

# Reflections

*International*

*Catholic Family Newsletter*

January 2023

Volume 90

**Bringing Light Into a World of Darkness**

**Apparitions in Zeitoun Egypt**

**15 Promises of Saying the Rosary**

**Danny Thomas-St Jude Hospital**

**Bible Verse for the Day:** Romans 10:9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

**Proof That The Unborn Child is a Person:** When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the **baby** leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the **child** you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the **baby** in my womb leaped for joy. Luke 1:41-44

**Thought for the Day:** Our Lady of Fatima said " Many souls go to hell because they have no one to pray for them and make sacrifices for them." Please pray for those that God puts in your path.

**Prayer for Today:** Dear Jesus, help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with Thy spirit and love. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of Thine. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Thy presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus. Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as you shine, so to shine as to be a light to others. Amen. Mother Teresa

**Blessing to All:  
By: Richard Pickard**

I will start my monthly letter to you by quoting St. John Henry Newman.

***“God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.***

***He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.***

***Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me. Still, He knows what He is about.”***

A little info about St. Newman. In 1852 Pope Pius IX named him bishop of Philadelphia, USA. Newman spent the rest of his life building churches, schools, and asylums for his diocese. He was devoted to education and was the first **ecclesiastic to organize a diocesan school system in the United States**. Newman was canonized in 1977 as the first U.S. male saint.

**Each of us have been given a purpose by God.** You are unique in God’s plan for the salvation of souls. Your life on earth is the first step towards eternal happiness. You are not guaranteed a life of happiness on earth but will find love and happiness in the next life. **God also gives each of us spiritual helpers in this life.** ‘You may not even know them’ but many souls are being prayed for by others who God choses to grant graces as intercessors for others. Don’t forget, you also have the saints in heaven to help you and to pray for your intentions when you petition them.

***Intercessors on earth do their work in secret each day, praying for you!*** Do not doubt this, for it is real. Many of you reading this Newsletter have been given a job by God to pray for others each day. This is an important purpose you have been given and the graces they receive because

of your prayers will be a crown of glory for you in the next life. God is counting on you to continue praying for others.

If you have a desire to pray for others, here is a list that you can choose from. You may not know those you help with your prayers in this lifetime but will know them in the next.

Pick one or more **to Pray for**:

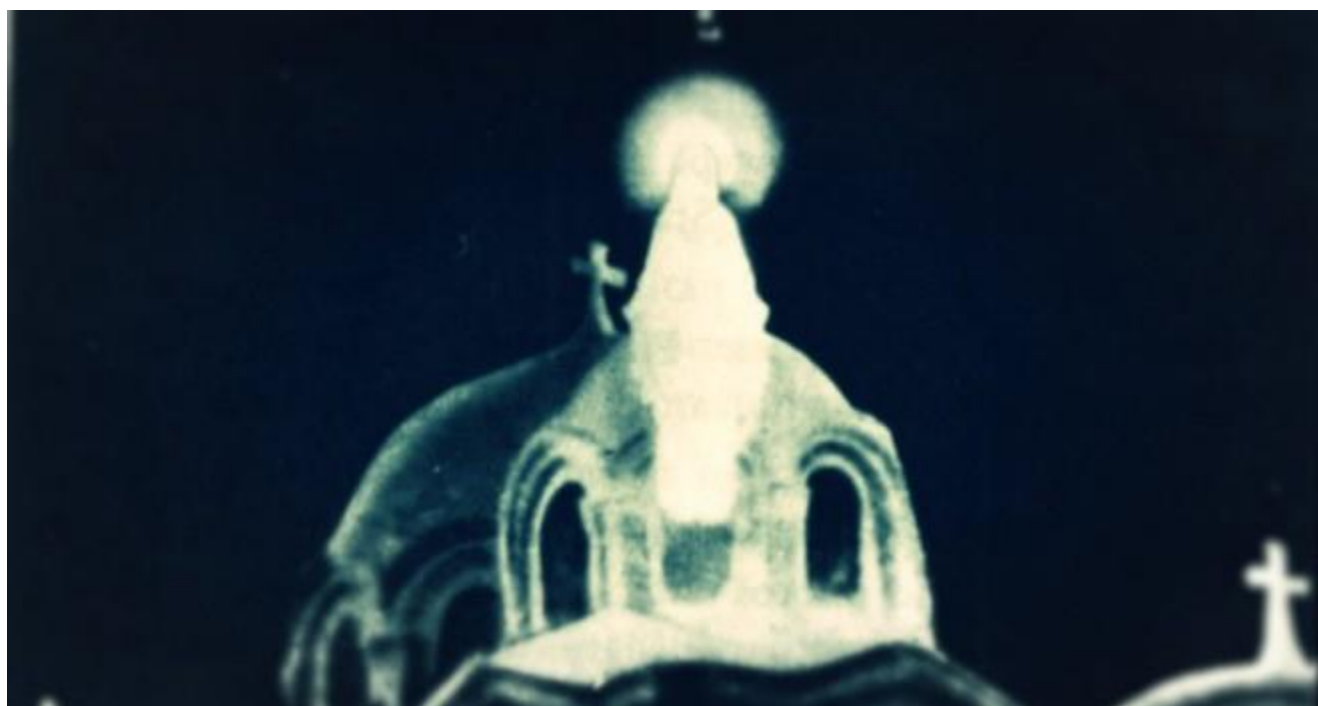
1. ***Sexually abused children***
2. ***Sexually abuse adults***
3. ***Those that have had abortions***
4. ***Those addicted to drugs, or alcohol or pornography***
5. ***Those that do not believe in God***
6. ***Those that are depressed and contemplating suicide***
7. ***Those living with past hurtful memories of unlove and abuse***
8. ***Those who are terminally ill***
9. ***Those who have severe mental issues***
10. ***Those living in serious sin***
11. ***Those living on the street***
12. ***Those working in the sex industry***
13. ***Those caring for patients with Alzheimer's***
14. ***Those who have broken spirits***
15. ***Those who have committed suicide***

If none of these "**to Pray for**", inspires you, then ask God to give you a purpose and a desire to Pray for whatever intention is put into your heart. **Pray for this intention each day.** You will be greatly rewarded in the next life.

May the New Year find you with Spiritual Peace and a closer relationship to Jesus and Mary. Persevere in Prayer; Forgive Others; **Keep your eyes forward on your journey and leave the past in the past. God gives you a new start each new day, no matter what happened to you yesterday or in your past.**

# The Overlooked Marian Apparitions at Zeitoun, Egypt

BY: **BRIAN KRANICK**



## *The Holy Family in Zeitoun*

<sup>1</sup>Zeitoun is one of the locations where the Holy Family supposedly stopped on their flight to Egypt, fleeing King Herod's murder of the innocents some nineteen centuries earlier. From **April 2, 1968 to May 29, 1971**, the Virgin Mary **appeared weekly on average, especially around feast days, on top of St. Mary's Coptic Church in Zeitoun for all to see**. This was not something just witnessed in a mystical vision by a few; it was a supernatural experience perceived by massive crowds for years. In addition, this occurred in a predominantly Muslim country and at a Coptic Church, which might be why Catholics are less familiar with it.

The Blessed Virgin Mary was witnessed by hundreds of thousands of people, including Copts, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and even secular Marxists, like the former Egyptian President Abdel Nasser. This supposedly greatly

