

## **God's Healing Touches Giawndra**

*Fr. Dennis Mary Dugan, S.O.L.T.*

In our community of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, God Almighty has manifested His great power and love for a lil' Indian girl. Seven years ago, Giawndra Martel of St. Michael the Archangel Church in Dunseith, ND - was a three years old with a tumor. The doctors had been working with her for many years with different medications. Despite their heroic efforts the tumors kept growing. Giawndra was sick of the side effects of the medication and decide to stop taking them. Her Grandmother, Gail, approached me about the need for a miracle. She was encouraged to go public with Giawndra's need for prayer. We made a poster of Giawndra and placed it all over the towns, in Churches and work places. The poster had Giawndra's school picture with her dazzling pink hair. The poster encouraged people to pray for the healing of Giawndra through the intercession of Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity. It was our hope that Blessed Elizabeth would intercede with God to give this lil' Indian girl a miracle.

Giawndra received permission and was prepared to receive Confirmation and First Holy Communion a year earlier than her age allowed. Her faith grew with frequent visits to her home by Sisters and priests, who shared the faith with her. She was regularly visited with the Blessed Sacrament, the Anointing of the Sick and Confession especially prior to her many trips to the doctor. She was encouraged in faith by the story of Bartimaeus the blind man of Jericho in Mark's Gospel 10: 46-52. Bartimaeus heard about Jesus' miracle cures. He thought to himself, if I ever meet Jesus, I will see. He was excited when that day came and Jesus was walking by. He screamed out to Jesus, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus called him over. He asked him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" Bartimaeus said, "I want to see." Giawndra was told that Jesus' next words to Bartimaeus were very important. Jesus said, "Your faith has saved you." Giawndra was told that she was to have the faith in Jesus like Bartimaeus. If she truly believed that Jesus could cure her – He would cure her. She was reminded of this story many times.

In March 2016 we mourned the death of the founder of Our Lady's Society, Fr. Jim Flanagan. At his funeral we gave Our Lady's Society missionaries the posters of Giawndra. Her poster and prayers went global for these missionaries serve in thirteen nations of Our Lady's Society missions. We encouraged people to place the posters in their Churches and storm heaven with prayers for Giawndra.

In October of 2016 we went on a pilgrimage to Rome. By God's grace, it happened to be the same time when Blessed Elizabeth would be canonized a Saint. After the canonization Mass we met the Holy Father and asked for his prayers for the Native American people. Giawndra now had the prayers of Pope Francis. Upon our return home we heard that Giawndra had received a cure. The doctors considered a year without the tumors growing as a cure. I met Giawndra in the Church one day shortly afterward. She ran up to me with a hug. I told her, "I hear that God is doing some incredible things in your life." And she agreed by saying "He is !" Then we praised God together. God's healing touch reached this lil' one in need. Her need for prayer was raised to heaven by many people of faith - by our community of believers here in the Turtle Mountain, by Fr. Jim Flanagan and the missionaries of Our Lady's Society in thirteen nations, by Pope Francis, by the new St. Elizabeth of the Trinity ... and the prayers of a lil' Indian girl in need. And God saw her faith and smiled upon our prayers and made a new Bartimaeus in our Giawndra.