

MYSTERIES
MARVELS
MIRACLES



HEART TOUCHED BY THE PASSION. The Augustinian mystic, St. Clare of Montefalco, was graced by an apparition of Our Lord in which He said to her, "I have sought a place in the world where I might plant My Cross, and have found no better site than your heart." The Saint's heart, removed after her death, revealed clearly distinguishable symbols of Our Lord's Passion.

MYSTERIES MARVELS MIRACLES

IN THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

By

Joan Carroll Cruz

*"I will show wonders in the heaven above
and signs on the earth beneath."—Acts 2:19*

TAN Books
Charlotte, North Carolina

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Nihil Obstat: Rev. Stanley P. Klores, S.T.D.
 Censor Librorum

Imprimatur: ✠ Most Rev. Francis B. Schulte
 Archbishop of New Orleans
 June 21, 1996

The Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur are the Church's declarations that a work is free from error in matters of faith and morals. It in no way implies that the Church endorses the contents of the work.

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Cover Picture: *The Mystical Marriage of St. Catherine of Siena*, by A. Franchi. Used by arrangement with B. N. Marconi, Genoa, Italy.

Library of Congress Catalog Card No.: 96-60581

ISBN: 978-0-89555-541-0

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

TAN Books
Charlotte, North Carolina
www.TANBooks.com
2013

“He that believeth in me, the works that
I do, he also shall do; and greater than
these shall he do.”

—*John* 14:12

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Since the very beginning of my work I seem to have had a great interest in the wonders related in the lives of the Saints. This interest is revealed in the many marvels mentioned in my first non-fiction book, *The Incorruptibles*. The subject of phenomena also found its way, in a large part, into my other works: *Relics*, *Eucharistic Miracles*, *Miraculous Images of Our Lady* and *Miraculous Images of Our Lord*. This present volume, therefore, is a culmination of my interest in this subject of phenomena.

From the outset it should be noted that this is not a textbook study or a detailed analysis of phenomena. An introduction is given for each chapter, followed by interesting examples of the phenomenon. Once again I serve as a reporter—telling of many wonders, but leaving all to the judgment and opinion of the reader.

Because of the interesting cases mentioned here, my work has been a pleasure and a most interesting occupation. I pray it will prove to be as interesting to the reader.

It is also my prayer that the reader will derive a greater appreciation of the wonders of God, who has proved by so many miracles His love for His children, His concern for their welfare and His ever-abiding willingness to provide aid in times of distress.

A line from Scripture reads: "I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath." (*Acts* 2:19). Through His sainted children, God indeed has worked a great variety of signs and wonders which can be characterized as mysteries, marvels and miracles.

—Joan Carroll Cruz

INTRODUCTION

A phenomenon can be defined as something extraordinary; out of the course of nature, a marvel, a wonder; or even as something abnormal. Webster explains it as an instance or deed that is extraordinary in bulk, quantity or degree.

How else can one explain levitation, bilocation, the odor of sanctity and so many other supernatural events mentioned so often in the lives of the Saints?

In introducing this subject we should first look back to Apostolic times following the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles when St. Paul speaks to the Corinthians of various gifts:

To one, indeed, by the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom: and to another, the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another, faith in the same spirit; to another, the grace of healing in one Spirit: to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the discerning of spirits; to another, diverse kinds of tongues; to another, interpretation of speeches. But all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will. (*1 Cor. 12: 8-11*).

St. Paul goes on to report his own experience with the phenomenal when he tells:

I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; God knoweth) . . . that he was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter. For such a one I will glory; but for myself I will glory nothing, but in my infirmities. (*2 Cor. 12:2-5*).

One wonders what St. Paul would think if he knew of the many

other gifts that would be given in future generations to God's chosen, such as the stigmata, the ability to subsist on the Holy Eucharist alone, the many events involving mystical hearts, etc.

