

Are the Mary Apparitions Fake?

INTRODUCTION

This book is about the Marian apparitions in the Catholic Church and why they cannot be accepted as having the right to tell us what to do and how we should live. We will see how it is best to pay no attention to them and despise their message. People find apparitions and the related miracles fascinating but the truth about them is just as interesting. For not it is enough to say that the Catholic Church boasts of having a faith that has not been added to since the apostles and that these things do not add to divine revelation. But they do for a miracle is a miracle and a revelation is a revelation. They are more convincing which tells us how bad the evidence of the apostles for Christianity was.

Some apparition sites honour vindictive visions. Read pages 208 and 209 of Everything You Know About God is Wrong, The Disinformation Guide to Religion, Edited by Russ Kick, The Disinformation Company, New York, 2007. There you will see that The Glories of Mary by St Alphonsus de Ligouri that the Virgin Mary was seen by people, who affirmed on oath, setting fire with torches to a house of immoral entertainment at Montevergine in 1611. Her arson resulted in the deaths of 1,500 people. Our Lady of Medous caused an epidemic of plague in 1648. The Church later changed the story to make it seem the Virgin had halted the epidemic. St Rita of Cascia prayed for God to kill her sons to stop them committing serious sin and it worked and she later became a nun and was famed for miracles and leaving a corpse that has been reported to move by itself since her death.

Marian apparitions almost always induce a state of ecstasy upon the witnesses. The witnesses hardly blink during the vision and stare upwards in a trancelike state. They say they are enraptured in joy. But there is no authority for ecstasy at all in the Bible. The resurrection witnesses did not claim - as far as we know - to have gone into such a trance. Paul speaks of visions but does not mention the trance. Jesus said we must do all the good we do to give God joy and do it only for him. He is the ultimate value. Marian ecstasy have people finding intense happiness in the presence of the Virgin and their focus is on her alone. Thus the ecstasy is a sign that if the apparition is supernatural then it is not from God.

The Church itself teaches that most apparition claims are probably not from God. Apparitions such as Medjugorje and Garabandal have caused huge trouble for the Church as has many others. Clearly it is best not to pay much attention to apparitions at all!

LOURDES

The Virgin supposedly appeared to Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes in 1858. The spot was an infectious dump and this Lady had Bernadette eating grass from it and her and the people drinking from a spring that was there all along according to shepherds at the time (page 87, 222, The Appearances of the Blessed Virgin; Mother of Nations, page 94). The Virgin asked them to do something dangerous over appearances that were not checked for authenticity yet! She was a devil. Bernadette lied when she said the Lady was the same size as herself and Bernadette was too small for her age for she said that the girl looked 16 or 17. The Lady promised to take Bernadette to Heaven which is against Catholic doctrine which says nobody is to know that. The Lady never promised cures but they are what Lourdes is famous for. Strange that there are no wooden legs lying about it.

As for the allegedly proven miracles of healing at Lourdes which are 64 in number they are not as above suspicion as the evidence says and as one would think (page 177, Believing in God). Some of the people were examined too long before their alleged cure and there is doubt about the diagnosis of others. The Abbe Fiamma was cured of hideous ulcers on the skin in 1908. The healing was reported to be instant but there is no proof that they were not healed between the last examination the date of which is unknown and his dip in the bath of holy water at Lourdes to which he attributed his cure.

In a small book called Spiritual Healing we read that the famous case of John Traynor's cure from epilepsy and paralysis at Lourdes was never recognised by the Church (71-74). Traynor had problems recalling all about his sicknesses after the cure which could have led to the medical experts being confused and thinking there was a miracle where there was none. They would have depended on his testimony more than on anything else. Traynor died in 1943. Delizia Cirollie had a tumour that would kill her on her knee. She went to Lourdes in August 1976 and nothing happened and she was cured in December at home. The tumour disappeared gradually. The Church recognised this as a miracle which was strange. It did not look like a miracle. The cure was not at Lourdes nor was it instant. The Church had decreed that a cure had to be instant. There are many mysteries about cancer (89) and they are enough to prevent one being surprised if cancer disappears. The Medical Bureau could not come to a consensus on what was wrong with her. Years later it was claimed by some of them that she had

Ewing's Tumour that nobody had been diagnosed from (76). This disease is so rare and obviously hard to diagnose as the Bureau's problems with it show that one wonders what grounds they have for declaring that once one has it they are stuck with it until it kills them. Diagnoses after the event and when nobody could come to a definite consensus at the time of sicknesses are not convincing.

