By Helen Rozeluk

"I Knew the Rosary Was Powerful, But"....

Another Miracle from the 1999 pilgrimage to Rome and Garabandal

When The Workers of Our Lady - Canada took a group of pilgrims to Rome in May, 1999 for the beatification of Padre Pio, someone in the group experienced a miracle every single day of that two-week pilgrimage. The following is mine.

We arrived in Rome on Saturday, May 1, 1999. Our group of twenty one was staying at the "pension" adjacent to the Ukrainian Catholic Church of Sts. Sergio and Bacco, where Bishop Roman Danylak also has an apartment. Since Bishop Danylak kindly agreed to be the spiritual director for our pilgrimage, this was the ideal location for us.

The next day, Sunday, May 2nd, we were to participate in the beatification ceremonies in St. Peter's Square. Bishop Danylak arranged reserved tickets for each of us in the very first (front) public section. Since so many thousands of people were expected to be there, Bishop persuaded us to pre-book taxis to the Vatican gates, rather than take public transportation, and then meet together at our pre-arranged destination. So we grouped ourselves in groups of four and set off.

My group of four included Elizabeth Marter, her husband, Andreas and Dr. Peggy McGinty. We were the last to arrive at the Vatican gates, but still in plenty of time before the beginning of the ceremony. From the gates we were to walk the length of the long and wide avenue towards St. Peter's Square (about 1 km or 1/2 mile) and then make our way to the front section.

It was a particularly hot and humid day. Crowds and crowds of people milled about, all going in the same direction, all hurrying to arrive on time. As we made our way towards our destination, the crowds became thicker and denser. Only one third of the way up, we came to a complete standstill. There was nowhere to move. The avenue was a wall-to-wall mass of human bodies, all trying to push forward and going nowhere. Time was growing short. We had to be moving or we'd be late. People began to push and shove. The pressure of the crowd became so tight that I was completely lifted off the ground and hung there in mid-air, supported only by bodies of shoving people. In order to breathe, I had to push back on the people behind me, because my chest was being crushed. We all thought we would be crushed. Shorter people began to faint. The more impatient individuals began to use their fists and punch others. The situation was rapidly deteriorating into a mob scene.

I looked at my companions: Andreas, who suffers high blood pressure, turned ashen grey; Elizabeth, who was ill with liver problems, was white as a sheet (see Elizabeth's Story); Peggy was very flushed from the unbearable heat and the crush of people. Suddenly, Peggy panicked and began to go into hysterics. This was the last straw. It triggered a reaction in me that I can only explain as "holy anger". I immediately began the prayer to St. Michael, followed by the prayer of protection. I then grasped Peggy by the arm and commanded her and the other two, in the Name of Jesus, to be quiet and follow me. I began to recite the Holy Rosary and I ordered them to recite after me, while we held hands and tried to move forward.

We had not yet completed the third "Hail Mary", when all of a sudden, there was an open path in front of us. We began to move swiftly through the crowd, continuing the rosary. As we looked behind us, the path closed in

again. It was truly like the biblical "parting of the Red Sea". We continued onwards, passing through the numerous checkpoints quickly and easily. Finally we arrived at St. Peter's Square. The Swiss guard at the opening to our section refused to let us in, even though we had reserved tickets. Again I had to call on our good Archangel St. Michael. The guard let us pass.

By the end of the fourth decade of the rosary, we were seated in our section at the front of St. Peter's Square! Each section seats about 1000 people. Not only were we in our section, but our *entire* group was seated together in the same two rows! When we arrived, we found out that the rest of the group, concerned about our absence, was also reciting the rosary for our safe arrival. Needless to say, the fifth decade of the rosary was said in thanksgiving to Our Blessed Mother for this enormous miracle. Later on, Elizabeth approached me in wonder and said, "Helen, I knew that the Rosary was powerful, but I never realized just how powerful it really is!" Amen.

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