Who can explain why one soul is given an extraordinary gift and not another? How can it be that many souls who have had a great compassion for Our Lord's sufferings have not received the stigmata, while others, who never suspected they would be so graced, received the wounds of the Crucifixion? Certainly, St. Teresa of Jesus did not want to levitate, fought against it at times, but nevertheless levitated in the presence of her sisters and even once in tandem with St. John of the Cross.

But many of the gifts were welcomed, such as those of mystical espousal and marriage, and those gifts that helped the people with whom the Saints came in contact, such as the multiplication of food, the mystical knowledge of a confessor in knowing the sins of a penitent, the quieting of storms, the providing of rain during droughts, or the gift of tongues.

It should be considered that the gift of tongues mentioned in this work is not that described by St. Paul in which one person speaks in an unknown tongue and another interprets the message, but the gift of one of God's Saints speaking or preaching in his own language—but understood by those who knew a different language. In other words, no interpreter was needed.

As a by-product of these miracles and phenomena there was a certain awe and respect for the Saint which could only strengthen faith and increase reverence for the One who actually worked the marvel through the instrument of the holy mortal. Of course, the wonders worked by the Saint were also significant in their being introduced to the beatification and canonization processes.

To understand how phenomena were regarded when holy persons were being considered for beatification and canonization, we should briefly consider the canonization process throughout the history of the Church.

Since the earliest days, martyrs for the Faith incurred immediate recognition, their tombs being decorated and piously visited and even the anniversaries of their death being celebrated. This veneration was approved by ecclesiastical authorities who were not blind to the errors and abuses that might occur.

According to Rev. Thomas F. Macken in his work, *The Canonization of Saints*, the Church was most prudent in testing the cultus

to be paid to martyrs. He gives as an example St. Cyprian (d. 258), who recommended that utmost diligence should be exercised in investigating the claims of those who were said to have died for the Faith. St. Cyprian indicated that the circumstances accompanying the martyrdom were to be investigated; the faith of those who suffered was to be considered, and the motives that animated them were to be rigorously studied. Rev. Macken stated that the utmost caution was employed to prevent the recognition of undeserving persons—this gathered from St. Cyprian's letters.

In the fourth century St. Optatus wrote a history of the Donatist heresy. It was at this time that religious honor was not to be rendered to a martyr unless it was declared legitimate by the Church. In the fifth century St. Augustine (d. 430) wrote about the procedures employed in his day for the recognition of a martyr and cites the bishops who organized a Canonical Process.

Following the age of the martyrs, at the end of the Roman era, confessors were then considered for Church recognition. These were the persons who had suffered imprisonment or torture for the Faith, but who had not attained the crown of martyrdom. Later the word "confessor" was given to those men who did not belong to a special class such as martyr, apostle or evangelist.

During the age of the Fathers of the Desert, mystical gifts were often those that had an influence over nature, such as related of St. Hilarion and St. Didymus, when serpents and ferocious animals became docile in their presence.

Msgr. Albert Farges, in his *Mystical Phenomena*, reports:

Although some parts of the wonders related in the lives of the Fathers of the Desert may be legendary, the foundation of a great part of these accounts is certainly authentic: it is confirmed by so great a mass of evidence that it cannot be doubted.

When the solitaries began the transition to monastic orders as organized by ST. BENEDICT (d. 543), records of events were carefully recorded.

By the seventh century public veneration of deceased servants of God was approved or disapproved by the local bishop, but there were examples of veneration being sanctioned by provincial and national councils. The bishops notified the Holy See of their rec-

ommendations, which were generally accepted by the Church. At this time we are assured that mystical and phenomenal gifts were carefully considered.

During the tenth century the more solemn issues were referred to the Holy See, the central authority of the Church. The first example of a solemn canonization took place in the year 993 when Pope John XV decreed canonization to St. Udalric, Bishop of Augsburg. Some authorities, however, maintain that the first solemn canonization was that of St. Swibert by Pope Leo III in the year 804.