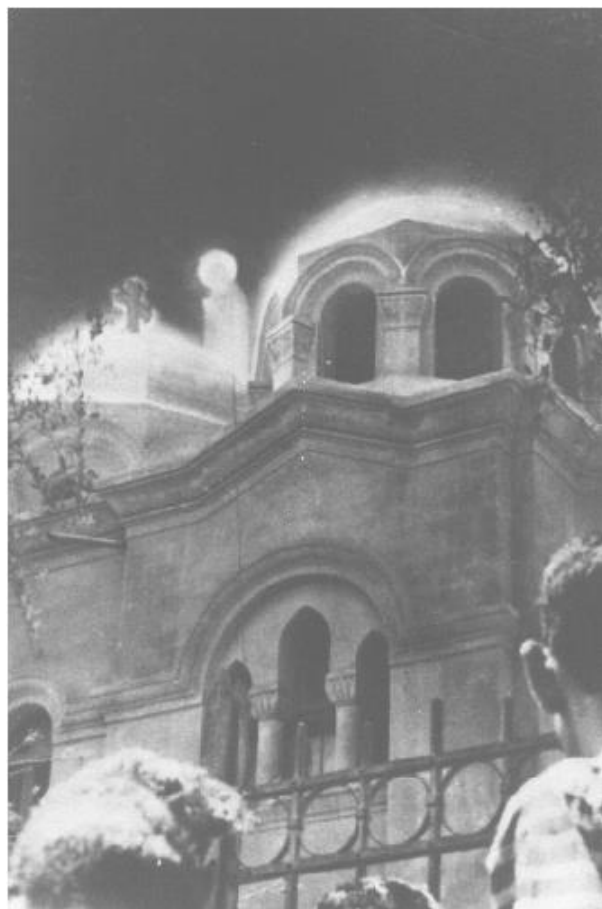
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<sup>1</sup> <https://catholicexchange.com/the-unlikely-marian-apparition-at-zeitoun-egypt/>

influenced him in his relations with Christians, who at the time were being targeted: red crosses painted on their houses to mark them. This was also a time of rapid expansion of Islamic fundamentalism.

Perhaps, Mary had come to mollify these tensions against Copts and other Christians in this very vulnerable time. Egypt had recently been defeated by Israel ten months earlier in the June 1967 Six-Day War. The Zeitoun years were a turning point from the '67 war to the Camp David Accords, and finally, a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, on the one hand, and rise of Islamism and the Muslim Brotherhood on the other.

### ***Miraculous Apparition***



The miraculous nature of the apparitions drew Egypt's full attention. Black and white photographs exist showing a brightly luminous being, the Blessed Virgin Mary, on top the Church. The apparitions would begin with a ball of light gradually materializing, and then, taking on the form of the Virgin Mary. One described Mary as "bright as a million suns." They called her Our Lady of Light. She was accompanied by other phenomenon as well.

Large, luminous doves moved swiftly across the sky, and at times flying in formations of two, seven or twelve, and in the shape of a cross. Incense as from "millions of censers" billowed up around her with a sweet fragrance. There were mysterious flashing lights, a canopy of shooting stars, like "a shower of diamonds made of light," as one witness recalled. Many miraculous

healings occurred too, from blindness, polio, paralysis, cripples, cancer and terminal illness. There were also spiritual conversions of Muslims and others to Christianity.

The Vatican made no official statement on its authenticity, deferring to the Coptic Orthodox Church. The Coptic Church investigated the matter and determined it was an authentic and true phenomenon. The civil government as well concluded that something real was happening at Zeitoun. At one point, the authorities even investigated a fifteen-mile radius for electronic devices and cut all power off to the area to create a blackout, yet Mary continued to appear.

### ***An Initial Vision***



The story begins much earlier, however, around 1920, when a Coptic Christian, Tawfik Khalil Abraham, who owned this spot of land in Zeitoun, was about to build a hotel there. Then, the Blessed Virgin Mary visited him in a dream requesting instead that he build a Coptic Church in her honor. If he did so, she promised to perform a miracle there sometime in the future.

In 1925, the Coptic Orthodox Church of St. Mary was completed. Then, as promised, the miracle happened years later beginning on April 2, 1968. Two Muslim garage attendants noticed a woman on the top of the Church and thought she was about to commit suicide. One of the attendants, Farouk Mohammed Atwa, yelled up to her "Lady, don't jump!" Soon, a crowd had gathered and realized that this was no ordinary woman but the Blessed Virgin Mary herself.

The apparitions continued unabated, with Mary appearing for a few nights each week for the next three years. People from all around began to come to St. Mary's in Zeitoun to see the miraculous apparitions. The crowds grew larger and larger. By some accounts, 250,000 at the highpoint would come nightly to watch for Mary appearing from Heaven.

