

**LOYOLA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
Ateneo de Manila University**

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# *Omnia Gratiarum*

**A Theological Investigation**

**About the Alleged 1948 Marian Apparition**

**in Lipa Carmel**

In Partial Fulfillment for the Subject

**Introduction to the Mystery of Faith**

Loyola School of Theology

Ateneo de Manila University

Submitted to

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	2
<b>CASE IN POINT:</b>	
Alleged Marian Apparition in Lipa Carmel (1948)	4
<b>AIM OF THE PAPER</b>	5
<b>EVENTS AND MESSAGES</b>	6
The Lady’s Message in her first visit in August 18, 1948	6
The first petals	6
Formal Phase of the Lady’s Manifestation	7
<b>ALL GRACES OR ALL GRACE?</b>	10
<b>THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION</b>	10
<b>CONTROVERSIES</b>	15
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	21
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
Original Account of “The Events at Lipa Carmel, 1948” by Mother Mary Cecilia of Jesus, O.C.D.	25
The Verdict	37
Decree from the Diocese of Lipa	38
Letter of Cardinal Ottaviani concerning the status of Mother Cecilia And Mother Mary Anne addressed to the Most Reverend Fr. Anastacio, Prior General of the Discalced Carmelites	39
Testimony of Fr. Lorenzo Ma. Guerrero, SJ	40
Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Ramon Arguelles. DD, STL	41

## INTRODUCTION

One of the things that I have learned from our class in the Introduction to the Mystery of Faith is for religious educators to catechize the people by considering their present context, conditions, questions and concerns. This methodology is very evident in the way the Catechism for Filipino Catholics (CFC) is presented. It deals with what is relevant to the people. The present situation of the people must be considered in order to be effective in catechizing. Knowing the people's culture and interest is also very beneficial in communicating the Gospel message. In the case of Filipinos, one effective means of communicating the Gospel truth is through their devotion to Mary.

It is a known fact that Filipinos have a strong devotion and love for Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ. As stated in CFC<sup>1</sup>, the outstanding characteristic of the Church in the Philippines is to be a “**pueblo amante de Maria**” --- a people in love with Mary. Filipinos' devotion to the Blessed Mother contributed a lot in keeping them in the Catholic faith. I personally witnessed this fact when I was assigned to minister to the people living in far flung areas. Attending mass was practically impossible for them. The only means that sustain them from their spiritual hunger is their devotion to Mary.

*Mary has been and remains the central inspiring force in bringing about a deeper evangelization of the masses of our people, “the safeguard for the preservation of our Catholic Faith, and the principle of deeper and fuller evangelization” (AMB 72-73).<sup>2</sup>*

It is important to understand that Mary's role in the Church is always to direct people to her Son. She points to her Son. Veneration of Mary always has a Christocentric dimension. Somehow, their role in salvation history is intertwined. The CFC pointed it out very well: “*The typical “Filipino” approach to Christ, therefore, is **with and through Mary**. Devotion to Mary has always been intimately intertwined with Christ.*”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*. (Manila: ECCCE Word & Life Publication, 1997) paragr. 45

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* paragr. 48

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* paragr. 46

This special attachment and attraction to Marian cults or deep hunger for spirituality added with social concerns such as poverty and injustice will make any community susceptible in accepting or being fascinated with supernatural phenomena. From this background we can understand where the Filipinos are coming from for having such high regard with supernatural phenomenon. Whether the experience is authentic or not, the obvious interest of the Filipino people in these events is undeniable. It is the role of the Magisterium to help these people in discerning whether the phenomenon is not contradictory to the deposit of faith and also a question of positive value. Our role now as theologians and as religious educators is to properly guide these people and catechize them regarding the teachings of the Church concerning these matters. Not a single iota of our Catholic doctrine should be contradicted by these phenomena. I strongly believe that studying these phenomena are closely related to our course in the Introduction to the Mystery of Faith because as religious educators, it is our duty to safeguard any erroneous doctrines that might mislead the faithful. These supernatural phenomena that people are so fascinated with are serious threats if the people are not guided accordingly. On the other hand, if no doctrine is violated, especially if it affirms the revealed truth of Christ, then we can even employ it in our advantage to strengthen the faith of the faithful.

