

The Power Of The Green Scapular

By a Religious Sister and Devotee.
Catholic Truth Society of Oregon No.pr185 (1985)

Our Lady of Fatima has promised her help to those who, following the divine will clearly expressed in these apparitions, have confident recourse in the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Having not a moment's doubt about her promised help on the one hand, and on the other seeing how little is done about the wishes of God and Our Lady, it is my desire to do everything I can so that at least that which has affected me as a Catholic and a Religious Sister might encourage souls to turn with confidence to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and thus, through my "little grain of sand", add to the propagation of this marvellous devotion.

PART I. A Spiritual Conversion.

With this in mind, when I heard of the great need in which two souls found themselves, I had recourse to the intercession of the Immaculate Heart. It concerned a young man, just married. About a month into his marriage, he fell ill with pneumonia from which he recovered, more or less, though only for a short time. Two or three months later, he caught a viral infection in the brain, which did not leave him much hope of survival, and his state became increasingly fragile. It is not difficult to imagine the consternation and the pain of his young wife, who had not known, until then, that the real cause of his condition was AIDS, and that it was possible that she was infected with it.

Since the man's condition was already very bad, a priest was brought to him who, as is usual, offered him the Sacraments of Confession and Extreme Unction – the Sacrament of the Sick. Knowing his culpability, he refused them although he was still capable of confessing his sins.

Shortly afterwards he lost the use of speech. His exterior comportment manifested clearly the state of his soul, filling his family and all who saw him with deep pain. Expressions of panic, terror and despair passed across his face, a true interior martyrdom at seeing himself face to face with death and with a conscience soiled by the double sin of what he had done to infect himself with this frightful illness, and the crime of not having warned his spouse, living with her the normal life of a married man whilst putting her life at risk as well.

It was then, when I had learned of all this, that I had recourse to the intercession of our gentle Mother and her Immaculate Heart, making greater use of prayer and using the GREEN SCAPULAR, known also as the SCAPULAR OF THE IMMACULATE HEART. I have complete confidence in this miraculous scapular because, besides having been given to us by the Blessed Virgin herself, it works miracles through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart which, as we know, is the devotion DESIRED BY GOD for our times.

Even though I did not doubt its efficacy, I nonetheless asked for it to be applied as quickly as possible to the sick man.

Since there was a delay in doing this, I wrote to the young wife insisting strongly that it be placed by him as soon as possible, adding, "don't be surprised if you see miracles" since I had already

asked for them from Our Lady, saying to her, "I know that you always hear me, my gentle Mother, and I do not doubt your intercession, but permit that this time I ask you for a miracle that may be shown to others. I know that the GREEN SCAPULAR does not fail if it is used with confidence in the humble instruments of salvation given to us by your maternal Heart. For this, for the glory of God and your Immaculate Heart, and for the salvation of many souls, grant me this miracle of conversion, so that I may be of use to him and that poor souls may be encouraged to be confident. If you so wish, pay a visit to this poor son of yours, but in such a way that the others realize what is happening and that you are there."

Shortly afterwards, I had some news.

The sick man became very ill, having vomited and been in great agitation. The priest was again called in, who this time placed the GREEN SCAPULAR on him and gave him Extreme Unction – the Sacrament of the Sick. With this, the man fell peacefully asleep. During the night, he woke up. He seemed very happy, his eyes were luminous and fixed on a precise point in the room, he seemed to be speaking with someone since he answered questions (something he had not been able to do for some time), sometimes, he smiled or wept with great emotion. His mother and sisters (people very far from God) who were present realized that something supernatural was taking place, even though they could see nothing, and they too wept with emotion.

After all this, the state of the sick man, particularly the state of his soul, changed completely. There was no longer the former terror or panic visible in his face, but rather a great peace and happiness. His health, even though not entirely restored, was much better. The attitude of his mother and sisters was completely different; now they prayed willingly, made sure his scapulars were well arranged, etc. When his wife learned of what had happened, she was entirely convinced that Our Lady had come to visit him.

Later on, she asked the sick man: Did Our Lady come to see you?

Yes, he replied with an expression of happiness.