On the Channel 4 documentary of 1998, *The Miracle Police*, it was revealed that the disease could have been tubercular or a strange infection that burnt out for the reports and x-rays are capable of different interpretations. The knee was not examined properly between Lourdes and December. Also, the girl seemed to be dying because the tumour was untreated. Would the Virgin Mary send a miracle in a case where the child should have had the leg amputated and did not do it? Yes she was right not to but only in hindsight. If you believe and have reason to believe even wrongly that a limb should be removed that is what you have to do. Our Lady implies approval for this carelessness and stubbornness. The girl's Archbishop as always got the medical reports and pronounced it a miracle. Now what would a bishop know? Only scientists and doctors have the right to say if something is a miracle. The miracle exploits science and then it disregards it as if it were nothing. The miracle could be interpreted as satanic for all these reasons if it was a miracle. And the Lourdes' Bureau said it was the best case they had examined which reflects badly on the other cures it declared inexplicable. And all doctors know that what is inexplicable need not be a miracle.

A book published in 1957 called *Eleven Lourdes Miracles* by Dr D J West showed that the healed people probably had not been diagnosed right and it was not certain that the cures were triggered by Lourdes and the role of suggestion was not excluded for the records were kept in insufficient detail (*Spiritual Healing*, page 79). I would add that if records are badly kept then there could be outright blunders in which fiction is reported as fact.

The Lourdes Medical Bureau has proclaimed some cures to be impossible to explain. Other medical bodies have checked its work and found explanations for them (page 150, *Looking for a Miracle*). This is not surprising for medicine requires a lot of interpreting and opinions. A woman was once found to be miraculously free of a disease in one instance and yet some years later she died from it so her being given the all clear was a mistake! The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* reported that American doctors found the documentation in favour of 1976 inexplicable cure outlined earlier to be equivocal and unscientific (page 151). It is strange that God says miracles are signs meaning that he will ensure they are verified and then does little about such false misleading claims. Most people would believe them.

It is no wonder that the medical reports that verify healings that are taken as miracles showing the Church should canonise people invoked for the cures as saints are highly confidential in the Vatican. This dishonesty is terrible. The cured people will talk about what happened so what is the Vatican hiding?

FATIMA

The Virgin Mary supposedly appeared six times to three children at Fatima in Portugal in 1917. There wasn't much written down about the visions before World War Two which leaves considerable scope for Lucia the only surviving visionary to exaggerate and tell lies (page 72, *The Evidence for Visions of the Virgin Mary*). The other children made no record having died soon after the visions. Lucia kept some things back until 1941 as she admitted in her memoirs.

It is disturbing that she never mentioned the prophecy about a second world war and a mysterious light that would be the sign that it was coming until after both took place. Frauds always give prophecies after the event.

The most important secret of Fatima about Russia and the need for the whole Church to consecrate the world to Mary and that Portugal will always have the faith was hidden until 1942 (*Fatima Revealed ... and Discarded*, page 134). Hiding the secret was dishonest for the people and the Church have a right to know everything to see if the apparition should be believed or not. She could have made the visions up. Why reveal then and not before unless she was inventing the messages? The Virgin told the children she would see them for six consecutive months on the thirteenth. But on one occasion she did not appear for the children were in custody so she appeared on a later day at Valinhos. The Lady was a liar. She made a mistake in telling Lucia what day the First World War would end and Lucia tried to make out that she misremembered what she had been told. The real Virgin would not have risked letting the children forget. Lucia was making up the messages and she was the leader of the trio.

Only part of the crowd, which could have been as large as 70,000 people saw the famous solar miracle (page 78, *The Evidence for Visions of the Virgin Mary*, page 173, *Believing in God*), and there were few written reports about it and no two people saw the same thing. Hysteria and tricks of the light, which are inevitable if one stares at the sun, and outright lies to abet the campaign against the anticlerical government explain everything. Moreover, since even Church approved visions are optional for belief what right would the real Virgin have to ask people to risk eye-damage by looking at the sun to act upon the evidence before the evidence was granted? Apparitions are supposed to remind Catholics about the truths of

their faith and do not add to that faith. Yet apparitions like Fatima give new revelations about most people going to Hell for sexual sin and about the need for the world to be saved by consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and gave prophecies. La Salette and Medjugorje and Garabandal all made the same mistake.

KNOCK

In Knock, Co Mayo, on the 21st of August 1879 the Virgin Mary flanked by St Joseph and St John the Evangelist and an altar with a lamb and cross on it allegedly appeared on the gable wall of the Parish Church to fifteen people.

Beirne stated that the Virgin's crown was somewhat yellow. A real miracle would have had a gold crown.

There is a serious problem as to why the vision was only witnessed by the family and friends of the first visionary though there were plenty of other people in Knock. Did she know that there was something odd about the whole thing that made her afraid to go to unbiased people?