*One element in the desired “reform” in Marian piety is a prudent, balanced attitude toward real or alleged apparitions of Our Lady, as overcoming an excessive credulity. This “balance” would involve, first stressing the uniqueness of the Gospel over all alleged “messages.” “We now await no further new public revelation before the glorious coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (cf. 1 Tim 6:14; Tit 2:13; DV 4).<sup>4</sup>*

With such a dramatic increase in the number of reported visions and locutions, anyone interested in exploring and understanding this phenomena needs to proceed with due caution. One that draws public interest lies in **Marian Apparitions**.<sup>5</sup> Very timely now in the Philippines is the appeal of quite a number of devotees of Mary to re-open the investigation of the alleged Marian Apparition in Lipa that happened in 1948.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. paragr. 1552

<sup>5</sup> The mystical appearance of a supernatural person who cannot be observed by anyone other than the visionary. Visionaries describe the person in the vision as seeming to be a real, three-dimensional body.

## **CASE IN POINT : ALLEGED MARIAN APPARITION IN LIPA CARMEL (1948)<sup>6</sup>**

Years ago, the Catholic Hierarchy of the Philippines investigated the strange events that occurred at Lipa, and came to the official conclusion that there was in them no evidence of the supernatural.<sup>7</sup>

*“This one apparition will be of special interest to the Filipinos, for the mysterious events that occurred in 1948 within the cloisters of a Carmelite convent in the city of Lipa brought notice to the Philippines, and had thousands streaming from all over the country to the convent grounds. And marvelous stories spread of a lovely lady in white, of petals falling from the sky, of a spinning sun, a moving statue, miraculous cures and conversions.”<sup>8</sup>*

As pilgrims flock to the said Discalced Carmelite Convent and numerous claims of supernatural events were testified by witnesses and devotees, especially by the seer, Sr. Teresita “Teresing” Castillo<sup>9</sup> and by Mo. Mary Cecilia of Jesus, OCD,<sup>10</sup> soon it was put to an end, for the Philippine Catholic Church<sup>11</sup> declared in 1951 that the alleged apparitions had no supernatural origin. In the long, stunned and painful silence that followed this pronouncement, myth and much detraction have grown thick around the events of 1948.

*After the pronouncement in 1951, the documents and materials in Carmel’s possession were ordered destroyed. These included the very valuable diaries of those involved. And nothing can be found in the archives of the Arzobispados of Lipa and Manila, or in the nunciature. However, three or four documents<sup>12</sup> have unexpectedly surfaced, including an account written by Mother Cecilia during the*

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<sup>6</sup>For a more detailed account of the said Apparition see: June Keithley, *“Lipa – With the Original Account of the Events at Lipa Carmel in 1948 by Mother Mary Cecilia of Jesus, OCD”* (Manila: Cacho Publishing House Inc., 1992)

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix for the official verdict and decree.

<sup>8</sup> June Keithley, *“Lipa – With the Original Account of the Events at Lipa Carmel in 1948 by Mother Mary Cecilia of Jesus, OCD .”* (Manila: Cacho Publishing House Inc., 1992) p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Visionary of Lipa; Carmelite postulant in 1948

<sup>10</sup> Then prioress of Lipa Carmel in 1948

<sup>11</sup> The concept of ecclesiastical approval or disapproval of apparitions emanated from the treatise *De Servorum Dei Beatificationis* issued by Pope Benedict XIV, who reigned from 1740 to 1758. The treatise established that the Roman Catholic Church might give approval of an apparition only after careful investigation. This approval called for only the assent of human faith; it did not require the assent of Catholic faith. Competence for this decision-making rested with the bishop of the diocese within which the apparition occurred.

<sup>12</sup>This account was originally written in English, translated into Spanish for Bishop Versoza, then translated back to English from the Spanish version. The Keithley Report utilized this English version for the documentary.

*time of the apparitions.*<sup>13</sup>

## **AIM OF THE PAPER**

This paper will try to **re-visit** (review documented accounts given by primary witnesses), to **re-investigate** (critically analyze the given limited resources available), and to **re-study** (using the latest official Church Documents, Papal Encyclicals and accounts from Church-Approved Apparitions) the said event that transpired in Lipa. It intends to conclude at the end of the study either to re-affirm the decision made by the commission<sup>14</sup> years back in 1951 (that there was nothing supernatural in the event) or on the other hand, recommend a re-consideration regarding the decision made many years ago by the Church Hierarchy (the appeal to re-open the case by many of the devotees as of now).