Gradually the process became more organized, with candidates for canonization, their miracles and phenomenal gifts being studied, rejected or approved by bishops. But then papal interventions in the making of Saints became more pronounced—especially under Pope Urban II (1088-1099) and Pope Alexander III (1159-1181), both of whom required proof of sanctity and eyewitness accounts of miracles and phenomena worked by the subjects before they could be considered for canonization. Since the year 1234, when Pope Gregory IX published his *Decretals*, absolute jurisdiction in the matter of canonizations was given to the Pope.

From then on phenomena and the matter of sanctity were placed under increasing scrutiny and strict investigation until, during the fourteenth century, the procedures took the form of official trials with the Promoter of the Faith arguing for canonization, while the Devil's Advocate argued against it.

Kenneth L. Woodward, in his book, *Making Saints*, reports on the trial conducted for the Augustinian hermit St. Nicholas of Tolentino. He tells that testimony was heard from 371 witnesses from July 7 to September 28, 1325 during a full-blown trial to determine his sanctity.

Despite these formal procedures, various holy persons were honored by their villages or towns. The papacy then conceded that the title "Saint" would be given only to those declared as such by the Vatican, while those honored locally or in religious orders could be given the title of "Beati" or "Blessed." But soon even the granting of the title Beati or Blessed was reserved to the Holy See.

To finally settle the matter of papal authority came Pope Benedict XIV, Prospero Lambertini, who reigned from 1740 to 1758. As a nineteen-year-old student he took doctorates in law and theology. As archbishop he proved to be a great spiritual leader; as cardinal he became a trusted adviser of popes; as pope he "stands out among

modern popes as a great legislator.” His gift of scholarship aided him when writing four hundred pages of instructions to settle the matter of phenomena, miracles and sanctity. His work entitled *On the Beatification and Canonization of the Servants of God* gives directives for the proper investigation of cases involving every facet of mystical phenomena and miracles.

The Pope makes fundamental distinctions among the gifts. There are those phenomena which render the recipient more pleasing or closer to God such as mystical marriage and the transverberation of the heart, among other gifts. Then there are other gifts which were given for the benefit of others, such as prophecy and the reading of hearts.

Pope Benedict XIV also set forth a fundamental principle: heroic virtue must be established before mystical phenomena and miracles may be presumed to be of divine origin. And, in fact, even when mystical phenomena are judged authentic, they have no influence on the candidate’s claim to sanctity.

Pope Benedict’s work also gives directives for determining if the marvels and miracles are the result of diabolical influences, whether the holy person is of sane mind, and whether all surrounding elements were scrutinized that might reflect on the phenomenon, as, for instance, whether flowers or perfumed ointments were near the person from whom the odor of sanctity was detected.

The outlined directives were observed until recent times when Pope Paul VI altered a few of the steps toward beatification and canonization, as, for instance, the previous requirement that 50 years should elapse before beatifying. This was to insure that the claim of sanctity was secure. A lesser time lapse is now acceptable.

The bishop of the Saint’s diocese still has great input in the process, as does the Postulator of the Cause who is assigned to each candidate and sees the process to its conclusion.

So it is that early on, a holy person could be declared a Saint by a local bishop after studying the phenomena and miracles, as well as scrutinizing the sanctity of the candidate. Many of the histories of the early Saints were given us by the most reputable scribes, such as the Venerable Bede (d. 735) and St. Gregory the Great (d. about 604), whose writings are quoted in this work.

For other reports of mystical experiences we can look to St. Augustine in the fifth century and St. Peter Damian in the eleventh. Their works were regarded as authoritative by mystical theologians.

It is to be noted that the greater majority of Saints mentioned in this book were from the thirteenth century to modern times—that is, during the time when the Causes were given the most attention, with phenomena and miracles being studied and accepted under structured procedures.

Msgr. Farges notes that there are three conclusions to be deduced during the centuries from the early days of the Church to modern times.

The first is that mysticism and phenomena are certainly an historical fact, at least for all those who do not wilfully close their eyes . . . For, indeed, what man of good faith could accuse such masters of critical history as the Bollandists of ignorance or imposture in their monumental researches? Who would dare to speak lightly of the processes of canonization, at which these same facts have been set forth at length, before such honest and competent judges, and then severely scrutinized and discussed . . . ?

