

# Our Lady of Soufanieh

Personal Testimony of Richard Salbato

When I went to Damascus to do a contract for the American Embassy, I had never heard of Our Lady of Soufanieh. That was very strange since by then I had become one of the world's experts on true and false apparitions. In fact, people from all over the world consulted me on the hundreds of investigations I had done all over the world on real and pretended seers. I did not believe there was any apparition I did not know and had traveled to 30 countries to do these investigations. True ones, I promoted and false ones I exposed resulting in Three Books, 34 Booklets, 28 Audio Tapes, and One Video.

The first thing I did in Damascus was to look for a way to attend daily Mass. I found an Italian hospital with a group of Italian nuns who had Mass every morning at 6:15 A.M. In order to attend the daily mass, I had to become the altar-boy.

On Friday I stayed after Mass and had breakfast with the priest. Without warning he said,

"I have to go and see the Sisters of Mother of Teresa of Calcutta. After, we will go and see the miracle. It is only five minutes from there."

I had no idea what miracle he was talking about but I dearly loved the Sisters and wanted to see them, so I agreed to go. Anyway, it wasn't easy to say, "no" to him. I didn't expect much from this miracle. I had never heard of it, and he spoke of it in a rather matter-of-fact way.

In Damascus it is called, **"Our Lady of Soufanieh."** Soufanieh is a Christian district of Damascus, and its meaning is **"the place of the man who prays all the time."** We saw the Sisters and, as expected, I was in love with them. They were always smiling and happy. They lived in total poverty. They never stopped working, praying, loving, and with a complete joy. "This is what the Church is all about," I told father, "or at least what it should be." We then walked down a narrow street called **"Bab Touma."**

I would later learn that the entire area was called Bab Touma, which means **"Thomas' gate."** Five minutes from the Sisters' home we passed through the "Thomas gate" in the old wall of Damascus. It stands between Bab As-Salaam (gate of peace) and Bab Sharki (east gate). "Between the East and Peace was Thomas;" I thought. Peace between the East and West was only a dream. I said a prayer to St. Thomas and went on. It is only a four-minute walk from there to the House of Ananias and only a ten-minute walk to **Bab Kisan, where Paul was lowered over the wall in a basket.** Passing the gate, we crossed a bridge over the Barada River. We then walked down the left side of the river a few hundred yards.

It was 9:00 A.M. We went through the door without knocking. Through the door was a thin stairway up five feet to the second floor. We had to be careful because there was **a young girl mopping the stairs,** and they were

wet. We went past her and into the patio room. I could tell that at one time it was a central patio, but it was now covered with a corrugated fiberglass roof. In the center of the room was a water fountain. My priest guide walked me right into the room without knocking or talking to anyone and took me to the far wall. On the wall were many religious pictures, flowers, and candles. In the center there was a marble box that looked like a little church. It had a pointed top, four marble columns, and glass on three sides. There was a large padlock on the right side.

Inside the box (or tabernacle) there was a marble dish half full of some kind of oil. Over the dish was a small, inexpensive picture of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child (post-card quality). It was an old Eastern style of painting, similar to "Our Lady of Perpetual Help." The picture was in a broken plastic frame. It was no more than three inches tall and two inches wide. Its value was probably less than one dollar. Considering the frame was cracked on the lower left side and the picture was torn on the upper right side, it was most likely worthless.

"This is the Miracle of Damascus", Father said. "This picture pours out oil."

I looked into the glass. There were oil drops clinging to the bottom of the picture frame, but they were not falling, just clinging there. I waited for him to tell me the rest of this story. Instead he said, "Let's pray the Rosary." He pulled out his beads and started praying. I was not mentally prepared to pray the Rosary, but other people came in and were saying some prayers before the little Icon, so I went along with him. As we prayed, the same mop-woman moved into the room and mopped the floor on her hands and knees.

I was very uncomfortable saying (not praying) the Rosary. Fortunately, I was saved. A man with a mustache came over and spoke good English. "Father, my name is Nicolas. Have you been here before?"

"Yes, I've been here, but my friend is from America, and he has never heard of Our Lady of Soufanieh. This is Rick."

I shook his hand and was glad to have the Rosary stopped. I hadn't come to pray but to see. Besides I was not sure what "Mary" I was praying to.

"You never heard about Soufanieh?"

"No! Father just told me about it yesterday."

"It started right after my wife and I were married. Oil started pouring out of her hands. ..."