## ***A Silent Witness***



Despite the length of the apparitions and the number of witnesses, the Blessed Virgin Mary did not speak or deliver any verbal messages. She maintained an attitude of prayer bowing towards the cross and blessing the people. Mary was seen gliding slowly about the domes of the Church, sometimes standing for two to three hours in the same spot, and at times kneeling before the cross on the roof. She acknowledged the people's presence by smiling at the crowd and blessing them with her hands.

Mary had long white and blue robes, and a veil of bluish-white light. They could see her garments moving in the warm night breeze. She had a dazzling crown on her head with a halo of bright light. Sometimes the witnesses saw her with the infant Jesus, or sometimes with the twelve-year old Jesus, and other times, with St. Joseph. Still other times, she was seen carrying a cross, or an olive branch—a symbol typically for peace and unity.

Bishop Athanasius of Beni Soueiff, sent personally from the Coptic pope, said,

"There she was, five or six meters above the dome, high in the sky, full figure, like a phosphorous statue, but not so stiff as a statue. There was movement of the body and of the clothing . . . she was very quiet, full of glory."

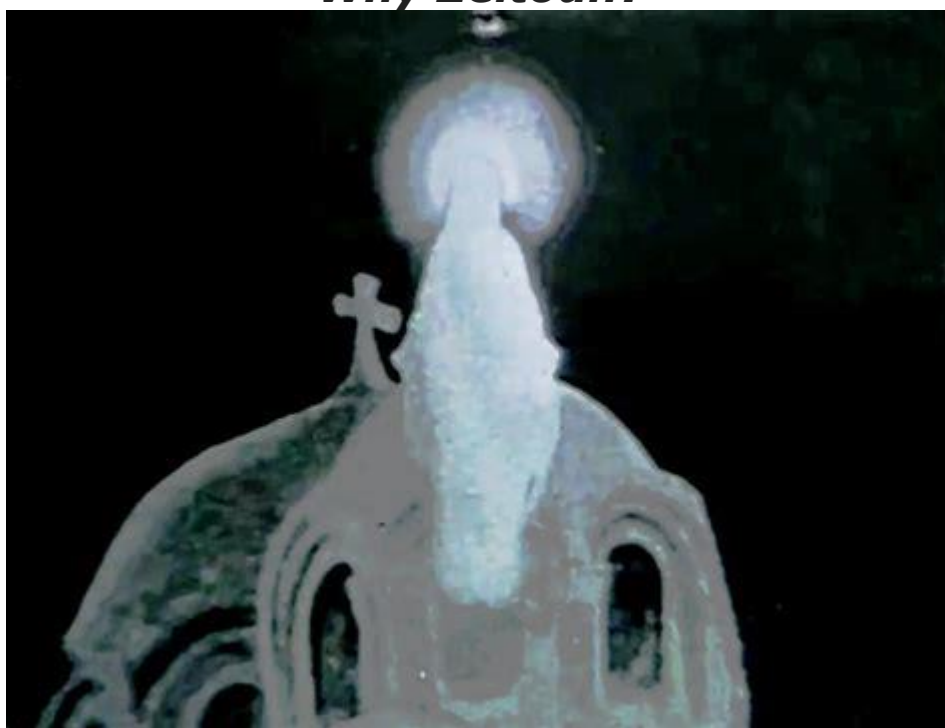
One Coptic priest noted that, "there were rays [of light] coming down from her hands," like depicted in the miraculous medal.

Coptic Bishop Marcos said when Mary looked at the crowd, it seemed as though "she concentrated her eyes on them exactly." Despite the number of people, it felt personal and individual. One witness, American Pearl Zaki,

described being there, "Yet I think each person present, as I talked with them and understood, felt alone with her and drawn completely to her."

A certain Coptic Christian, Dr. Khairy Malek, who witnessed the apparitions, said he could even see her teeth when she smiled at them. At one point, the crowd turned and began shouting up towards the moon. When Dr. Malek turned, he saw the Virgin Mary's "whole face stamped on face of the moon." Clearly, something extraordinary and profound occurred in Zeitoun between 1968 to 1971. The next question is why then, and why there?