The second conclusion is the fact that mysticism and phenomena have existed throughout the ages. This is incontestable and appears as one of the greatest sources of the life of the Church, reaching from the bloody persecutions of the first three centuries, through the various heresies and difficulties in the Church.

The third conclusion is that the phenomena and mystical elements should be studied. Msgr. Farges gives as his reason:

If the wonders of the visible heavens proclaim and sing the glory of the Creator, as the Psalmist has well said, what shall we say of the hidden marvels of souls raised to the highest states of holiness.

It is hoped that readers will find this book to be an interesting recital of mystical gifts and phenomena for their study and consideration as suggested by Msgr. Farges, and that, as a result, they will acclaim that God is truly wonderful in His Saints.

MYSTERIES
MARVELS
MIRACLES

—Part I—

THE MIRACULOUS
IN THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

BILOCATION

Bilocation is the phenomenon in which a Servant of God is in one place at a given time, and at the same moment, by a mysterious presence, is in another place a distance away, where impartial witnesses hear him speak and see him move in a normal fashion.

One writer explains: “That bilocation is physically impossible, that is, contrary to all the conditions of matter at present known to us, is the practically unanimous teaching of Catholic philosophers in accordance with universal experience and natural science.” It is also noted that some of these great thinkers believe that “the instances of bilocation narrated in the lives of the Saints can be explained by phantasmal replications or by aerial materializations.”

No matter how it is explained, or whether or not it is believed, the subject of bilocation has been mentioned in the lives of numerous Saints—their instances of bilocation have been witnessed by trustworthy persons at both the places where they appeared, even at times being acknowledged by the Saint who performed such a wonder through the grace of God. Additionally, numerous instances of bilocation have been so well-documented, witnessed and investigated that they are accepted facts in the history of the Church and in hagiography.

It is understood that the mystical gift is not given for the convenience of the recipient, but to aid him in helping his fellow man or in performing a function some distance away that had been forgotten. Often the recipient of this gift employs it to attend the dying, to comfort, to instruct and for many other reasons which we will now explore.

Credible witnesses on a number of occasions attested to the fact that ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI (d. 1787) was seen at two different locations at the same time, once being seen in the pulpit preaching a sermon and at the same time being in the confessional. Another time he was known to be in Naples preaching to university students when a poor woman called at Pagani to receive

the alms usually given to her by the Saint. A lay brother, on answering the door, told her of the Saint's presence in another city and sent the poor woman away. Suddenly St. Alphonsus appeared and gave her the usual amount of money.¹

The most extraordinary incident of this Saint's ability to bilocate took place when Pope Clement XIV was dying. The Rev. Tannoia, a companion of the Saint, relates:

During the morning of September 21, 1774, Alphonsus, after saying Mass, threw himself in his armchair, as he was not wont to do. He appeared prostrate and absorbed in thought, making no movement, speaking no word and asking no one for anything. He remained in that state for all that day and the night that followed, and all the while took no food and made no sign that he would undress. The servants who saw him in this position, wondering what was to happen, stood by the door of his room, unwilling to go in. On the morning of the 22nd he had not changed his attitude and the household did not know what to think. The fact is that he was in a prolonged ecstasy. Later on in the morning, however, he rang the bell to announce that he wished to say Mass. At that signal, it was not only Brother Romito who came as usual, but everybody in the house ran to the bishop's room. On seeing so many people, the Saint asked in surprised tones what was the matter. "What is the matter?" they answered, "this is the second day that you have not spoken, eaten, nor given any sign of life." "You are right," said Alphonsus, "but you do not know that I have been assisting the Pope, who has just died."

Shortly afterwards it became known that Clement XIV had died on September 22 at seven o'clock in the morning, at the very time that the ecstasy of St. Alphonsus came to an end.²

ST. GERARD MAJELLA (d. 1755), a member of the Redemptorist Order, which was founded by St. Alphonsus, also experienced the phenomenon of bilocation on a number of occasions. One day when he had received no answer from Muro about a pressing affair, he said to his companion, "I must go there." The next day he was

seen at Muro while, on the other hand, his companions declared that he had not left the monastery.

