

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*The Emmitsburg Dispatch* encourages its readers to express their thoughts and opinions about issues that appear in this publication or affect the community. Letters must be exclusive to the *Dispatch* and should be no longer than 300 words in length. They must be signed and include the writer's address and phone number to be used for verification. *The Emmitsburg Dispatch* reserves the right to edit letters for content and space.

# Visions and private revelations

An authentic vision is a charism or a charismatic grace. These graces are given to an individual or a group primarily for the spiritual good of others or for the Church as a whole. No body is required to believe in these visions of others, nor are they to be ever pressured into believing private revelations.

The recipient of the apparitions and revelations at Emmitsburg is a good practicing Catholic and has been exemplary in her obedience to the decree of the Cardinal.

This decree states that after study by experts the Cardinal declares that "in this case, constat de non supernaturalitate." The term supernatural ordinarily has a much wider application than it does here and refers to a number of gifts which are not miraculous,

for example, an act of love is supernatural. Here the term would mean supernatural in the way the event has transpired. That is, the phenomena perceptible to the senses cannot be explained by natural causes and is therefore miraculous. So what the Latin words mean is that the presumed apparition is clearly not miraculous or there are not sufficient reasons manifesting it to be so. It does not mean that the events are diabolical in their origin or only present in the mind and imagination of the individual or individuals involved, but may still be within the workings of the Holy Spirit in a faithful soul.

Now the certitude that can be reached as a result of investigating apparitions and private revelations can never be the certitude of divine faith that we receive in

the mysteries of our faith, such as the Trinity or the Incarnation. The Church humbly states its judgment knowing that it is always a fallible one, but one that should be respected by the faithful. With all this in mind, it is therefore not a matter of sin or disobedience for the faithful to incorporate this devotion in their private prayer lives.

-Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D.  
*Carmelite Monastery  
Washington, D.C.*

*Editor's Note: Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. is the English translator of the writings of both St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross. He is a member of the Institute of Carmelite Studies and was the vice postulator for the canonization of St. Edith Stein.*

## From a neutral observer...

As a neutral observer who moved to this area after Cardinal Keeler ended the Thursday night prayer meetings at St. Joseph's, I am amazed at the anger and animosity demonstrated regarding Our Lady of Emmitsburg. I have investigated both sides – the apparitions have not been condemned, even though this is inferred. We are free to believe, if not condemned by the Church; but also free to not believe if accepted by the Church. The visionary has been obedient to the Cardinal's directives.

Throughout history Heaven has touched upon the earth to redirect mankind's self-destructive path, toward more self-reflection, conversion and healing, which was met with similar responses. 2000 years ago, Jesus was misunderstood, vilified, condemned and put to death by people who felt justified in their anger and condemnation, led by Pharisees terrified of losing their material status quo. Many canonized saints were treated in the same way, with false accusations and assumptions. Eventually they were vindicated – St. Bernadette,

St. Faustina, St. Pio, to name a few.

History continuously repeats itself, and if we observe history, we will see ourselves reflected. The evil one tries to convince us we should ignore or change history, even convincing us that he doesn't exist, that the supernatural is something conjured up in our minds and something to be feared. Considering the condition of today's world, why would we not welcome heavenly intervention and wisdom? It would be better to wait and see prayerfully rather than to point fingers, assume and judge; to be generous and loving rather than angry and resort to name-calling. Recall these words from the 1950s movie, "The Song of Bernadette": "To those who believe, no explanation is necessary. To those who do not believe, no explanation is possible."

Let's join together against the real enemy!

-Sharon Legere  
*Gettysburg, Pa.*

## Keep Me Blind

If loving Our Lady and Mother Mary since I was a child makes me blind, then I am blind.

If taking Mary's hand and having her lead me to her Son makes me blind, then I am blind.

If going to Mass as often as possible makes me blind, then I am blind.

If praying before the Blessed Sacrament several times a week when possible makes me blind, then I am blind.

If having devotion to and saying the Rosary daily makes me blind, then I am blind.

If saying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy as often as possible makes me blind, then I am blind.