**"Oh, so you are the husband?"** Even the priest didn't know we were talking to Mirna's husband.

"Yes, I am her husband. Anyway. ..." and he went on with the story. He talked to us for over thirty minutes giving a good outline of the entire phenomenon. **As he talked, the girl kept mopping the floor with a rag and bucket.** Father indicated that he had to leave, but I was becoming more and more interested. I asked if I might come back that evening. Nicolas said he would be happy to tell me all I wanted to know.

As we started to leave, I said, **"Where is your wife, Mirna, now?"**

**"That's Mirna."** He pointed to the woman mopping the floor and called her over in Arabic. She stood up and wiped the water off her hands with her apron. She came and shook my hand without saying a word and then went back to her work. I have to admit I thought she was a servant. Her clothes were very plain. She wore no makeup, and servants were very common and very cheap in Syria. I was shocked.

I had personally seen seven so-called seers and mystics. This one was very different.

As we left, more people came in to pray. No one knocked on the door. This was their home? This was where they ate and drank and slept? **But the door was always open!**

That night I went back to their home by myself. It was about 4:00 P.M. There was a group of people praying before the Icon. Before I left, there were more than sixty people crowded in the little patio praying the Rosary and singing songs to Our Lady.

Nicolas spotted me and invited me into his living room, which was in the front of the house and two steps higher than the central patio. In the living room was a small iron stove with a pipe that ran up about ten feet and then off to the right and through the wall. There were another ten people in the living room which had five old couches in it. There were two coffee tables. Four of the people on the couches were priests.

I could tell by their dress one was Greek Orthodox and the rest were Roman Catholic. They were talking in Arabic. Nicolas sat me down and we talked. Mirna came and went into the patio without talking to anyone. She passed out prayer cards, took care of her children, changed the diapers of her youngest boy, served tea to the priests, sang songs with the crowd of people, but never led in the prayers or in the songs. In fact, no one seemed to pay any attention to her. She didn't give anyone any special attention. If I hadn't known who she was, I would never have guessed it was she.

Nicole (we were getting more personal) continued to tell me the story. I told him for the first time that I was a writer. I started to ask some very difficult questions. I had decided I was going to write this story whether this was from God, from Satan, or simply fraud. There was a lot more to this apparition than any I had written about so far, and the others were known all over the world.

This one was almost unknown in the Western world. The story became more and more interesting. My questions became more difficult. Nicole had never had anyone ask these kinds of questions. He confessed that he and Mirna almost knew nothing of theology. He was Greek Orthodox. She was Catholic. He had some religious education. She had almost none. The priests in the room couldn't speak English.

Nicole phoned **Father Elias Zahlaoui**. He had witnessed the miracle from almost the very first day. He was also very well educated in theology. Nicole asked him to meet with me. Father E. Zahlaoui spoke some English but not very well, so Nicole recommended that he bring along a translator.

Really, I didn't understand why I was getting all this special attention. Many other people came and went in this house without even meeting the family. I had already met the aunts, sisters, brothers, grandmothers, everyone. Although, at this point I hadn't heard Mirna say one word. She seemed like a Martha to me (re: Martha and Mary story in the Bible).

## Seven Years of Documents

I went to Father E. Zahlaoui's church, Our Lady of Damascus. Waiting for me in the street was my interpreter. "Are you Rick?" he asked. "I'm Jack. Father E. Zahlaoui asked me to meet you out here and show you in." Jack turned out to be invaluable to me. First of all, he was better in the English language than I was. Jack Sarkis Toumajyan had ABA, MSC, and Ph.D. He was Professor of the Department of English at the University of Damascus. He had a strong Catholic faith but was not caught up in miracles. He was a good friend of Father E. Zahlaoui, but he had been too busy to check into this miracle himself. He was preparing for marriage, building a new house, teaching, and he lived outside of town without a car. The fact that he had no opinion about the miracle was beneficial.

Father E. Zahlaoui was a rather large man with a very gentle, loving way about him. He was soft spoken. He never rushed an answer. He was well educated but didn't show off his knowledge. I couldn't help but like him. However, I couldn't afford to let that sway me. I jumped in with both feet.

**"Father, I am a writer. I primarily write about the dangers of false apparitions and cults. I have been doing this for over twenty years. I am going to write this story. If it is of God, of Satan, or simply fraud, I am still going to write the story. To give you an example of the apparitions I don't believe in and have written against, first of all, I have written against-! (and I rattled off ten well known apparitions and mystics).**

"I will help you in any way I can," Father began. "What would you like to know first?"