Another time, Fr. Margotta revealed to Dr. Santorelli that St. Gerard, although in his room, had nevertheless spent the night in ecstasy before the Most Blessed Sacrament in the choir of the Franciscans.

The Rev. Nicholo Fiore of Teora, impressed by the Saint's reputation, spoke to Dr. Santorelli about his desire to meet him. Dr. Santorelli replied that he would arrange a meeting. A few days later the Rev. Nicholo arrived at the monastery to conduct business and informed Dr. Santorelli that an introduction was unnecessary since Gerard had visited with him at his home some days earlier. Dr. Santorelli, who knew that the Saint had not left the monastery, took the Rev. Nicholo to a place where Gerard and the community had gathered and asked the Rev. Nicholo to identify him. Rev. Nicholo pointed him out without hesitation.³

After conducting a mission at Piombino, ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS (d. 1775) was accompanied to his ship by a great number of people. Among them was Dr. Gherardini, who remained on the pier until the ship was out of sight. On returning to the city and going into a friend's house, Dr. Gherardini saw St. Paul of the Cross coming out of a room. Not believing his own eyes, he went to the Saint and said, "How now, Fr. Paul, are you here? I have been with you down to the pier, I have watched you to a distance out at sea, and now I find you here?" The Saint replied, "Be still. I came here for an act of charity." He then disappeared.⁴

There lived at Cupertino an elderly gentleman, Octavius Piccinno, who was affectionately called "Father." He had asked ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO (d. 1663) if he would kindly assist him at the hour of death. The Saint promised to do so and added, "I shall assist you, even though I should be in Rome." This proved to be a prophecy, since the Saint was in Rome when the old gentleman became sick. When the last hour of the man's life approached, those who were tending him saw St. Joseph of Cupertino speaking with him. Among the many witnesses was Sr. Teresa Fatali of the Third Order, who spoke to the Saint and in amazement asked, "Fr. Joseph, how did you come?" He replied, "I came to assist the soul of 'Father,'" and then suddenly disappeared.

During the time that the Saint lived at Assisi, he was seen at Cupertino assisting his mother during her last hour of life. Realizing that she would be denied her son's presence, she cried out, "Alas, my dear Joseph, I shall not see you again." To the amazement of all who were in the room, a bright light filled the place. Presently St. Joseph was standing beside the dying woman, who exclaimed, "O Father Joseph! O my son!" At that same moment Fr. Custos at Assisi met the Saint, who was crying as he entered the church. When Fr. Custos inquired about his sadness, Joseph replied, "My poor mother has just died." A letter, arriving a few days later, verified the Saint's statement, as did several persons who lived with the Saint's mother. They solemnly testified that the Saint had assisted his mother on her deathbed.⁵

ST. LYDWINE OF SCHIEDAM (d. 1433), a victim soul who endured numerous afflictions that kept her perpetually bedridden, was once visited by the prior of the monastery of St. Elizabeth, which is situated near Brielle on the Island of Doorne. The Saint gave him a description so detailed of the cells, the chapel, the chapter house, the refectory and the porters' lodge that the prior was astounded. "But how can you know all this?" he asked in amazement, knowing that she could not leave her bed. "My Father," she replied with a smile, "I have been there frequently when I was in ecstasy . . ."⁶

It is a certainty that ST. MARTIN DE PORRES (d. 1639) spent all his religious life at the Monastery of the Holy Rosary in Lima, Peru; yet, according to reliable witnesses, he was seen at different times in Mexico, China, Japan, Africa, the Philippine Islands and perhaps even in France. The accounts of these bilocations are well-authenticated, especially that which took place in Mexico City.