Are you going to get better?

No, he added, but also with an expression of tranquility. He wanted to say what Our Lady had said to him, but he could no longer speak. Just from time to time he could be heard saying things like, "be strong", "the grace of God", etc.

My letter finally reached the woman the day following all these events (I had told no-one of my prayer to Our Lady), and she was able to tell me afterwards: "You told me I must not be surprised if I see miracles with the Green Scapular. I believe the miracle has already taken place, not so much in his body as in his soul." Let us pray that, after a good preparation, his soul goes and unites itself with God and contemplates for all eternity she who granted him the great grace of conversion and peace of soul. Immaculate Virgin, may this account be for the greater glory of God and your glory; and by confidence in the marvellous intercession through the GREEN SCAPULAR, may many souls be saved.

"Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

"AVE COR MARIAE." HAIL TO THE HEART OF MARY!

PART II.

What is the Green Scapular?

The Green Scapular, called by Our Lady, "The Badge of the Immaculate Heart of Mary," was given to the world by the Blessed Virgin Mary through a series of apparitions to Sister Justine Bisqueyburu, a Daughter of Charity, in the early 1840's in Paris, France. On the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, Sept. 8th, 1840, the Mother of God appeared holding in her right hand her Immaculate Heart, mounted by flames and holding in her other hand a scapular.

The scapular consisted of a simple piece of green cloth, rectangular in shape, hanging from a green string. On one side was an image of Our Lady dressed in a long white gown, which reached to her bare feet. Over this, she wore a light blue mantle. However, she wore no veil. Instead, her hair hung loosely about her; and in her hands, she held her Heart from the top of which gushed abundant flames. Her bearing was enhanced by a majestic beauty, all heavenly. On the other side of the scapular was pictured her Immaculate Heart, all ablaze and transparent as crystal, with rays pouring out that appeared more dazzling than the sun. This Heart, pierced with a sword, was encircled by an inscription in the form of an oval and topped by a golden Cross. The inscription read:

"Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us, now and at the hour of our death."

At the same time an interior voice revealed to Sister Justine that God desired to establish among mankind a more tender and confident appreciation and love of His Most Beloved Mother by means of devotion to her through the title of her Immaculate Heart. When invoked under this title and through this holy image, Our Lady would obtain great favors from her Divine Son, especially in the areas of physical health, peace of mind and spiritual conversion. She who is the Refuge of Sinners would particularly obtain the conversion of those who had fallen away from the True Faith, and those poor sinners who had no faith. Mary wanted copies of the scapular made as soon as possible and distributed with great confidence.

Unfortunately, there were many delays. Many were caused by the normal and even healthy skepticism of Sister's superiors and the Church authorities. It takes the discernment of the Church to determine if these apparitions are from Heaven, hell or personal delusion.

Sister Justine suffered much during this time. Finally, after a thorough investigation and careful discernment, the local Bishop approved the apparitions and was ready to permit the spread of this new sacramental. Our Lady, however, had never been clear about certain aspects of this new devotion. Questions needed to be answered. What circumstances were necessary to make the scapular effective? Was there a special blessing for it? Was there a ceremony for enrolling persons in its use? Were there any obligations for those who used it? Was the scapular for use only by certain groups of people or in certain situations?

To resolve these difficulties it was decided that Sister Justine would ask Our Lady herself what God's Holy Will was in these matters. Our Blessed Mother replied during an apparition on September 8, 1846 - exactly six years after her initial request for this "Badge of the Immaculate Heart".

Our Lady replied: This scapular is not like others (it is not the clothing-habit of a confraternity) but merely two holy pictures on a single piece of material. Therefore, no special formula is required to bless it or enroll someone in its use. It suffices that it be blessed by a priest and worn by the one whom we desire to benefit by Our Lady's intercession. If, on the other hand, the person is unable or

even unwilling to wear it or carry it, it may even be slipped, unknown to him, into his clothes, bed, room, or possessions etc.

