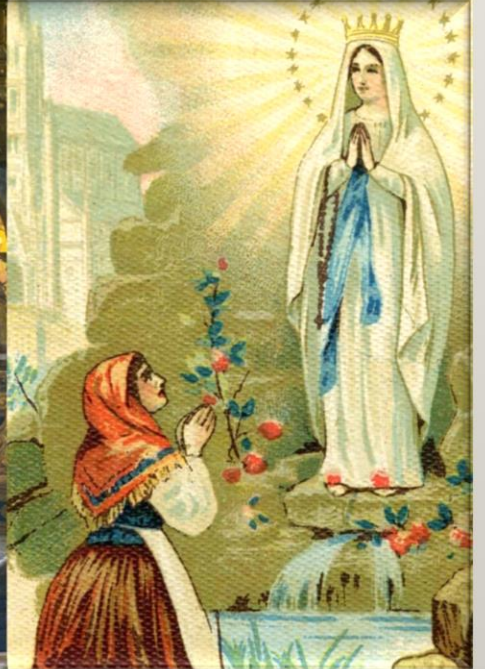
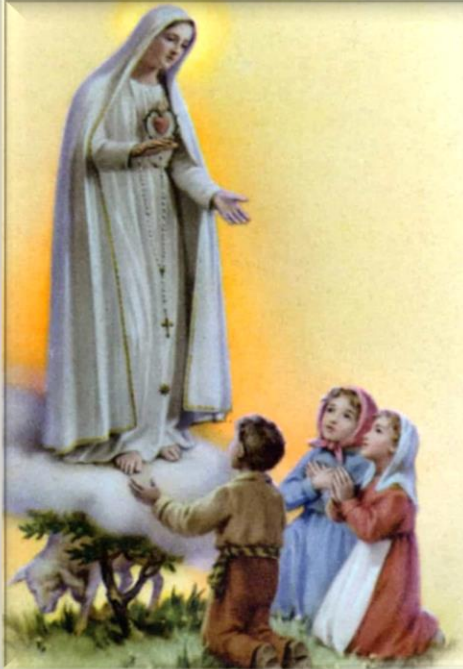


Visions of Jesus and Mary



Since the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ on Calvary, a number of people have had visions of Christ and personal conversations with him. Some people have had some visions as well regarding his mother Mary. In recent centuries, people reporting visions of Jesus have been of diverse backgrounds: laity and clergy, young and old, Catholics and Protestants, devout or casual believers.

Some visions have helped maintain the strength of the Catholic Church through the centuries before being accepted by the Vatican. Saint Juan Diego's reported vision of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico in 1531 was instrumental in adding almost 8 million people to the ranks of Catholics between 1532 and 1538.

Reported Visions:

Churches built based on reported visions of Jesus and Mary attract many millions of pilgrims each year.

On August 19, 1982, some teenagers in Kibeho, Rwanda reported visions of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ, as Our Lady of Kibeho. The teenagers reported truly gruesome sights such as rivers of blood and the visions were accompanied by intense reactions: crying, tremors, and comas. The apparitions were accepted by the local Roman Catholic bishop but have not been given final approval by the Holy Office.

Visions of the early saints:

Saint Francis of Assisi: In 1205, while praying in the Church of San Damiano just outside Assisi, Saint Francis of Assisi reported a vision in which an image of Jesus came alive and told him: "Francis, Francis, go and repair My house which, as you can see, is falling into ruins." This vision led Saint Francis to renounce the outlook of his merchant family, embrace poverty and form the Franciscan order. The Franciscans became a key force in the renewal of the reach of Christianity.

During another vision in 1224 Saint Francis reportedly received the very first recorded case of stigmata. Two years before Francis, the faithful servant of Christ, gave



his soul back to God, he was alone on the top of Mt. Alverna. There he had begun a fast of forty days in honor of the archangel Michael and was immersed more deeply than usual in the delights of heavenly contemplation. His soul became aglow with the ardor of fervent longing for heaven as he experienced within himself the operations of grace.

As he was drawn aloft through ardent longing for God one morning near the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, and was praying on the mountainside, he saw what appeared as a seraph with six bright wings gleaming like a fire descending from the heights of heaven. As this figure approached in swift flight and came near the man of God it appeared not only winged but also crucified. The sight of it amazed Francis and his soul experienced joy mingled with pain. He was delighted with the sight of Christ appearing to him so graciously and intimately and yet the awe-inspiring vision of Christ nailed to the cross aroused in his soul a joy of compassionate love.