A merchant who had resided in Lima and was a good friend of the Saint went on business to Mexico City, but before leaving he visited his friend to implore his prayers for a safe journey and success in his business undertakings. Upon his arrival in Mexico he became desperately ill. At the height of his sufferings he asked, "O my God! Why isn't my good friend Brother Martin here to take care of me when I am so desperately ill?"

Immediately the Saint was beside him. The sick man, full of questions about the Saint's providential arrival, was told, "I just arrived."

After ministering to the merchant, setting the room in order and prescribing a medicinal draught, the Saint reassured the merchant that he would soon recover. The saintly Dominican then disappeared as mysteriously as he had arrived.

The merchant promptly returned to health, and hoping to thank his benefactor, whom he thought was visiting Mexico City, he tried to locate him. He first visited the Dominican friars at their monastery, but learned that they had not been visited by anyone from Lima. He went to the residence of the Archbishop of Mexico, but without success. After inquiring at hostels and inns he learned that no one could give him information about his friend. It was not until the merchant returned to Lima that he understood what had taken place. After telling his story to the priests of the Saint's monastery, he learned that Br. Martin had never left Peru. The merchant then understood that Martin had not only prayed for the success of his Mexican trip, but had also extended his promise by supernaturally ministering to his needs.⁷

A native of Peru returned to Peru after spending many years in China and listened with astonishment as St. Martin conversed with him on the customs of the Chinese Empire. The Saint also gave him a minute and accurate description of a holy Dominican lay brother of extraordinary virtue who resided in Manila, whom St. Martin had met in the Philippines in some mysterious way.⁸

The Saint himself alluded to his gift of bilocation when he was tending to a patient who was suffering agonies from erysipelas. The Saint advised that the blood of a fowl be applied, but the patient objected, expressing a repugnance to the treatment. The Saint persisted, saying, "I do assure you it is an efficacious means of relieving your sufferings—for I saw it used successfully in the hospital at Bayonne, in France."⁹

What is regarded as the most substantiated case of St. Martin de Porres' bilocations was vouched for under oath by a man named Francisco de Vega Montoya and concerns the Saint's miraculous visits to northern Africa. A man whom Francisco knew well had been held captive in Barbary. Many times he saw the Saint carrying out his mission of mercy among the captives: caring for the sick, comforting the afflicted, clothing the naked and encouraging the prisoners to remain steadfast in their faith. After regaining his liberty the man travelled to Spain, and after a time journeyed to the city of Lima. One day, while visiting the monastery of the Domini-

can friars, he spied Brother Martin. Rushing up to him, he thanked the Saint for all his acts of kindness in Africa, but the Saint merely motioned for him to be quiet. When they were alone, the Saint begged the man not to mention his presence in Africa to anyone. The man later learned from one of the Saint's companions the supernatural nature of the Saint's visits. With enthusiasm he went about telling everyone of the supernatural grace afforded the humble lay brother.¹⁰

ST. CATHERINE DEI RICCI (d. 1590) was born of a distinguished Florentine family. She became prioress of St. Vincent's convent at Prato and was outstanding among mystics for the intensity of her gifts and ecstasies. A stigmatic who suffered the agony of the Passion twenty-eight hours every week beginning at midday on Thursday and ending at four o'clock on Friday, Catherine also had the gift of bilocation. She is known to have had frequent conversations with St. Philip Neri while he was in Rome and she in her convent at Prato. Although they had exchanged a number of letters, they never met, except through their mystical visits, which St. Philip Neri readily admitted had occurred and which five reputable persons swore they had witnessed.¹¹

Perhaps the most extraordinary case of bilocation is that recorded in the life of VEN. MARY OF AGREDA (d. 1665), a humble nun who spent forty-six years in the Convent of the Conception in Agreda, Spain. Not only did the Venerable travel mystically across Spain and Portugal, but she also crossed an ocean to visit another continent that was known as America. Her final destination was New Mexico and the Indians of an isolated tribe. The event took place in the following manner.

