

What We Believe...



Why We Believe It...

Miracles by Joe Sixpack

Miracle: *a surprising and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore considered to be the work of a divine agency (Webster's).*

Miracle: *A sensibly perceptible effect, surpassing at least the powers of visible nature, produced by God to Witness to some truth or testify to someone's sanctity (Modern Catholic Dictionary).*

Ours is a very cynical world. Because we live in a post-Christian era where God is not only no longer believed in but actually mocked, miracles are seen as phenomena that can't be explained only because we lack the technology to fully understand certain laws of nature. This cynicism has effected the Christian world as well. Even among our separated Protestant brethren I've heard it said we are beyond the age of miracles—that miracles no longer take place.

Baloney!

Miracles take place every single day throughout the world. Some of those miracles are working in a perpetual state, some for the entire two-thousand year existence of the Church. Fact of the matter is, the majority of miracles taking place around the globe happen only in the Roman Catholic Church.

Take the incorruptibility of some of the saints for example. From St. Cecilia (d. AD 177) to Padre Pio (d. 1968), we have almost 2,000 years worth of ongoing miracles. Here are just a few of the more than one hundred:

St. Catherine Laboure (of the Miraculous Medal) died on December 31, 1876. When her body was exhumed 56 years later it was unblemished. Her eyes were as blue as the day she died. The saint is still lying in state in a crystal reliquary at a chapel in Paris, and she looks as if she died only yesterday.

St. Bernadette Soubirous (Our Lady of Lourdes) was exhumed 30 years after her death in 1879, looking as she did the day she died. In fact, due to her frail and stressful health throughout her life, she was homely at best, yet seemed to grow beautiful after her death. She can be seen lying in state at the Motherhouse of her Order in Nevers, France.

St. John Vianney (Curé of Ars) died in 1859 and was exhumed in 1904. He lies in state for all to see above the main altar in the basilica at Ars, France.

St. Pio of Pietralcina (Padre Pio) died in 1968. There are still thousands of people alive today who knew the saint. His incorrupt body can be seen lying in state at San Giovanni Rotondo in Italy, where it has been since 2008.

There are countless other miracles. About six months ago, I wrote about the miracle of the sun at Fatima in 1917 (#80) and the miraculous Battle of Lepanto in 1571 (#88). St. John Paul the Great performed healing miracles during his life. Padre Pio not only had the miraculous gift of

bilocation, the stigmata, the genuine gift of tongues, and the ability to read souls, but he also performed healing miracles during his lifetime. St. John Bosco performed miracles of healing, multiplying food as Christ did with the bread and fish, and could read the souls of his boys to get them to come clean in the confessional.

From the day that St. Bernadette was shown the miraculous spring by Our Lady at Lourdes in 1858, there have been numerous miracles taking place through the use of the miraculous waters. Indeed, the grotto itself is a testimony to the many miracles that have taken place there—and continue to take place today—by all the crutches, walkers, and wheelchairs that have been left behind. So prolific are the miracles at Lourdes that the CBS television news magazine *60 Minutes* has run three separate segments on Lourdes since its debut in 1968.

On these pages I've also related miracles that have taken place through the sacramental known as the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, as well as the rosary, miracles of saints, and even angels. Nowhere do you find more miraculous events from God than inside the Roman Catholic Church! But the greatest, most sublime, longest running miracle in the Church happens every single day and has since Jesus was walking among men. Of course, I'm speaking of the miraculous transubstantiation of the Most Holy Eucharist.

I've heard so many Catholics tell me they'd love to be able to witness a miracle of God. My almost indignant response has always been, "But you do see one on a regular basis. Let's go to Mass and I'll show you." Every time you hear the priest say the words of consecration at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass you are witnessing a miracle, and it's one Jesus promised in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John. When the priest repeats Jesus' words—This is My Body...This is My Blood—the ordinary bread and wine cease being what they appear to be and become the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. How much more of a miracle could anybody want?

While I was being taught the Catholic faith, I made the intellectual decision to become a Catholic while studying the ninth article of the Apostles' Creed—"I believe in the Catholic Church, the communion of saints". Through the Church's teachings in that article, it was proven to me that Jesus Christ founded the Catholic Church. But the emotional decision to become a Catholic came when I was taught about the Most Holy Eucharist. It was proven to me beyond a doubt that when the priest says the words of consecration a genuine miracle takes place. That is when Jesus comes from heaven to rest on the altar so He can be given to me to commune with me and become a part of my body and soul. And it is only possible for this miracle to take place within the Catholic Church, which is why it's a mortal sin against faith for us to receive non-Catholic communion or to participate in certain acts of non-Catholic worship.

Do you realize you know someone who regularly performs miracles? Well, you do. That would be your priest, or any priest for that matter. Through Holy Orders, a sacrament given to His Church to apply the redemption He won for us with His life until the end of time, the priest was given the power to perform two miracles on a daily basis. One miracle he performs is the miracle of forgiving our sins in the sacrament of Penance. The other miracle he performs is the one that takes place at Mass. Through his intentions alone are your sins forgiven. By his hands and through his intentions alone, the priest commands Almighty God to come down from heaven into his hands...and God obeys! Only in the Catholic Church!

We're not beyond the age of miracles, and we never will be as long as this world exists. We just have to open our eyes and see them with the child-like eyes of innocence and faith, because that's What We Believe...Why We Believe It.

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