If having admiration for two people who have given their

lives and talents to the service of the less fortunate while asking nothing in return makes me blind, then I am blind.

If doing my best to treat others, as I would like to be treated and not condemning them for not believing the way I do makes me blind, then I am blind.

I feel very strongly that I speak these words for many.

-Wayne Warthen  
*Emmitsburg*

*Written in response to Mary Ann Osborne's letter to the editor, "Our Lady of Emmitsburg devotees – the blind leading the blind," in the Aug. 4, 2005 issue of The Emmitsburg Dispatch.*

## 100 Years Ago "In this place" From *The Emmitsburg Chronicle*

*This column offers a regular look back at Emmitsburg through the eyes of The Emmitsburg Chronicle which first appeared on June 14, 1879, published by Samuel Motter. In 1909 the paper became known as The Weekly Chronicle. It continued regular publication, allowing for a 5-year hiatus during World War II, until February 9, 1977.*

**August 18, 1905** - Mrs. Emma E. Zimmerman has had a new roof put on her house, West Main Street.

About 75 chickens have been stolen from Mr. Sebastian B. Florence, near town, during the summer.

Mr. James Adelsberger returned home Saturday last week from Baltimore, where he was operated on for white swelling several weeks ago. His condition is improving slowly.

One night last week whilst Mr. David H. Guise's horses were in the pasture field one horse had its leg so badly broken by being kicked by another horse that it had to be killed.

On Thursday night of last week, about 20 or more bushels of corn were stolen from Mr. Lewis M. Motter's corn crib, in this place. The stealing of the corn is being investigated.

### Shot Himself in the Wrist

On Wednesday, Mr. Cyril Rotering, son of Mr. Charles Rotering, of this place, accidentally shot himself in the left wrist while handling a revolver, inflicting a very painful wound. Drs. J.W. Eichelberger and J.B. Brawner dressed the wound, and being unable to locate the bullet Mr. Rotering went to a hospital in Baltimore on Thursday morning to have the bullet removed.

### Baseball and Accidents

**August 25, 1905** - On Tuesday the Emmitsburg Baseball Team played the Fairfield team, on the grounds of the latter team. The game was won by the Emmitsburg team. Score 3 to 2.

When in the act of leaving Fairfield for Emmitsburg, after witnessing the game of ball, Mr. James McGreevey, of this place, accidentally drove against the wheel of Mr. James Slagle's buggy wrecking the wheel.

While returning home from witnessing the same game of ball, Mr. Joseph Shuff's team, with three young ladies in the surrey, met with an accident coming down the hill at Mr. Frank Caldwell's, a short distance from town. In descending the hill, his horse started to run and when suddenly stopped something about the harness broke, the surrey going against the horse with much force, breaking the surrey, which belongs to Messrs. Frailey Brothers. No one was injured.

The Fairfield team played a return game of baseball in this place yesterday afternoon. This game was also won by the Emmitsburg team. Score 6 to 8.

### Concrete Pavements

The work of laying the concrete pavement in front and around St. Joseph's Catholic Church has been completed. About 10,000 square feet of this paving has been laid about the church, including the pavement in front of St. Euphemia's school building and the Sister's house on Green Street. There is now one continuous stretch of concrete pavement beginning at the corner of the cemetery at the public alley on Gettysburg Street to Mr. John Slagle's residence on Green Street. This is the greatest amount of this kind of pavement ever laid in this place. The work was under the supervision of Mr. Robert Wolf, of York, Pa.

Quite an improvement is being made at the Reformed Church. The iron fence, which enclosed the church and yard for many years has been removed, and a concrete pavement has taken the place of the old stone and brick. The new pavement contains 680 square feet of concrete work. The work was done by the same gentlemen who laid the pavement at St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

## Thanks for ambulance company support

On behalf of The Emmitsburg Ambulance Co. #26 I would personally like to thank the businesses of Emmitsburg and surrounding areas for their generous

contributors to our raffle which we held on July 2, 2005 with all proceeds going toward our building fund. This was our second year of doing this and we hope to

make it an annual fundraiser to be held during Celebrate Emmitsburg Days!

-Donna Miller  
*Thurmont, Md.*