### ***Why Zeitoun?***



As mentioned, Zeitoun, Cairo was one of the traditional locations that the Holy Family had fled to escape the slaughter of the innocents under King Herod, as Gospel explains:

"Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." (Matt. 2:13)

Nevertheless, Herod carried out his murderous intent against the infants (Matt. 2:16). Perhaps, the Blessed Virgin Mary appearing at Zeitoun was to honor the Holy Family's flight to Egypt from Herod's massacre of the innocent children.



Blogger and author Emmet O'Regan has pointed out that 1968-1971 was the very same timeframe for the mass legalization of abortion. In April 1968, the very same month that Zeitoun began, the United Kingdom enacted the Abortion Act. This was the initial break in the dam inundating the world with legalized abortion. This quickly spread to the United States in loosening abortion laws in 1969, and soon thereafter, *Roe v. Wade* was argued in 1971, and decided on January 22, 1973. This opened the doors to the mass slaughter of the innocents worldwide. It is the beginning of Herod's slaughter of the innocents on an apocalyptic level.



Zeitoun is very much like Blessed Virgin Mary's dramatic and unprecedented warning at Fatima in 1917, just before the unleashing of the errors of Communism upon the world in the Russian Revolution. Yet, at Zeitoun there were no messages, no visions, and no secrets. Mary's message was her silent presence in that time and at that location. The Blessed Virgin Mary came, again, in unprecedented fashion in Zeitoun, perhaps, to warn the world of new evils that were about to be unleashed upon it — this time with abortion. Perhaps, it was an appeal, too, against the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt.

### *Our Lady of Zeitoun, Pray for Us!*

Maybe not coincidentally, apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary were seen there in 2000-2001, and again, in 2006, in Assiut — which is also traditionally the southernmost point that the Holy Family travelled to in their Egyptian flight. Another purported apparition, then, occurred in Warraq, Egypt in 2009, among other locations.

Was the Blessed Virgin Mary retracing the steps of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt some two millennia later? In these unprecedented revelations, the Blessed Virgin Mary came to Zeitoun as Our Lady of Light, that is, the Woman clothed with the Sun with a crown on her head, much like the great portent that appears in Heaven (Rev. 12:1).



**D**ear children, With a motherly love I am calling you to—full of strength, faith and trust—look towards my Son. Keep opening your hearts to Him and do not be afraid, because my Son is the Light of the world and in Him is peace and hope. That is why, anew, anew I am calling you to pray for those of my children who have not come to know the love of my Son. So that my Son, with His light of love and hope, may illuminate also their hearts; and you, my children, that He may strengthen and give you peace and hope. I am with you. Thank you. "

# 15 Super Promises of Our Blessed Mother for Faithfully Praying the Rosary

1. Whoever shall faithfully serve me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall receive signal graces.  
*[A signal grace may be a simple sign in daily life that answers a question made in prayer or points towards God's will. For example, seeing a rose after finishing a novena to St. Therese of Lisieux could be considered a signal grace. Signal graces are often subtle or seemingly coincidental.]*
2. I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the Rosary.
3. The Rosary shall be a powerful armor against hell, it will destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies.
4. It will cause virtue and good works to flourish; it will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God; it will withdraw the hearts of men from the love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of eternal things. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means.
5. The soul which recommends itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary shall not perish.  
*[In other words, anyone who faithfully prays the Rosary and asks for Mary's intercession will not go to hell.]*

6. Whoever shall recite the Rosary devoutly, applying himself to the consideration of its sacred mysteries, shall never be conquered and never overwhelmed by misfortune. God will not chastise him in His justice, he shall not perish by an unprovided death; if he be just he shall grow in grace and become worthy of eternal life. *[An unprovided death means dying while not in a state of grace (that is, in dying with unconfessed mortal sin in the soul). The Blessed Mother promises that anyone who regularly prays the Rosary, and earnestly tries to live according to God's will, will be spiritually prepared when their time of death comes.]*

7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the Rosary shall not die without the sacraments of the Church.

8. Those who are faithful to recite the Rosary shall have, during their life and at their death, the light of God and the plenitude of His graces; at the moment of death they shall participate in the merits of the saints in paradise.

9. I shall deliver from purgatory those who have been devoted to the Rosary.

10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in heaven.

11. You shall obtain all you ask of me by the recitation of the Rosary.

12. All those who propagate the holy Rosary shall be aided by me in their necessities.

13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death.