Popular belief claims that the alleged apparition in Lipa were suppressed and judged as “*not worthy of belief*” due to mere faults found in the technicalities. The proponents who wish to re-open the case of Lipa appeal using the discrepancies in these technicalities. A section of this paper entitled “**controversies**” will sight some discrepancies in the preliminary investigations as a background only. I would like to stress here that I do not undermine the importance of technicalities in the investigation (i.e. mandatory silence) for this is very crucial in the preliminary procedure of any supernatural investigation but these issues will not be discussed in this paper since a thorough study and argument regarding this matter has already been extensively discussed in the well-received book of Ms. June Keithley entitled “Lipa”<sup>15</sup> if I will discuss it, I will just be repeating what she have done already. However, a lot of her findings will be used as a resource material and background for this paper. What this paper intends to develop is a theological understanding regarding the alleged messages given by Our Lady during the event. Hopefully, it may conclude whether the alleged messages or the event itself is theologically sound or really “*not worthy of belief.*”

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After the documentary had been aired, the original English document surfaced. See: Appendix for the original account

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 18

<sup>14</sup> The decision was signed by six bishops: Gabriel M. Reyes, then Archbishop of Manila; Cesar M. Guerrero, Bishop of San Fernando; Mariano Madriaga, Bishop of Lingayen; Juan C. Sison, Auxiliary Bishop of Nueva Segovia; Vicente P. Reyes, Auxiliary Bishop of Manila; and Rufino Santos, Apostolic Administrator of Lipa.

<sup>15</sup> June Keithley, “*Lipa – With the Original Account...*”

## EVENTS AND MESSAGES

### The Lady's message in her first visit in August 18, 1948:<sup>16</sup>

*“Do not fear my daughter. He whom you love above all things has sent me. I come with a message. You have had a long and fierce battle with your enemies. It has caused me much pain. But they will no longer molest you unless there be a last, strong assault. Do not be afraid, be brave. Your enemy is jealous because you love your Mother Prioress very much. Love her much more. Wash her feet, kiss them, then drink the water. Give this message to your mother. Love her very much but tell nothing to others.”*

This message was followed with an additional command that the visionary should eat some grass and perform this act at three in the afternoon, *“for such acts would be for the salvation of two souls, that of the Prioress and her own.”*<sup>17</sup> Some may find it absurd and repulsive to our human judgment why Our Lady should require such an act but it is interesting to note that in 1858, the Lady who introduced herself as the Immaculate Conception had to ask Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes three times to drink from the mud and to eat weeds --- a task which this future saint could accomplish only on her third attempt. This act scandalized and prompted witnesses to say that Bernadette had gone mad, an accusation that would also be hurled against Teresing.<sup>18</sup> Later it is understood that these acts are preliminary conditions in order to prepare the visionary for the task ahead. To put it simply, this is a sign of obedience and an act of humility and faith. But still others, skeptic or not, do not see the relevance of these requirements. For them, humility, obedience and simplicity is not measured by these acts.

### The first petals<sup>19</sup>

On August 19, the same day Teresing and Mo. Cecilia complied with the Lady's request; the following messages were given to Teresing:

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid. pp. 31-32

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p. 32

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 34

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 34

*“Your mother made a wise decision in obeying me. Now that you have given me proof of your humility, and your mother of her simplicity, I can now proceed. Both of you will always remain under my mantle.”*

The following day, Teresing witnessed the shower of roses (petals) in her bedroom while fixing her bed. In an interview made by Ms. June Keithley she said:

*“I was in my cell and fixing our bed in the morning....then I looked up because I knew there was something falling, so I looked up and saw petals. I said, ‘how can this be? There are no holes in the ceiling.’ I was really surprised!”<sup>20</sup>*

In any Marian apparition, it is always marked with extra-ordinary phenomena. It consists of what the seers and witnesses say they saw, predictions made by the Lady which were fulfilled, the Lady’s messages and the miraculous cures.<sup>21</sup> From these experiences, conversions and devotions flourish. The shower of petals in Lipa is one of the alleged unique and unexplainable supernatural phenomenons that took place in that event. This happened not only once but was followed in the succeeding days in Lipa. Even bishop Obviar & Versoza experienced these shower of petals right before their very eyes.