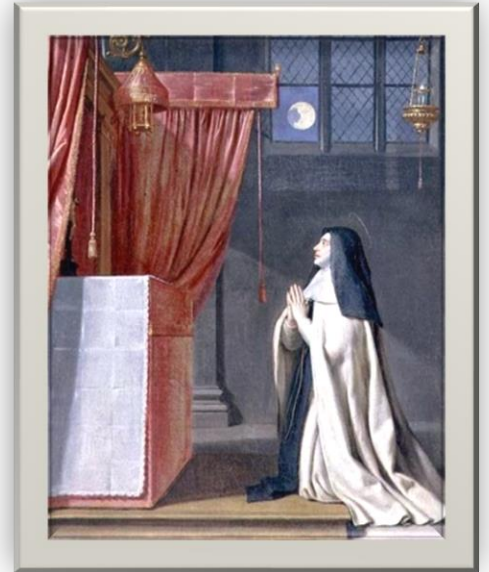
When the vision vanished after a mysterious and intimate conversation it left Francis aglow with seraphic love in his soul. Externally, however, it left marks on his body like those of the Crucified as if the impression of a seal had been left on heated wax. The figures of the nails appeared immediately on his hands and feet. The heads of the nails were inside his hands but on top of his feet with their points extending through to the opposite side. His right side too showed a blood-red wound as if it had been pierced by a lance, and blood flowed frequently from it.

Because of this new and astounding miracle unheard of in times past, Francis came down from the mountain a new man adorned with the sacred stigmata, bearing in his body the image of the Crucified not made by a craftsman in wood or stone, but fashioned in his members by the hand of the living God.

Saint Juliana of Liege :

Starting in 1208, Saint Juliana of Liege had visions of Christ which she kept a secret for almost 20 years. In these visions she was reportedly told to institute a solemn feast for the Blessed Sacrament as the Body of Christ.

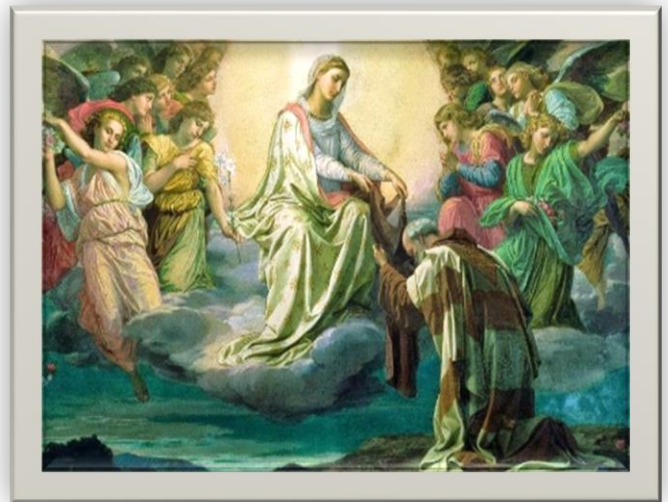
When she eventually reported her visions to her confessor, the information was relayed to the bishop. Years later, in 1264, Pope Urban IV (who was formerly the Archdeacon of Liege) formally declared the feast of Corpus Christi for the whole Latin Rite, as the first papally sanctioned universal feast for the Latin Rite.



Saint Simon Stock:

The Blessed Virgin Mary is traditionally said to have appeared to the English Carmelite priest St. Simon Stock in 1251, and given him the Carmelite habit, the Brown Scapular, with a promise that those who die wearing it will be saved.

Also known as the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the brown scapular is perhaps the best known, and most widespread of all small scapulars.



Saint Catherine of Siena :

was a withdrawn Dominican tertiary who lived, fasted and prayed at home in Siena Italy. In 1366, when she was 19 years old she reported her first vision of Jesus after which she started to tend to the sick and the poor. In 1370 she reported a vision in which she was commanded to abandon her life of solitude and to make an impact on the world.

She corresponded with Pope Gregory XI and other people in authority, begging for peace and for the reformation of the clergy, writing over 300 letters. Her arguments, and her trip to Avignon, eventually became instrumental in the decision of Pope Gregory XI to return the Avignon Papacy to Rome where she was summoned to live until her death. She is one of only three female Doctors of the Church.



Saint Julian of Norwich :

In 1372 Saint Julian of Norwich was on her deathbed and had been given her last rites when she reported a series of visions of Jesus, followed by a sudden recovery. Almost twenty years later she wrote about these visions in her book “Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love” perhaps the first book in the English language written by a woman, presumably because she was unfamiliar with Latin. Her book mentions her illness and her recovery as she saw the shining image of Christ.