One day in the year 1620, while rapt in ecstasy, Maria was transported to New Mexico, where she was commanded by Jesus to teach the Indians. She spoke in her native Spanish, but was nevertheless understood; she, in turn, understood the language of the Indians. Because they did not know her name, the Indians called her the "Lady in Blue" because of the blue mantle she wore over her habit. When she awoke from her ecstasy she found herself in the convent in Agreda.

Two reports of a nun teaching the Indians reached Don Francisco Manzo y Zuniga, Archbishop of Mexico. One report was from

Mary of Agreda's own confessor, Fray Sebastian Marcilla, who contacted the Archbishop to learn if Mary of Agreda's report to him that she had bilocated to the Indian territory was correct. The other report came from missionaries who related how the Indians sought them out under the direction of a Lady in Blue. To determine the truth of these reports the Archbishop assigned Fray Alonzo de Benavides of the Franciscan Order to investigate. Fray Benavides was then the director of the missionaries who labored from Texas to the Pacific.

One day in the year 1629 Fray Benavides was sitting outside the Isleta Mission when a group of fifty Indians from an unknown tribe approached him and asked that he send missionaries to their territory. In his letters to both Pope Urban VIII and King Philip IV of Spain, Fray Benavides revealed that the Indians had travelled a great distance from a place called Titlas, or Texas, and that they knew where to find the friars from the directions given them by a Lady in Blue who had taught them the religion of Jesus Christ. Two missionaries were sent back with the Indians. These holy men found the Indians well instructed in the Faith and baptized the entire tribe.

After searching for eleven years, Fray Benavides finally found the mysterious nun, not in America, but in Spain. On his return to Spain in 1630, he visited the Superior General of his order, Fr. Bernardine of Siena. It was he who told Fray Benavides that the Lady in Blue was Sr. Maria of the convent in Agreda. Realizing that the nun, out of humility, would not reveal her secret to him, the holy nun was placed under obedience to tell all she knew about the visits to America. In the presence of her confessor, Fray Benavides questioned her in regard to the various peculiarities of the province in New Mexico. She described the customs of the different tribes of Indians, the nature of the climate and other details. Fray Benavides later wrote that "she convinced me absolutely by describing to me all the things in New Mexico as I have seen them myself, as well as by other details which I shall keep within my soul."

Fray Benavides was later installed as the Auxiliary Bishop of Goa, India. He was ordered by His Holiness Pope Urban VIII in 1634 to write an account of his personal investigations. Of Sr. Mary of Agreda, Fray Benavides once wrote, "I call God to witness that my esteem for her holiness has been increased more by the noble qualities which I discern in her than by all the miracles which she has wrought in America."

The Provincial of Burgos, Fr. Anthony da Villacre, submitted Mary of Agreda to a rigorous ecclesiastical examination. In the end he declared her mystical favors to be authentic.

Abbe J. A. Boullan, a Doctor in Theology, wrote of Sr. Mary, "In the highest rank among the mystics of past ages, who have been endowed with signal graces and singular privileges . . . must be placed, without hesitation, the Venerable Mary of Jesus, called of Agreda . . ." ¹²

Ven. Mary of Agreda bilocated to America during an eleven-year period from 1620 to 1631. She experienced more than five hundred "flights," sometimes making as many as four visits in one day. Mary of Agreda is also the author, with the help of the Blessed Virgin, of *The Mystical City of God*, which is regarded as the autobiography of the Mother of Jesus.

ST. FRANCIS OF PAOLA (d. 1507), known as "God's Miracle Worker Supreme," was also given this mystical gift of bilocation. It is recorded that once, while serving at the altar in the chapel, he was also seen by some of his monks working simultaneously at his chores in the kitchen. ¹³

Another time, while the Saint was in Paterno, his biographers report that:

. . . people who wanted to see him approached the chapel and found him so deep in prayer that they decided not to disturb him. When they returned to the street, they were surprised to see him talking to some people. They hurried back into the chapel and saw him still lost in prayer. ¹⁴

Before ST. DROGO (d. 1186) was born, his father died and at his birth his mother also died, leaving him an orphan. When he was old enough to understand, he learned that his mother's life had been sacrificed for his own, a revelation that distressed him greatly.