Thousands of followers started flocking the apparition site due to this extra-ordinary experience. What is more compelling is that it was experienced not only by the visionary but by thousands of people as well. Reports of miracles and conversions were attributed to these petals up until this present day. Mo. Cecilia, testified by other nuns in Jaro Carmel where she was exiled after the condemnation of the alleged apparitions, was being followed by this shower of roses even in Jaro Carmel.

#### Formal Phase of the Lady’s Manifestation

As the alleged apparition progresses, the Lady began to reveal her identity to Teresing. At around five in the afternoon of September 12, 1948, while saying the rosary in the garden,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. pp. 34-35

<sup>21</sup> Ingo Swann, *“The Great Apparitions of Mary: An Examination of Twenty-Two Supranormal Appearances.”* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co.,1996) p. 11.



Teresing heard a voice instructing her to return to that spot for 15 consecutive days. During those periods, she received these messages:

*“I am your mother, and I am the mother of my Son, Jesus...Pray for them [priests and nuns] as you have never prayed before. The Sacred Heart of my Son bleeds anew for every fallen priest or nun.”*

At this point the Lady is starting to convey messages directed not just for Teresing but for others. It's implications covers reparation for the sins of others and for conversion of sinners. It is a common experience between different Marian apparitions the appeal for prayer and penance. The Church's members, especially among the clergy in the different points of history, are known to deviate sometimes from what they are supposed to be --- morally upright and holy. The constant call for repentance is very evident in every Marian apparition. Theologically speaking, this call to repentance is not a sole Marian innovation but emanates from a Christological perspective. This message is the message of the Gospel of Christ. Nothing new is revealed in this message. All these messages are already in Sacred Scripture. From time immemorial, God sent prophets, angels, apostles, disciples, preachers, etc. to deliver this message in various times in history. This message of prayer and penance is also voiced out in Fatima.

*“I ask this from Carmel. I wish that my image be placed here. This place must be cleaned so that it may become a shrine for prayer.”*

Another usual request in Marian Apparitions is erecting a shrine for a place of prayer. CFC gave us a good guideline regarding this issue:

*Fourth, proper response is not fulfilled by merely erecting a shrine or organizing certain devotions, but by **imitating Mary's faith, hope and love** of God and neighbor.<sup>22</sup> [emphasis mine]*

The Lady's request for a shrine in Lipa was accompanied by a message to the Carmelite community at that time. They were instructed to believe and to keep the apparitions secret until she advised otherwise and especially to let “love” overflow in their monastery. They were instructed to love one another as true sisters (this instruction is again not something new for it is

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<sup>22</sup> CFC. paragr. 1552

the same instruction given by Christ --- “*My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you.*”<sup>23</sup>), obey and love the Mother prioress (which “stands in place of Christ” --- as stated in the Carmelite Rule of Life) and not to envy Teresing. The Lady also requested that the monastery be known as “*Our Lady’s Carmel.*”<sup>24</sup>

It is important to mention how Carmelites regard Mary from the start in order to understand the implications of what the Lady is asking these nuns. Many devotees of the brown scapular (associated with Our Lady of Mt. Carmel) have a misconception of attaching superstition in the scapular. But for a true Carmelite, wearing the scapular basically means being clothed with Mary’s virtues. When a Carmelite performs or does certain acts related to Mary (like this request of the Lady in Lipa), it is clear to him/her that it means imitating Mary’s virtues in order to grow in faith, hope and love. These theological implications may not seem obvious from an outsider’s point of view, but for a Carmelite, this is very clear --- to venerate and honor Mary means to imitate her total obedience to God by being clothed with her virtues.

On another account the Lady also instructed:

*“I want a statue of myself to be made so that my little ones can see me. Describe me to your chaplain because I wish my statue to look as you see me, and to be as large as that of Our Lady of Lourdes which stands inside the cloister.”*

The said image was temporarily put aside as a consequence of the verdict of the investigating committee. After several decades, upon the approval of the local ordinary of Lipa, it was permitted for public veneration again. Now, replicas of the said image are being distributed to different dioceses in the Philippines and even abroad. The image that will become popular will soon be known as **Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace.**

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<sup>23</sup> John 15:12; also John 13:34

<sup>24</sup> June Keithley. “*Lipa – With the Original Account...*” p. 46

## **ALL GRACES OR ALL GRACE?**

The Lady appeared at the last day of the promised 15 days. After exhorting the community to love one another, encouraging simplicity, humility and obedience, requesting mass to be held every 12<sup>th</sup> of the month and stating that her Son is the Way, the Truth and the Life, she identified herself before vanishing: “*I am Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace.*”