"Right now I'm not interested in the miracles. That will come later. The first tests of all miracles are **OBEDIENCE, FIDELITY, AND HUMILITY.** Let's start with Obedience. Has Mirna ever been disobedient to her bishop, her confessor, her husband, her mother and father, or even to the government?"

"No! She is a very passive girl. She is easily guided and doesn't seem to ever want to make decisions. She isn't at all a leader. She is a follower. The only one who could be accused of disobedience is me.

"After the first few months of the miracle, my bishop told me to stay away from the house. I had been going every day. I was her spiritual director. I stopped going for ten months. After all that time I figured the bishop had forgotten his order, so I tested him by going to a very big happening. It was televised. He saw me there and said nothing. So I have assumed he has rescinded his order. Probably wrong on my part. I don't know...?"

"But all of this was probably good. **Father Malouli** took over for me. He is very meticulous in detail. He has gone every day for seven years and has taken notes of everything, even the exact time of the day. Every miracle that took place he has documented. He has requested testimonials and doctors' reports. He has filed and preserved in stacks and stacks of documents. I could never have done that. I have a parish to run. Father Malouli is older. He is sort of retired and is the chaplain to the French hospital a few blocks from Mirna's house. He also has his superior's permission to report all that happens. **He sends copies of everything to his superior and to the Vatican.** So, it was good that my bishop stopped me and Malouli took over. He has done an excellent job."

"Do you think I can get copies of all these documents? I will pay for all the costs."

"I'm sure you can, and you will not have to worry about the costs. Father wouldn't ever accept your money. **The messages don't allow acceptance of money.**"

"Okay. I'll get into all that later. I'll have to talk to the bishop and the other priests around town. Let's have a look at Fidelity." Up to now I had not heard much about the messages. My priest at the Italian hospital was busy translating them from Arabic to English, but he wasn't finished yet. It was surprising to me that after seven years there was not one English translation. "What are the messages all about?"

Father E. Zahlaoui thought for a second. In Arabic he said, "There are many, but the main message seems to be this. .." After Jack translated for him, he gave the message in English all by himself and very slowly.

**"The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth is the Church. Those who divided it have sinned. Those who are happy in this division continue to sin."**

Suddenly, this statement shocked me. My mind raced back over the past five years. I had mastered the Bible and the Dogma of Faith. I was well read in the History of the Church. I taught adult religious classes. There were only two questions I felt I didn't know. I would ask every new priest I met the same question over and over for five years. It had been only a few months prior to this day that I discovered the answer in the writings of St. Augustine. The passage I could not understand was this:

"Amen I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN is greater than he. But from the days of John the Baptist until now the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN has been enduring violent assault, and the violent have been seizing it by force." (Matt. 11:11-12).

John was not in Heaven. In fact, the Gates of Heaven were still closed. "And no one has ascended into Heaven except Him who has descended from Heaven. .." John 3:13). How could Heaven be assaulted? From Augustine I learned that the City of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God, the Body of Christ, and the heavenly Jerusalem were all the same thing. They were the Communion of the Saints: the Church

Militant (on earth), the Church Suffering (in Purgatory) and the Church Triumphant (in Heaven). It was one universal, spiritual Kingdom.

It had been only the month before that I asked the brothers at a monastery at Rocca Di Papa, Rome, the meaning of the words "world without end" in the prayer in the Rosary. We know that the world will end. I learned that the word "world" was a bad English translation and that the word should have been "kingdom." I was being prepared by God for this message, but I didn't know it.

I told Father E. Zahlaoui that there was no way this little girl, Mirna, could have known that the Kingdom of Heaven was the Church. Not one in a thousand Christians could give the proper answer.

"Yes!" he said. "She is not well educated at all. In one of the messages the word 'Emmanuel' was given. She had to ask me what the word meant. She had never heard it before."

Father made an appointment for me with Father Malouli. In the meantime I picked up the English translations from the Italian hospital. The translations were not good. Father's Arabic was poor. The messages had many things in them that bothered me. Father Malouli and I met at Nicole's house. Mirna was mopping the floor again. Father couldn't speak English. Nicole translated.

### **Testing For Fidelity**

I wanted to know what the words "My mission is over" meant. His answer didn't satisfy me. He said that it was the last time Mirna saw the Virgin in an apparition. However, she saw and heard Her many more times in ecstasy. It was not a good answer. I would find the answer months later on my own, but for now I wasn't satisfied. Also the words, "my generation" were not explained. It seemed to me more and more that the miracles and cures were the only things people were concentrating on and not the messages. If this was from God or from Satan, the messages held the key. The most disturbing words of the apparitions were "found a Church." If I interpreted it the way I was reading it, it would create a new cult, a new division of the Church. Father pointed out that the rest of the passage explained the first sentence, but I was not happy with that choice of words coming from the Virgin Mary. It was true that the rest of the message said, "I did not say, 'build a Church.'"