There is only one prayer that needs to be said, at least once a day: "Immaculate heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death." If the person who is the intended beneficiary of the scapular's use does not say it, then someone else can say it in his place. The Green Scapular may be used anywhere, for anyone. The greatest graces are attached to its use, but these graces are more or less great in proportion to the degree of confidence of the person praying. This was the meaning of the different kinds of rays that fell from the Mother of God's hands at the last apparition.

Has the Green Scapular devotion been very effective?

Favors obtained by invoking Our Lady under this title have been truly remarkable. There have been miracles of health, peace and conversion. At a major national medical center in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., two people were cured of fatal diseases, just a few days from death! Others were on the verge of suicide. Through the Green Scapular devotion, they were given the wisdom to understand why they were so miserable, and the strength to make the changes necessary to bring happiness and hope into their lives. Most importantly, there were truly wonderful graces bringing people in various circumstances to reconcile themselves to Jesus in the fullness of His Truth and grace. Family and friends, who had fallen away from the Catholic Faith, and even those who never had faith, came to embrace the Sacraments (sometimes after being away a lifetime). People involved in dangerous relationships saw their bad companions change for the better or leave the relationship. Work environments witnessed an increase of purity in speech, modesty in dress and charity in behavior.

Part III.

The Testimony of Father Robert A. Macdonald, C.Ss.R. (1961) AMONG MARY'S GIFTS.

Let me tell you the story of how I discovered the Green Scapular. This is my only way of trying to spread a true and tender love of Her Immaculate Heart and of paying my debt to Her. Some years ago, before penicillin was in use, I was lying in a hospital very ill with pneumonia. I began to hemorrhage and the doctors decided to operate as a last resource. Then a little nun came into my room.

"Father, have you great faith in the Mother of God, especially in Her Immaculate Heart? If so, you can be cured."

"How, Sister?"

"Through the Green Scapular."

"What is that?"

"Four years ago, Father, I was operated on for cancer. I was so filled with it, that they just closed me up and sent me away to die. Then I prayed to Our Lady of the Green Scapular; I grew tired of waiting to die and came back to work. I am cured, Father. Do you want me to give you a Scapular?"

"Please, Sister."

With that, she put one over my head. A feeling of tremendous confidence poured into me and the bleeding stopped. Two days later, in the X-ray room, they asked me when the hemorrhage had ceased. When I replied that it was a matter of a couple of days, they expressed great surprise.

"You have a wound that is six months healed and there is no other mark." Today even the scars are gone. No wonder I speak of an unpayable debt to Her Immaculate Heart. Since then I have done everything possible to foster this devotion. To my great joy and amazement, those to whom I have spoken of the Green Scapular have become more zealous than I. Never have I seen the equal of the faith and confidence of these new apostles of Mary.

During May, I asked the rector of St. Patrick's, Toronto, for permission to speak of it at the Wednesday devotions. I had a thousand Green Scapulars on hand, but no one thought that more than thirty would be asked for. The thousand were gone the first morning. The room where we distributed them was so jammed that I feared someone would be injured. The rest of the day, I was besieged on all sides for more. Foolishly, I showed the one I had for myself and it was quickly snatched from my hand!

The Green Scapular is the story of Sister Justine Bisqueyburu. An orphan in early life, she was adopted by a wealthy relative who left her his fortune. Her greatest day of joy was November 27, 1839, when she entered the novitiate of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris. Her Sisters in religion are stationed in Maryland.

They can tell you much better than I the story of a Sister who inspired love and emulation in everyone who met her. One who was a confidante of Pope Pius IX in the dark days preceding his imprisonment in the Vatican; one who was the admiration of the Mohammedans of North Africa; the recipient of the flattering imitation of the famous Florence Nightingale on the battlefields of the Crimea. They can tell you the great efforts she made to keep her identity unknown; how her secret was revealed.

They will repeat the description of the Mother of God, standing in all Her beauty before the young novice, and returning again and again until the Scapular was made and distributed. Telling the young Sister that the Scapular could be blessed by any priest, carried or worn on the person, even left in one's room.

The particular power of this Scapular is that of conversion, to bring Her Son into the hearts of men.

The prayer, and this can be said in favor of another, is: "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death."