*“Pray, my child. The people do not heed my words. Tell my daughters that there will be persecutions, unrest and bloodshed in your country. The enemy of the Church will try to destroy the faith which Jesus had established and died for. The Church will suffer much. Pray for the conversion of sinners throughout the world. Pray for those who rejected me and those who do not believe my messages in the different parts of the world. I am really sad but consoled by those who believe and trust me. Spread the meaning of the rosary because this will be the instrument for peace throughout the world. Tell the people that the rosary must be said with devotion. Propagate the devotion to my Immaculate Heart. Do penance for priests and nuns but be not afraid, for the love of my Son will soften the hardest of hearts, and my motherly love will be their strength to crush the enemies of God. What I ask here is the same I asked at Fatima. I bless this community in a very special blessing. All these can be revealed now. I repeat to you that I am Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace. This is my last apparition here.”*

I will not discuss in further detail the last message of the Apparition. As mentioned within the message itself, the same is asked at Fatima. Some commentators however see a controversy in the title given by the Madonna. When asked whether the title was “of all Graces,” Teresing strongly pointed out that it is “of all Grace.”<sup>25</sup> We shall discuss the different implications between these two titles. Are they really different or are they pointing at the same reality?

## **THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION**

In our present age, though others still find it difficult to accept calmly the belief that Mary is Mediatrix of all Graces we are more enlightened by encyclicals written by popes and

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 56

other Church documents, especially after Vatican II, openly referring to Mary as such. We can imagine how rigid the Church was during that time in 1948, especially having Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani<sup>26</sup> (a known conservative) as Prefect or Assessor of the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office now known as the Sacred Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). Though not proclaimed as a Dogma, Mary has been referred to under the title Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces. Many popes in their encyclicals have discussed this thoroughly and sensibly. Among the earliest popes who somehow regarded her related to this title before Vatican II were:<sup>27</sup>

Leo XII – “through whom [Christ] has chosen to be the dispenser of *all heavenly graces*”(Jucunda simpler, 1883); “It is right to say that nothing at all of the immense treasury of every grace which the Lord accumulated --- for ‘grace and truth come from Jesus Christ’ (Jn 1:17) --- nothing is imparted to us except through Mary...”(Octobri Mense, 1891).

St. Pius X – “*dispensatrix of all the gifts*” acquired by the death of the Redeemer (*ad diem illum*, AAS 36, 1904, p.453); “...she became most worthily the reparatrix of the lost world and dispensatrix of all the gifts that our Savior purchased for us by his death and his blood” (*Ad diem illum*, 1904; cf., Eadmer, *De Excellentia Virginis Mariae*, c.9); For she is the neck of our Head by which He communicates to his Mystical Body *all spiritual gifts*” (*Ad diem illum*, 1904).

Pope Benedict XV – “For with her suffering and dying son, Mary endured suffering and almost death... One can truly affirm that together with Christ she has redeemed the human race... For this reason, *every kind of grace* we receive from the treasury of the redemption is ministered as it were through the hands of the same sorrowful Virgin...(Apostolic Letter, *Inter Sodalicia*, AAS 10, 1918, p. 182); (Mass and Office of Mediatrix of all Graces approved 1921)

Pope Pius XI – “the virgin who is treasure of *all graces* with God... (Apostolic letter, *Cognitum sane*, AAS 18, p.213); “...We know that *all things* are imparted to us from God, the greatest and best, through the hands of the Mother of God” (Encyclical Letter, *Ingravescentibus malis*, AAS 29, 1937, p. 380).

Pope Pius XII – “it is the will of God that we obtain *all favors* through Mary, ‘*let everyone hasten to have recourse to Mary*’”(Superiore anno, AAS 32 1940, p. 145. For usage of same expression by Pius XII, cf.,

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<sup>26</sup> See appendix for Cardinal Ottaviani’s Decree related to Lipa apparition.

<sup>27</sup> For a fuller discussion regarding these encyclicals see: “The Mediatrix of Mercy, the Triumph of Divine Mercy and the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart” by Dr. Mark Miravalle, S.T.D. in “*Contemporary Insights on the Fifth Marian Dogma: Mary Coredeptrix, Mediatix, Advocate*” Theological Foundations III. Edited by Dr. Mark Miravalle, S.T.D. (CA: Queenship Publishing Company, 2000).