The Church which Jesus established is one Church, because Jesus is one. The Church is God's Kingdom on earth, etc."

But this could be interpreted to mean a brand new church. I had to be sure. Father was not happy with my reluctance to accept his answers. Of course, we didn't speak directly to each other. Nicole was translating the best he could. I asked him to explain the words, "Those who distribute their money to the churches and the poor, but do not have love are nothing:" He couldn't explain it. I was disturbing him. He was surprised, however, that I had not asked the question most people ask regarding the passage, "Pray for the inhabitants of the heavens (upper sky) and Earth."

"Yes!" I said. "That passage amazed me, insofar as it came from Mirna, but it is theologically correct. Purgatory is part of the Kingdom of Heaven, and so, praying for those in the heavens (upper sky) means Purgatory." I also knew that the eastern tradition was that Purgatory was near Heaven (in the sky) and not near Hell. Anna Catherine Emmerich (who I have great loyalty to) saw Purgatory as a place in the sky.

Within the week Father Malouli had the documents ready for me. He handed me a stack of paper six inches thick. But all the documents were in Arabic and French. I couldn't read any of them. At the American Embassy I found a Moslem woman who could translate them all for me. The cost of translating all of them was very high, but I liked the idea of a Moslem doing it. If there were any discrepancies or other problems, she would jump for joy to point them out. The messages, themselves, I had translated by three different people. There were also over thirty hours of video films of her ecstasies, her stigmata, the oil from her hands and the Icon, testimonials of cures, etc. I went to a video studio near the house and ordered three films in American style and three in the European style. The voltage and hertz style films I gave to Jack, along with a tape recorder and asked him to translate everything.

One thing I learned from twenty years of study on apparitions is that the local bishop and ONLY the local bishop has the right to make a final decision in these matters.

The **Vatican Nuncio, Cardinal Luigi Accogli**, did his own investigations but remained neutral. To make matters worse, one of the messages reads, "Do not be fragmented like the elders." In spite of all these difficulties, the Catholic bishop of Mirna gave his blessing, keeps pictures of the Icon in his church and sends his secretary to the little house almost every night.

Nicole's Greek Orthodox Patriarch gave a written approval which has been placed in their house in large letters.

The third bishop, Father Malouli's bishop, gave the Nihil Obstat to all the messages from 1982 to 1987. Not only have these bishops given passive approval, but thirteen others have come to the house to pray, and four others have witnessed the oil coming from Mirna's hands and the Icon in other parts of the world, including America. I met with the Vatican Ambassador, the **Pro Nuncio, Archbishop Luigi Cardinal Accogli**, and we talked for over an hour. The stand of the Vatican is to stay neutral. However, he had conducted a chemical test on **the oil and found it to be 100% pure olive oil**. He told me that his chemist claimed it was not possible to obtain 100% purity by any known means. He asked me to see him before I left and to report my findings to him. Unfortunately, I was not able to do so due to my sudden departure. For now, I was more than satisfied with the reaction of the bishops.

On the night of February 13, 1989, I was back asking difficult questions again. I wasn't happy with the theological answers Father Malouli was giving me. Finally, as he answered and Jack interpreted, I stopped him right in the middle of his answer.

"I don't want answers from theology. Let me hear from Mirna, herself" I called her over. I had never talked directly to her before. She sat next to me. I looked her right in the eyes. "Mirna, I know what you say, that you do not know religion like these priests, but answer me anyway, not from knowledge, but from your heart. Just tell me what you think and how you feel about these questions."

I started putting questions to her. Jack interpreted for me and for her. Her answers were simple, humble, and beautiful. All this time I was asking the wrong people.