The sixteen revelations start with the crown of thorns and proceed through the death of Jesus, ending with his resurrection and how Christ still dwells in the souls of those who love him. She is celebrated in the Anglican Church.



Saint Juan Diego :

In 1531, Saint Juan Diego reported an early morning vision of the Virgin Mary in which he was instructed to build an abbey on the Hill of Tepeyac in Mexico. The local prelate did not believe his account and asked for a miraculous sign, which was later provided as an icon of Our Lady of Guadalupe permanently imprinted on the saint's cloak where he had gathered roses. Over the years, Our Lady of Guadalupe became a symbol of the Catholic faith in Mexico. By 1820 when the Mexican War of Independence from Spanish colonial rule ended Our Lady of Guadalupe had come to symbolize the Mexican nation. Today it remains a strong national and religious symbol in Mexico.



Saint Teresa of Avila :

On St. Peter's Day in 1559, Saint Teresa of Avila (Teresa de Jesús) reported a vision of Jesus present to her in bodily form. For almost two years thereafter she reported similar visions. Saint Teresa's visions transformed her life and she became a key figure in the Catholic Church eventually being recognized as one of only three female Doctors of the Church.

One of her visions is the subject of Bernini's famous work The Ecstasy of St Theresa in the basilica of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome.



Venerable María de Jesús de Ágreda :

In the early 17th century, Venerable María de Jesús de Ágreda reported a number of mystical experiences, visions and conversations with the Blessed Virgin Mary. She stated that the Blessed Virgin had inspired and dictated passages in the book *Mystical City of God* as a biography of the Virgin Mary.

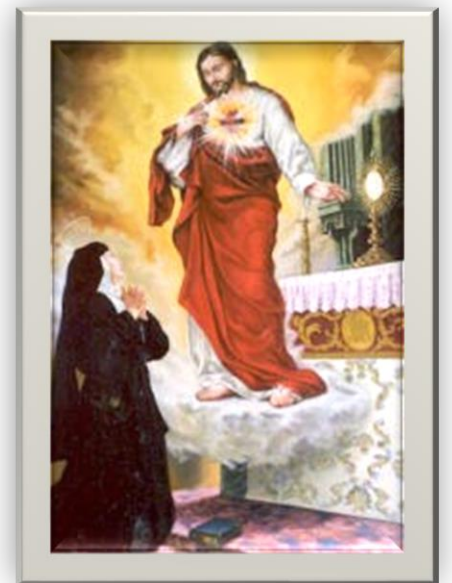


The book *Mystical City of God* is still frequently studied in college and university programs of Spanish language and culture. However, the book (which makes a number of somewhat unusual claims) has remained controversial within the Roman Catholic church, having been banned and restored a number of times, and her process of beatification (started in 1673) has not been completed.

Saint Marguerite Marie Alacoque :

From 1673 to 1675, Saint Marguerite Marie Alacoque recounted a series of visions of Christ speaking to her. In December 1673 she reported that Jesus permitted her to rest her head upon his heart, and then disclosed to her the wonders of his love.

This led her to the founding of the Devotion of the Sacred Heart. Initially, her life, actions, beliefs and writings became the subject of extreme scrutiny by the Catholic Church. However, she was eventually declared a saint in 1920 and the Feast of the Sacred Heart is now officially celebrated 19 days after Pentecost.



Saint Veronica Giuliani :

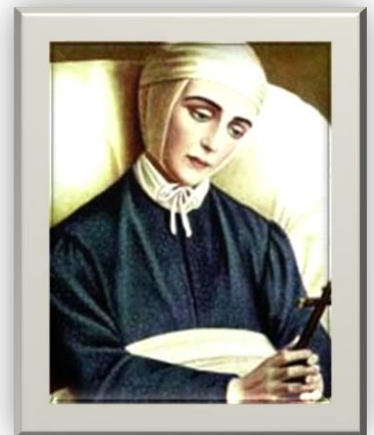
At her profession as a Capuchin Poor Clare nun in 1678, Saint Veronica Giuliani expressed a great desire to suffer in union with the crucified Jesus for the conversion of sinners. Shortly after that time she reported a series of vision of Jesus and the Virgin Mary that lasted a number of years.

She reported a vision of Christ bearing his cross and of the chalice symbolizing the Passion of Christ. On Good Friday 1697 she received the five wounds of Christ as stigmata.