14. All who recite the Rosary are my sons and daughters, brothers and sisters of my only son Jesus Christ.

15. Devotion of my Rosary is a great sign of predestination. *[That is, devotion to the Rosary is a good indication that the devotee is on the path to Heaven.]*

## Guideposts Classics: Danny Thomas on Prayer and Promises

• BY: DANNY THOMAS



In this story from May 1981, actor and comedian Danny Thomas recalls how an answered prayer led him to found Saint Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

Many people seem to know that I once vowed to Saint Jude that I'd build a shrine in his name if he'd help me through a difficult time in my life. Yet the fascinating part of that story is how, when I failed to keep my part of the bargain, that saint resolutely refused to

let me off the hook.

If you're not a Catholic, as I am, such talk of shrines and vows and saints might sound a bit strange, but when I was growing up in a deeply religious family in Toledo, Ohio, these things were familiar matters.

My parents had come from Lebanon, a country where shrines dedicated to favorite patron saints are familiar sights. Often these shrines are simply statues, or little places where you can stop to meditate and pray.

We Catholics, of course, do not worship these patron saints—we worship only God—but we do look upon them as special intercessors with God, and we choose them as our guardians and protectors.

And, believe me, as one of nine kids in a very poor immigrant family, I was grateful for all the protection I could get!

My mother did not hesitate to make her own spiritual vows. I remember especially a solemn promise she made shortly after the birth of my youngest brother. His name was Danny.

At that time my name was Amos—Amos Jacobs—but early in my show business career I took the names of my youngest and oldest brothers and became Danny Thomas.

When the first Danny was a few months old, he was badly bitten by a rat that jumped into his crib. He screamed and went into convulsions.

At the hospital the doctors told my mother that Danny was dying, but she wouldn't accept that. She went to her knees in prayer, promising God that if her baby's life were saved she'd beg alms for the poor for a year.

Danny got well, and every day for 12 months my mother, herself one of the poorest of the poor, living in shabby, cramped quarters over a pool hall, went out and begged pennies from door to door.

My mother's faith in God was so strong that she could not possibly give in to fear or hopelessness. To her, despair was a tool of the devil—it was doubting God, and that was a sin.

As each of us children was born, she turned us over to God and after that she would not let herself, or us, forget that we had Him to turn to.

When I was ten years old, I landed a job hawking soda pop in the old Columbia burlesque theater in Toledo, which meant that I wouldn't get home until 2:30 in the morning.

One day I heard a neighbor asking my mother if she wasn't worried about the things that might happen to her little boy, but my mother's reply rang with certainty. "Amos is sale," she said. "I've given him into the care of the Blessed Mother." She knew that I was in good hands, and so did I.

I always had my heart set on being an entertainer, and during the seven years I spent at the burlesque theater I studied some of the best comedians in the business and grew all the more determined to be one too.

I quit school at 16 and worked as a busboy, a night watchman, a drill-press operator's assistant, all the while picking up odd jobs singing and clowning at local banquets.

Eventually I went to Detroit and sang for a while on a radio program. That's where I met and married Rosemarie, who's been my wife ever since. And that's where I faced the first real crisis of my life.

In June 1940, a baby was on the way. I was making two dollars a night as an M.C. at a Detroit supper club called the Club Morocco. Then it

was announced that on Saturday night the club would close for good. I had no job to go to, and no prospects.

Rosemarie was urging me to consider looking for a more reliable line of work, but all I myself wanted was show business. I wasn't worried about our future,

I wasn't in despair—my mother had taught me too well for that—but the time had come when I had to choose a realistic career, for me and for my family.

Rosemarie talked about my going into the grocery business. I had to consider her wishes. Maybe she was right, maybe I could never make my way—and ours—as an entertainer. I was in an agony of indecision.

On Tuesday night a man came into the Club Morocco. He was celebrating something. His pockets were filled with little cards that he was handing out to people as he tried to tell them about an incredible thing that had just happened to him.

His wife was in a hospital where she'd been facing an operation for a deadly cancer. All night long this man had knelt on the cold marble floor of the hospital and prayed the same prayer over and over again.