Later that evening all the priests were gone. Jack, his future wife and I were saying good-bye to Nicole and Mirna. **"I'm sorry for all the difficult questions," I told her. "But tomorrow I will have even harder ones for you."**

Jack interpreted and Nicole spoke up without thinking what he was saying. **"Maybe God will answer you."**

Jack and I stepped down to the lower patio and went over to look at the Icon. I just wanted to see if the three oil drops were still hanging onto the picture. They had been there for three months now. There was a light inside the marble box, and I found it incredible that those three drops had hung on there in that heat for so long a time without dropping off. Nothing has that much viscosity. I said a prayer to Our Lady. Mirna and Jack's fiancée came and stood next to me. I turned to leave and noticed that Mirna's eyes were all wet, and tears were starting to show. I didn't know what was wrong. As I looked at her, **she opened her hands and turned the palms up. They were covered with oil.**

I placed my hands on top of hers and pulled the oil off. My hands were filled with oil. The oil continued to come out. She went over to the Icon and placed her head against the glass and started to pray out loud. I didn't understand the words, but I understood the emotion. She began to sing her prayer. I felt she should be left alone, so I whispered to Nicole that I was going to leave. I went outside. In the street Nicole, Jack, his friend, and I talked softly for a few minutes. My hands were still wet from the oil. Mirna came outside and started to say something to me. Then she remembered that I didn't understand Arabic. I spoke for her.

"Yes, I know. That was meant for me."

When I got home that night the oil was still on my hands. I had seen another miracle, but I couldn't let that stop my investigation. Only logic and the proven methods of discernment must be used. I could not let emotions get ill my way.

## Cures

On a street called "Straight" Mirna prayed with her over the body. **He came back to life.**

In California you can meet a boy, Samer Sayegh, 2684 Waite Avenue, Apartment 1, Chico, California 95926, USA. In 1982 he was totally crippled from birth with twisted legs. In 1982 he was cured and still testifies

to the miracle today. Or speak to Jabra Tawil. He had so many things wrong with his body he had given up on life, God, and everything. Now, he cannot stop praying and praising the Madonna and sister Mirna. Before Mirna,

Jabra managed to go to church once a year and had not been to communion in twenty years. He had never prayed a Rosary. Now he prays Rosaries everyday with other prayers. In fact, his entire life is the Virgin Mary and Christ.

## The Final Test

I had tested the phenomenon of Soufanieh in every way I knew. I tested it for Obedience and it passed. I tested it for Fidelity to Doctrine and Tradition and it passed. I tested it for Humility and Simplicity and it passed. I tested it for Fraud and it passed. I had determined that it was not fraud and was not from Satan. It had to be a miracle of God. But this was not enough. There was still the possibility that it could develop into a cult or a new religion without the proper guidance. Mirna wasn't a leader and that was good. But there were others around who didn't have a strong religious education. There were some that were caught up in the feeling of God's presence but had not yet seen the road (the door) God was opening to them. They could possibly lead her and the whole thing in the wrong direction.

I wrote my final question down and had it translated into Arabic. I asked her to give me an answer in writing. My reason was two-fold. One was to see if a cult could develop; and two, was to see if one of the messages would result in a mass disobedience. The message is, "Do not be fragmented like the elders." This was my question:

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Dear Mirna,

What I am about to ask is very important, and your answer will be included in the book about "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." After your answer, I will elaborate on this question, but first I will keep it very simple. As you know, I have been investigating this miracle to see if it is from God, from Satan, or simply fraud.

I have determined that it cannot be fraud, and it is not from Satan. However, just because Heaven has visited you does not guarantee your salvation, and it does not guarantee that other people (perhaps influenced by Satan) could not make something wrong out of God's plan for unity.

So, I ask this crucial but enlightening question "God is asking for unity and unity from the bottom (the people) up to the top (the clergy and the bishops). **What are some of the ways this request might be realized?"**

Richard Salbato

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Nicole said that when she read it she laughed because at first she thought it was easy to answer. She showed it to Father Malouli and Father E. Zahlaoui. They didn't take it lightly, but they refused to help her with it.

After a week, I asked her for the answer. She had not given it yet. Another week went by and she had not answered it.

Finally, I talked to her. She said that she didn't know the answer:

"It should be up to other people HOW to have unity."

Actually, that was a great answer, but I didn't tell her that. "Mirna, let me tell you a story. [Jack repeated it in Arabic.] Once I was forced to go before a large group of people to teach the Rosary. When I got in front of the microphone, I just stood there and stared at the audience. I told God that if He wanted me to talk, he would have to do it for me. I was not going to say a word. In time I started talking, and I was enjoying what my mouth was saying. So, put a pen in your hand and start writing. Let the Holy Spirit write it for you."

The next day I received her answer. Jack read the Arabic answer back to her and asked her if she really wanted to use the word "stupid."

In good English she said: "Yes, Yes, I want to use it." She laughed.

Before writing the English translation, Jack wanted to change the wording "God has no time" to "is timeless or eternal." She had no objection, but I said, "No! What she is saying is theologically correct, even if she doesn't know it."

