes upon you. There will be much persecution."

[Laboure plays it coy. She does not say it was revealed to her that it would all take place within fifty years but that she thought it would. That the world would endure great sorrow implies that this sorrow is worse than any sorrow endured by the world in the past. But this didn't happen in the fifty years. "Misfortunes will fall on France - -the throne will be abolished the entire world will be convulsed by misfortunes of all kinds" reveals that the Virgin links the world calamity with the fall of the monarchy in France. They happen close together. The Archbishop of Paris, Mgr. Darboy, was killed 41 years later in 1871. The prophecies were recorded after the events in 1876.]

Mary said, "God wishes to charge you with a mission. You will have to suffer much in the performance of it, but the thought that it will be for the glory of God will enable you to overcome all your trials. You will be opposed, but do not be afraid. Grace will be given you to do what is necessary."

All the prophecies came true except one. And no wonder most them came true when they were not recorded until 1876 - after the events! However, the account may not entirely be post-event prophecy. There is evidence that she was indeed making guesses about the future.