Around the age of eighteen he decided to follow Our Lord in strict poverty and embarked on a penitential life as a pilgrim, visiting churches and shrines in several lands. After a time he settled at Sebourg, near Valenciennes, where he was hired as a shepherd by Elizabeth de la Haire. In this humble position he grew even deeper in prayer and virtue and was regarded as a Saint by the people of the

district. It is known that he tended the sheep every day, yet he was often seen assisting at the offering of the Holy Sacrifice in distant churches. So many of these bilocations were noted that a local saying became widely known: "Not being St. Drogo, I cannot be in two places at the same time."¹⁵

After six years the holy man resumed his pilgrimages. St. Drogo died at the age of eighty-four after suffering for many years from a repulsive and painful hernia, which could not be hidden. He is the patron of shepherds.

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (d. 1231) has been given a number of impressive titles, some of which are "The Wonder-Worker of Padua," "Evangelical Doctor" and "The Hammer of Heretics." He is regarded as the first theologian of the Franciscan Order and has been numbered among the Doctors of the Church since 1946. Renowned as a worker of miracles, he was also acclaimed as a preacher. It is said that St. Anthony ". . . possessed in an eminent degree all the good qualities that characterized an eloquent preacher: a loud and clear voice, a winning countenance, wonderful memory, and profound learning, to which were added from on high the spirit of prophecy and an extraordinary gift of miracles."

About the many miracles performed by the Saint before and after his death, one authority states that most of the miracles ". . . come to us on such high authority that it is impossible either to eliminate them or explain them away without doing violence to the facts of history."

Among his many mystical gifts was that of bilocation. One account tells us that he was preaching one Easter Sunday in the Cathedral of Montpellier in the presence of the clergy and a vast multitude. Suddenly he remembered that he was expected to sing at the same time at the Solemn High Mass in the choir of a neighboring convent monastery. Distressed that he had forgotten this appointment, he drew the cowl of his habit over his face, sank back in the pulpit and remained silent for a long time. His biographer continues:

At the moment when he ceased speaking in the cathedral, though all the while visible to the congregation, he appeared in the monastery choir among his brethren and sang his office. At the close of the service he recovered himself in the pulpit of the cathedral and,

as his chronicler says, finished his sermon with incomparable eloquence.¹⁶

The Spanish Franciscan ST. PETER REGALADO (d. 1456) entered the Order at the age of thirteen and practiced all the austerities and virtues of a perfect religious. After his ordination he was made superior, and then, soon afterwards, was appointed head of all the monasteries of the reformed movement in Spain. He is known to have kept an almost continuous silence and to have spent the greater part of the night in prayer. God rewarded his faithful service with extraordinary graces: he was often seen raised above the ground with flames radiating from his body and he possessed an agility and ease which our glorified bodies will one day experience. Strangest of all, it was also established that he was often found at the same hour at monasteries far distant from one another, transacting business for the Order.¹⁷

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER (d. 1552) is regarded as one of the Church's most illustrious missionaries. He was born of noble parents and was by nature refined, aristocratic and ambitious. He was for a time professor of philosophy at the University of Paris, where he met St. Ignatius Loyola and became one of that Saint's original seven followers. His missionary career began in 1540, when he journeyed to the East Indies. Within ten years he had made successful visits to Ceylon, India, Malaya and Japan. He performed many miracles and exercised many mystical gifts, including that of bilocation. He is reported to have been at several places at the same time preaching to the natives. So carefully witnessed were these bilocations and so numerous were they that one biographer admits that the "bilocations which are related in the story of St. Francis Xavier would seem to be of quite ordinary occurrence."

ST. VINCENT PALLOTTI (d. 1850) was born in Rome, spent all his life there, and even died in his native city. He is the founder of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate, which is also known as the Pallottines. Founded in 1835, there are now several houses of the Order in the United States that are active in educational, parochial and mission work. An order of women known as Pallottine Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate was founded by St. Vincent Pallotti in 1843.