Once he felt he had a good understanding of the words in Arabic, Jack sat down and wrote out the English. He gave it to me. As I read I felt as if she were still looking for an answer in the beginning, but as I read on I felt as if someone else was answering for her.

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In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God, Amen.

To brother Richard,

To the one whom God has chosen to spread the good news in His name. Do you think you want to realize anything yourself? No, It is all by HIS Will.

I am a simple girl. My mission is to pass God's message to the people. It doesn't concern me whether they believe [or not], because their faith reflects on themselves, but I feel happy because, with God's power, I remove the dust from the eyes of stupid people who don't appreciate God's power except when they need it.

I used to be stupid like them. I knew that God existed, but I didn't know the extent of His power on people. I used to fear Him because people made me fear Him. After this experience, I am no longer afraid of God, because God is merciful and full of charity. I fear people because they distance me from God with their demands. I am afraid of losing my humility and simplicity because of them, and if I lose my humility, then I have lost my life, and my life is Christ.

I would like to clarify something about this phenomenon. Until now, I know nothing. Only God alone knows everything. Why He chose me, I don't know. Why a married woman living with her husband and her children, also I don't know. Why in this house and not in church [the place worthy of

Christ], also I don't know. But if I knew all this, my power would have been so great as to equal God's power, but this is impossible because God's mystery is deep.

No matter how strong our knowledge is, we cannot get to know God truly, as He knows us. If this phenomenon is false and of people's doing, why should I get involved rashly and destroy my own house? At the beginning of the phenomenon I was a new bride, and life offered me big opportunities to enjoy myself because my husband, Nicolas, loves life and enjoys it, and so do I. Life is beautiful without Christ because you don't have to give an account of your actions to anyone. This is in this life, but not in the life to come.

But with our knowledge of Christ, our life has changed. It became clear that life with Christ is more beautiful, although there are difficulties because God's way is difficult. But with God's power we can bear our daily cross and with real happiness. Our happiness was false. It was acting and pretense. Now it has become an inner joy. Christ has moved into us and into our hearts. Our joy is God's love for us, our love for Him and our truthfulness to Him.

If this phenomenon is, however, of Satan, then I welcome him. This means Satan has repented, since he allows us to pray in the name of God for seven years untiringly and without boredom. As to those who say that I am married, and this is a shame because God chooses unmarried girls and often nuns, I say that if my marriage is a shame, then our faith is false. As my husband and I are one body in marriage, attuned together, so we are all one body in Christ, but not all attuned together.

As for unity, it can only be achieved through prayer. What God is asking of us is difficult. **It won't come about unless the big ones give up their seats, their haughtiness, and their greed.** God is able to unify us in His own way, but He wants this from us to discover the extent of our love for Him. He sacrificed His life on the cross for our sake, while we only love Him when He gives us what we ask of Him.

As I said above, I was stupid to love the many feasts of Christ recurring a number of times, but now I have some awareness. I know that Christ is one in all of us, as we should be one in Him.

As Jesus said to Peter, "You are the rock on which I shall build my Church," here He comes again to tell us that we are His Church. "You are my Church, and your heart is mine." We have to understand what He wants and do it. With faith and prayer, people must become aware of the truth and know that **whoever divided us has been punished by God**, and we should put right this immense wrongdoing against Christ. We should not continue in it.

Would unity fulfill what Jesus Christ has asked of us? From my point of view, unity will not be achieved **unless we unify our hearts** and plant peace, love and faith in them. This peace can only be through the one Christ. We must, therefore, pray to God with insistence to put peace in our hearts and to remove hatred and selfishness from the hearts of His children, who are only His when in need and who sell Him off when He needs them.

But if we love each other as Christ has asked us to do, then His Will will be done, and we shall gather all the churches in one Church, called God's one house, and we shall all meet under one roof-God willing. When will this be accomplished? I don't know, because I live in time, and God has no time. But **to go on in our sin [division] is horrible and unjust to us and to Christ.**

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Judge her answer for yourself. As for me, I can think of no greater gift to give to my Church than to work for the prayer of Christ at the last supper: "that they may be one even as We are one." John introduced Christ by saying, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Christ began His preaching with the same words. He taught us to pray for this Kingdom in the Lord's Prayer. Now, let us work, pray, and even demand that the Kingdom of Heaven on earth be again united. Yes, if this miracle is of Satan, he is a fool, because unity can only tighten his chains. He wants to divide and conquer.

**A united Church will be a beacon to the world.**