Another interesting point is that Mary Beirne could have moulded the perception of the others of what was seen at the gable for she quickly took on a leadership role and was the first to suggest it was the Virgin Mary (page 206, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary*). She seems to have been behind the acceptance by the witnesses that the bishop was St John the Evangelist. It is interesting that God would send John holding a book to suggest he wrote the Fourth Gospel when scholarship shows that he did not. Anyway there could have been a strange light and she led the rest to think they saw these figures inside the light. The illusion hypothesis is a possibility.

Knock cannot be from God because the first commission was careless and did not ask the right questions or work out why the witnesses were sometimes contradicting one another (page 66, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary*). God would do better than that. The first commission is the most important one. They did not try to explain why there was a dispute about if there was a Lamb there or not or if there were glittering stars or if the crown was somewhat yellow or gold or if there were angels flying about or if there was a cross on the altar that appeared in the vision with the Lamb standing on it. Patrick Hill was known to have added a lot to his original description when he was interviewed in 1897.

The book, *The Apparition at Knock, A Survey of Facts and Evidence* by Fr Michael Walsh is a good read. Page 20 tells us that the figures seemed to move out and then backwards according to Patrick Hill's testimony. That is what something being projected from a machine would do. Some but not all the witnesses said the figures moved, but it is a very easy thing to imagine. Bridget Trench said they didn't move (page 29). Page 47 has top witness Mary Beirne saying the vision of Mary had a yellow whiteness. She didn't see the vision's feet but Bridget Trench said they were visible and tried to touch them (page 29). She also said that the images seemed to retreat into the wall when approached – maybe that was an illusion. When you are far off a projected image it is easier to think it is three dimensional but when you get close it is easier to see that it is on the wall. She added that she saw attempts to recreate the vision using slides but there was no comparison (page 50). In 1936, she said she couldn't remember seeing a lamb on the altar (page 52). She stated that close up the images seemed painted on the wall (page 62).

The apparition led to people picking the cement out of the Church wall and putting it in danger of collapsing (page 89). Would the Virgin knowing people would do this have appeared at Knock and caused the desecration of a Church? Strangely it got so bad that the stones were being pulled out before anything was done about it. Apparitions of lights on the gable and even of the Virgin herself were seen after the vision but the Church dismissed those stories.

How could God give us fifteen modern witnesses to a miracle when he only gave us a handful of obscure and legendary witnesses to the resurrection? Why is Knock more believable than the resurrection of Jesus though the latter is essential for belief?

The vast majority of believing Catholics believe in their faith because of the alleged miracles of Lourdes and Fatima and often because of the Turin Shroud. This must be dangerous and sinful. They are basing too much on private revelations. They are supposed to base their faith on the resurrection of Jesus not apparitions. But they don't. The resurrection is not a sign for them for they have less interest in it than in the apparitions and visions. They can't even give good believable reasons for holding the resurrection to be fact. If they saw the resurrection as a sign and as good evidence for the authenticity of the Christian faith they would not be building their faith on private revelations. The private revelations have bad fruits no matter how good these fruits look.

It is foolish to believe that the private revelations are really from God.

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THE WEB

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False Visions Which Followed Knock
www.theotokos.org.uk

Critique: "Poem of the Man-God" Medjugorje's Gospel by Brother James,
<http://members.lycos.co.uk/jloughnan/critique.htm>

Saints Preserve Us!
www.forteantimes.com/articles/159_saintspreserved.shtml

PRIVATE REVELATION: UNRAVELLING MEDJUGORJE by Carey Winters
www.geocities.com/militantis/medjugorje.html

This excellent site outlines the errors of famous Catholic visionaries such as Anne Catherine Emmerich and Marie de Agreda which they said their visions told them. But it puts these errors down to the visionaries misunderstanding. This excuse itself accuses God of being slack! It points out that when Satan speaks, in the experience of the Church, he states 99% of the truth that God has revealed and 1 % untruth because every little error helps his cause. In the Church's experience, that is the way it seems to be which means Carey and the Church should not be accepting the visions of Emmerich and Agreda. The former stated that there was a terrestrial paradise near Tibet and the psuedo-Dionysus writings are authentic though they are universally recognised as heretical forgeries advocating a Hindu piety. Thus she fell into heresy. Her miracles defended those errors. Agreda insisted that all must believe her writings which in Church doctrine can only be said of sacred scripture and the infallible dogmas of the Church. Nostradamus claimed that his revelations were given to him by the creator God. Like Agreda he claimed to be the producer of new scripture and was a heretic. The site examines the proof that the apparitions of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje are not from God at all.

BIBLE QUOTATIONS FROM:
The Amplified Bible