When the sun came up in the morning the doctors called him in to report that, inexplicably, miraculously, his wife's cancer had disappeared.

"This is the prayer that did it," he said, handing me one of the cards. It was the prayer to Saint Jude.



All that night I thought about this man and his appeal to a saint whom I knew only slightly as “Patron of the Hopeless” or “The Forgotten Saint.”

Though an apostle of Jesus, Jude was not one of the saints whom many Catholics turned to, probably because of his name, which was really Judas Thaddeus, far too similar to that of the hated Judas Iscariot.

The next day I went into a church to pray, and when I reached into my pocket for a coin, I found the card the man had given me. Then and there I felt moved to make my vow.

I did not ask for anything specific like money or fame, but I promised Saint Jude that if he would help me find some clear course for my life, I would build him a shrine.

The day after the Club Morocco closed, I drove my old Buick down to Toledo and left Rosemarie with my parents while I took one last stab at looking for work in show business.

My plan was to go to Cleveland where I had a number of contacts, but at the last moment, I turned the other way and went to Chicago. It was almost as though I was being drawn there.

Chicago became my town. Very quickly one little radio job led to another, and in a short time I was flourishing as a character actor. Then I tried my hand again as a stand-up entertainer.

I opened before 18 customers in a converted automobile showroom called the 5100 Club; in a few months there were that many people waiting outside trying to get in. Success simply piled upon success.

And what happened to my vow to Saint Jude? Nothing. I was so busy that for two years I had forgotten about it. But Saint Jude had not.

On the way home after a night at the 5100 Club, I used to go to the 5:00 a.m. mass at St. Clement's Church. One morning I picked up a little pamphlet that lay beside me in the pew and, to my surprise, read about a novena—a nine-day period of devotion—about to be offered to none other than my old friend Saint Jude.

Even more surprising was the information that there, on the south side of Chicago, was the first national shrine to Saint Jude. Chicago was Saint Jude's town, too! He wanted me to know it.

I did not forget Saint Jude again. I knew I had to do something about fulfilling my vow, but I couldn't make up my mind what kind of a shrine I should build.

Rosemarie suggested that I think about a statue, or perhaps a side altar, but somehow nothing seemed right to me. Time went by. I moved on to New York. My career progressed to movies and TV. Still I could not make up my mind.

And then came the dream.

I dreamed one night about a little boy being injured in a car accident. He was rushed to the hospital, but for some reason the doctors were reluctant to treat him and the boy bled to death. The dream was so vivid, so horrifying, that it troubled me for days.

But out of that dream came an idea, an idea born of a lifetime of experiences. I thought about the man who had prayed for his wife all night on the cold hospital floor.

I thought of my infant brother Danny grabbing hold of life just when the doctors said he was dying, and slowly I began to see Saint Jude's shrine as a hospital. And what better way to honor the Patron Saint of the Hopeless than with a place where "dying" children, children with "incurable" diseases could come to be healed?

That, of course, was the beginning of Saint Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. It is the only institution on this earth dedicated solely to the conquest of catastrophic diseases.

It is open to children of all faiths and races regardless of their parents' ability to pay. No family ever pays for the services rendered there. They are free.

It took me ten years to raise the money to get the hospital started. I did it mainly through benefit performances, going all over the country raising money from Catholics and Protestants and Jews—and Moslems, too—and especially getting help from people of my own Lebanese heritage.

I never went before one of those benefit audiences that I didn't think about my mother going door to door begging pennies, for, in my own way, I was doing the same thing, for the same reason.

Today when I look at the hospital that Saint Jude brought into being, when I see the hope that the Saint of the Hopeless has brought to thousands of parents and their youngsters, I am as certain as my mother was certain, that to right despair is to affirm our faith in God and in the love He has for all of us.

Information about St Jude Hospital can be found at:  
(Control and left Click ) <https://www.stjude.org/>

## I'm praying this for my family...

**Lord,**

You are all we need.

Be the peace in our relationships.

Be the strength in our weakness.

Be the health in our bodies.

Be the hope in our hearts. **It's**

**You, Lord—not the stuff—that  
provides true joy.**





Jesus Loves You

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