Ten years after the manifestation of the Miraculous Medal to Sister [Saint] Catherine Labouré in 1830, the Blessed Mother entrusted the Green Scapular of the Immaculate Heart to Sister Justine Bisqueyburu, likewise a Daughter of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul.

The manner of using the Scapular was indicated by the Blessed Virgin. Since it is not the badge of a confraternity but simply a double image attached to a single piece of cloth and suspended from a cord, investiture is not required. It suffices that it be blessed by a priest and worn by one for whom it is intended. It may be placed in the clothing, on the bed, or simply in the room.

The only prayer is the inscription surrounding the heart on the reverse of the Scapular: "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death." Although wonderful graces are obtained, they are proportionate to the confidence with which it is given.

The Green Scapular was twice approved by Pope Pius IX, in 1863, and again in 1870, when he said: "Write to these good Sisters that I authorize them to make and distribute it."

Part IV.

The Vincentian Story.

Green Scapular.

On Jan. 28, 1840, in Paris, France, the Blessed Virgin appeared to Justine Bisqueyburu, a Daughter of Charity, a Seminary Sister of the Daughters of Charity congregation, while she was at prayer in the convent chapel at Rue du Bac in Paris. This began a series of visits, which culminated in a special gift of Mary: the Green Scapular.

The first four or five visits of Mary with Sister Justine seemed to have no other end than to deepen in the Sister her relationship to the Mother of God. Shortly after, she received the habit of the Daughters of Charity and had been sent to serve the poor by teaching in Blangy, France. When she was at prayer on September 8, 1840, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, she had another apparition of the Blessed Virgin. Mary held in her right hand her heart surrounded by flames, and in her left, a type of scapular. The scapular consisted of a single small piece of green cloth suspended from a cord of the same color. On one side of the piece of cloth was a picture of the Blessed Virgin as she had shown herself in the apparitions. On the other was a heart inflamed "with rays more brilliant than the sun and clearer than crystal."

Our Lady's heart, pierced with a sword, was surrounded by an oval inscription surmounted by a cross. The inscription read, "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death." At the same time, an interior voice revealed to Sister Justine the meaning of the vision and that the scapular should be shared with the world as an instrument in the conversion of souls. Sister Justine told no one other than her superior and her spiritual director, Father Jean-Marie Aladel, of the Congregation of the Mission. The scapular was approved by Pius IX in 1870.

Sister Justine.

Justine Bisqueyburu, (1817-1903), was born in Mauléon, France and lived with her mother's sister. She entered the Daughters of Charity in 1837. Although much of her work was to be in health care, first she taught school in Blangy, France. She then served in Constantinople, Paris, and Algiers. In Algiers, she was in charge of a military hospital. In 1867, Sister Justine was sent to Italy to organize medical care for wounded soldiers. In 1868, she was sent to Carcassone, France to administer a hospital. She remained in Carcassone until her death.

During her retreat in preparation for entrance into the Daughters of Charity, on January 28, 1840 Sister Justine was in the chapel at Rue du Bac in Paris. While she was at prayer Our Lady appeared to her, dressed in a long white gown and a light blue mantle; her hair was not covered. She held the Immaculate Heart; at its top were bright flames. Our Lady said nothing. At the end of the retreat, Our Lady appeared to Sister Justine again and the vision recurred five times during her novitiate. On each occasion, the vision was identical to the first; on each occasion, Our Lady said nothing.

On September 8, 1840, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sister Justine was in Blangy. While Sister Justine was prayer, Our Lady again appeared to her. Although in other ways her appearance was unchanged from previous visions, this time Our Lady held a green scapular in her left hand: a single piece of green cloth strung on green cords. On it was an image of the Blessed Mother as she had appeared to Sister Justine, holding her Immaculate Heart in her right hand. On the cloth's reverse was "a Heart all ablaze with rays more dazzling than the sun and as transparent as crystal". The heart was pierced by a sword, surmounted by a gold cross and with words in the shape of an oval around the heart: "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our

death". Sister Justine heard by an interior voice say that Our Lady wished the scapular to be promoted widely as an instrument in the conversion of souls.

"Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death".