19th Century visions

Anne Catherine Emmerich: was told by Our Lord that her gift of seeing the past, present, and future in mystic vision was greater than that possessed by anyone else in history. Born at Flamske in Westphalia, Germany, on September 8, 1774, she became a nun of the Augustinian Order at Dulmen. She had the use of reason from her birth and could understand liturgical Latin from her first time at Mass. During the last 12 years of her life, she could eat no food except Holy Communion, nor take any drink except water, subsisting entirely on the Holy Eucharist. From 1802 until her death, she bore the wounds of the Crown of Thorns, and from 1812, the full stigmata of Our Lord, including a cross over her heart and the wound from the lance.



Anne Catherine Emmerich possessed the gift of reading hearts, and she saw, in actual, visual detail, the facts of Catholic belief which most of us simply have to accept on faith. The basic truths of the catechism—angels, devils, Purgatory, the life of Our Lord and the Blessed Mother, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the grace of the Sacraments—all these truths were as real to her as the material world. Her revelations make the hidden, supernatural world come alive. Below are some of the most enthralling of these revelations :

She saw that each parish and diocese, each city and country has its own particular and powerful guardian angel.

She saw that the Church never has allowed children of Catholics to be raised outside her fold, and that as soon as solidly established, she banned mixed marriages.

She saw how the various indulgences we gain actually remit specific punishments which otherwise would await us in Purgatory.

She revealed that to gain an indulgence we must approach the Sacraments with true repentance and a firm purpose of amendment—or we do not gain it.

She deposes that it is more holy to pray for the Poor Souls in Purgatory than for sinners who are still alive.

She describes the nature, extent and power of victim souls, and their role in the life of the Church. She describes the condition of St. Lydwine of Schiedam, a victim soul during the time of "three popes," and how her body came apart into three pieces, joined only by the slenderest of sinews. She saw only 6 victim souls in her time working like herself on behalf of the Universal Church, and about 100,000 Catholic people worldwide who were great in their faith.

She revealed that saints are particularly powerful on their feast days and should be invoked then.

She saw that many saints come from the same families, the antiquity of which often extends far back into the Old Testament.

She saw the strong link—even long after their deaths—between holy souls in Heaven and their descendants here on earth, lasting even centuries.

She saw that the Garden of Eden, with all it contained, was a perfect picture of the Kingdom of God.

She revealed that Enoch and Elias are in Paradise where they await their return to the world to preach at the End of Time.

She revealed that Our Lord suffered from the wound in His shoulder more than from any other.

She continually saw a false church, and wicked men scheming against the Catholic Church and doing much harm—both in her own time and in the future.

She saw in a vision the enemies of the Church tearing it down and trying to build a new one on strictly human plans—but none of the saints would lend a hand. Later, this church of men is destroyed and the saints of God join in to rebuild the true Church of God, which becomes more glorious than ever before.

She saw the revival of the priesthood and the religious orders after a period of great decadence.

She describes in detail her visions of heaven, which she saw as "the Heavenly Jerusalem."

Sister Marie of St Peter :

In 1843 , a Carmelite nun in Tours France reported visions of conversations with Jesus and the Virgin Mary in which she was urged to spread the devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus, in reparation for the many insults Jesus suffered in his Passion.

This resulted in the Golden Arrow Prayer. The devotion was further spread from Tours partly by the efforts of the Venerable Leo Dupont (also called the Apostle of the Holy Face) and influenced Saint Therese of Lisieux.



Saint Bernadette Soubirous :

In 1858 Saint Bernadette Soubirous was a 14-year-old shepherd girl who lived near the town of Lourdes in France. One day she reported a vision of a miraculous Lady who identified Herself as the Virgin Mary in subsequent visions. In the first vision she was asked to return again and she had 18 visions overall. According to Saint Bernadette, the Lady held a string of Rosary beads and asked Saint Bernadette to drink water from the spring nearby and to request that the local priests build a chapel at that site of the visions.



Eventually, a number of chapels and churches were built at Lourdes as the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes - which is now a major Catholic pilgrimage site. One of these churches, the Basilica of St. Pius X can accommodate 25 thousand people and was dedicated by the future Pope John XXIII when he was the Papal Nuncio to France.

Venerable Marie Martha Chambon :

In 1866 Venerable Marie Martha Chambon began to report visions of Jesus telling her to contemplate the Holy Wounds, although it is said that she had received her first vision when only five years old.

She was a member of the Monastery of the Visitation Order who lived in Chambéry, France, and is in the process of canonization by the Roman Catholic Church.