AAS 45, 1953, p. 382); “She teaches us all virtues; she gives us her Son and with him all the help we need, for ‘God wished us to have everything through Mary’” (Mediator Dei, 1947).

From these encyclicals we can notice the development of the teaching regarding Mary as Mediatrix of All Graces. It is interesting to note that Pope Pius XII’s *Mediator Dei* came out at 1947. The happenings in Lipa took place in 1948 --- only a year after the encyclical was released. It has been experienced by the Church before that Mary’s apparitions confirms the current issues the Church faces at that certain time. One of these apparitions that confirm the title attached to the current issues of the time happened in Lourdes France: Mary Conceived without Original Sin (Immaculate Conception). In the case of Lipa, the thought of associating the apparition to affirm the current issue the Church faces at that time (in this case that Mary is indeed Mediatrix of All Graces) is reasonable.

After Vatican II, an official Church document and papal encyclical strengthened the teaching about the Mediatrix of All Graces: *Lumen Gentium* and *Redemptoris Mater*.

“Thus there is mediation: Mary places herself between her Son and mankind in the reality of its wants, needs and sufferings. *She puts herself ‘in the middle’*, that is to say, *she acts as a Mediatrix not as an outsider, but in her position as a mother*. She knows that, as such, she can point out to her Son the needs of mankind and in fact, she ‘has the right’ to do so. Her mediation is thus in the nature of intercession: Mary ‘intercedes’ for mankind”<sup>28</sup>

Mary’s maternal mediation does not obscure the unique and perfect mediation of Christ. Indeed, after calling Mary ‘Mediatrix’, the Council is careful to explain that this ‘neither takes away anything from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficacy of Christ the one Mediator’ (Lumen Gentium, n.62) ...in addition, the Council states that ‘Mary’s function as a Mother of men in no way obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows its power’ (Lumen Gentium, n. 60).<sup>29</sup>

In the Philippines, another Official Church Document teaches very clearly how the Church understands Mary as Mediatrix of All Graces:

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<sup>28</sup> John Paul II. *Redemptoris Mater* n. 21

<sup>29</sup> John Paul II in his Wednesday audience of October 1, 1997

*Authentic Catholic doctrine teaches that Mary's intercession does not in any way detract from, or add to, the unique mediation of Christ (cf. 1 Tim 2:5-6). Two analogies help us to understand this. First, in God's continuing act of Creating, the one goodness of God is communicated diversely to all creatures. Second, the priesthood of Christ is shared in various ways both by sacred ministers and by all the baptized. Hence, in like manner, the unique mediation of Christ is shared by all, since God calls all to cooperate, in manifold human ways, in Christ's redemptive mission (cf. LG 62). Catholics see in Mary a special cooperation due to her God-given role within His saving work through Christ and the Spirit<sup>30</sup>.*

*St. Paul clearly affirms "there is ONE mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5) But just as Jesus calls all to follow him and share in his mission as Prophet, Priest, and King, so he gave Mary, his Mother, the unique mission of being mother to all his disciples (cf. Jn 19:26). Thus Jesus makes Mary share in his own saving mediatorship, neither adding nor detracting from it in any way.<sup>31</sup>*

After pointing out how the Church interprets this teaching, we will notice that all principles behind it points to Christ's saving grace. We saw that there was nothing new revealed. All matters only supplement the existing Truth found in Jesus Christ. The Church has always acknowledged the proper role and importance of Church-approved Apparitions, especially in light with Divine Revelation. "*Revelation is God's personal loving communication to us of who He is and His plan to save us all in His love. It is God's reaching out to us in friendship, so we get to know and love Him.*"<sup>32</sup> All private Apparitions, whether they be authentic or not, do not affect in any way the public Revealed Truth of Christ. The faithful may believe in the Church-approved private apparitions but they are not obliged. Belief in these Church-approved apparitions is not necessary for salvation. The fullness of Revelation is revealed by and through Jesus Christ as stated in Sacred Scriptures:

*"We now await no further new public revelation before the glorious coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (cf. 1 Tim 6:14; Tit 2:13; DV 4)*

as well as in the official teachings of the Church:

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<sup>30</sup> CFC. paragr. 526

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. paragr. 549.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. paragr. 101

*Nevertheless we Catholics must “witness to [our] own faith and way of life” in the Catholic Church which “proclaims, and is duty-bound to proclaim, without fail, Christ who is the way, the truth and the life” (NA 2). Jesus Christ is “himself both the mediator and the fullness of all Revelation” (DV 2; cf. CCC 65).<sup>33</sup>*

There is no question with the term “of All Graces” as it is clearly mentioned and discussed in the above Church documents and papal encyclicals. It refers to the merits of Jesus Christ and all other favors God grants to humanity. We may simply put it this way: Catholics see in Mary a special cooperation due to her God-given role within His saving work through Christ and the Spirit.<sup>34</sup> Now, will this explanation remain the same if we change “of All Graces” to “of All Grace?”