Saint Gemma Galgani :

In 1899 Saint Gemma Galgani reported a vision of Jesus after which she experienced recurring stigmata. She reported the vision as follows: “At that moment Jesus appeared with all his wounds open, but from these wounds there no longer came forth blood, but flames of fire. In an instant these flames came to touch my hands, my feet and my heart.”

Thereafter she reported receiving the stigmata every week from Thursday night to Saturday morning, during which time she also reported further conversations with Jesus. The Congregation of Rites has so far refrained from making a decision on her stigmata.



20th Century visionaries

Padre Pio :

The Franciscan Italian priest Saint Pio of Pietrelcina reported visions of both Jesus and Mary as early as 1910. For a number of years he claimed to have experienced deep ecstasy along with his visions.

In 1918, while praying in the Church of Our Lady of Grace he reported ecstasy and visions which this time left him with permanent and visible stigmata, the five wounds of Christ. The stigmata remained visible on his hands and feet for the next fifty years.



Sister Claire of Jesus Crucified: In 1916, during World War I, Claire Ferchaud — in religion, at that time, she claimed to have been given a vision of Christ himself showing his heart "slashed by the sins of mankind" and crossed by a deeper wound still, atheism. On 12 March 1920, however, a decree of the Holy Office disavowed her revelations and stated that belief in the visions of Loublande could not be approved. The Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Léon-Adolphe Amette declared that regretfully he was unable to discover a supernatural inspiration in her statements.

Our lady of Fatima: shepherd children at Fátima, Portugal, in 1917 were declared "worthy of belief" by the Catholic Church in 1930 but Catholics at large are not formally required to believe them. However, five popes — Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict XVI — have supported the Fátima messages as supernatural. Pope John Paul II was particularly attached to Fátima and credited Our Lady of Fátima with saving his life after he was shot in Rome on the Feast Day of Our Lady of Fátima in May 1981. He donated the bullet that wounded him on that day to the Roman Catholic Sanctuary of Fátima, in Portugal. Every year on May 13 and October 13, the significant dates of Fatima apparitions, pilgrims fill the country road that leads to the



Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fátima with crowds that approach one million on each day.

Blessed Alexandrina of Balazar :

Blessed Alexandrina of Balazar, in Portugal, reported many private apparitions, messages and prophecies received directly from Jesus and Virgin Mary. In June 1938, based on the request of her spiritual director Father Mariano Pinho, several bishops from Portugal wrote to Pope Pius XI, asking him to consecrate the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

At that time Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII) was the secretary of the state of the Vatican, and he later performed the consecration of the world.



Saint Faustina Kowalska :

The Holy See has, at times, reversed its position on some visions. In 1931 Saint Faustina Kowalska reported visions of a conversation with Jesus when she was a Polish nun. This resulted in the Chaplet of Divine Mercy as a prayer and later an institution which was condemned by the Holy See in 1958. However, further investigation resulted in her beatification in 1993 and canonization in 2000. Her conversations with Jesus are recorded in her diary, published as "Divine Mercy in My Soul" - passages from which are at times quoted by the Vatican. Divine Mercy Sunday is now officially celebrated as the first Sunday after Easter.



Sister Maria Pierina De Micheli :

On the first Friday in Lent 1936, Sister Maria Pierina De Micheli, a nun born near Milan in Italy, reported a vision in which Jesus told her: “I will that My Face, which reflects the intimate pains of My Spirit, the suffering and the love of My Heart, be more honored. He who meditates upon Me, consoles Me”.

Further visions reportedly urged her to make a medal with the Holy Face. In 1958, Pope Pius XII confirmed the Feast of the Holy Face of Jesus as Shrove Tuesday (the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday) for all Roman Catholics. Maria Pierina De Micheli was beatified by Benedict XVI in 2009.



From 1944 to 1947 the bed ridden Italian writer and mystic Maria Valtorta produced 15,000 handwritten pages of text that she said recorded the visions of her conversations with Jesus about his life and the early church. These pages became the basis of her book *The Poem of the Man God*. The Catholic Church placed it on the Index of Forbidden Books. While the Index no longer exists, the then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger stated in a letter of January 31, 1995 that the condemnation still "retains its moral force", and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith declared that the visions "cannot be considered supernatural in origin."

Some people who are said to have received interior locutions or messages from Jesus prefer not to discuss them in detail. For instance, while the Vatican biography of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta refers to her interior locutions and messages from Jesus, she often referred to them in terms of a “call within a call”.