I will not deal with this dilemma grammatically. But, I will try to assume intelligibly what “of all Grace” may imply. One approach is to associate Jesus Christ as “**the Grace.**” Let us quote a paragraph in the CFC:

*Obedying God’s Law is clearly the means toward the goal of sharing in God’s own life of love, GRACE. Grace is primarily God’s loving PRESENCE, the gift of the Spirit within us that justifies and sanctifies us...<sup>35</sup>*

If grace is primarily God’s personal loving presence to humankind, we have to relate this with Christ being Emmanuel --- God-with-us. Christ’s Incarnation brought about a wholly new way of God being present to humanity. Albeit He has always been present to his people in history before the Incarnation, His presence was not the same as His presence when the Word became flesh.<sup>36</sup> This is very evident in Salvation history. Christ is the greatest manifestation of God. Christ is the primordial sacrament of God. He is “THE PRESENCE” he is “THE GRACE.”

Having written that, Mary’s role as mediatrix must always be directly connected with her role as the Mother of Christ. Similarly in the teaching of “of All Graces,” which focuses on the different aspects of dispensing various needs of the Church coming from Christ, now the “of All

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. paragr. 76

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. paragr. 526

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. paragr. 952

<sup>36</sup> John 1:1-3

Grace” focus on the relationship of Mary being mother to the one encompassing “grace” It is important again to remember here that the focus of the teaching is in Christ being “the highest self-offering of God” and not on Mary.

Now, after elaborating on that matter, it seems that there is no great difference between the two terms --- “of all graces” and “of all grace.” This paper attempted to see any difference but it found none. It seems that there is no great difference between the two. It invites other theologians for further reflection regarding the matter. If however, some item be deemed as non-conforming to official Church teaching or worse heretical, I submit myself humbly to the judgment of the Church.

## **CONTROVERSIES**

There are indications that the official Church investigation was rather hurried, slipshod affair, generally wanting in thoroughness.<sup>37</sup>

- Bishop Versoza was never questioned, neither Bishop Obviar, who would till his dying day, wait for official church representatives to come for his testimony.<sup>38</sup>
- Fancisco Dychangco, head of the Lipa Marian Research Center, which at one time spearheaded a campaign that tried to have the case re-opened, cites another serious oversight on the part of the commission:<sup>39</sup>

*“For example, Mrs. Mendoza of Paco, and also Sr. Melania Sunga of Candon, Ilocos Sur... were not investigated ... if these miracles were investigated, and they said never. So I presumed that those who investigated Lipa only asked questions from the Sisters and never investigated any of the miracles.”*

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<sup>37</sup> June Keithley. “Lipa – With the Original Account...” p. 114

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

<sup>39</sup> Ibid



- All the bishops have since passed away. But there are testimonies to the effect that they may have been ill prepared to sign such a document. Here is a quote from an interview with Mr. Dychangco:<sup>40</sup>

*June Keithley* : *Did you ever get to talk to any of them?*  
*Dychangco* : *Yes. Only one, because at that time in 1982, only one was living, and that was Bishop Reyes of Cabanatuan, Vicente Reyes. And I asked him, “How did you arrive at that decision?”*

*He told me, “I was young bishop then. I was called to the Arzobispado in Intramuros at nine o’clock in the morning. We had a conference there. At around threoo’clock, we signed he document that it was not true.”*

*I asked him, “Did you investigate yourself, Your Excellency?”*

*“No,” he said. “There was a body, a commission ho investigated.”*

- Teresing states that she was never called to face or be interrogated by the Bishops. Neither was she ever interrogated by the Carmelite father sent from Rome.<sup>41</sup>
- Bishop Cesar Guerrero,<sup>42</sup> when he was still alive, often expressed his disappointment over the turn of events:<sup>43</sup>

*“He ( Bishop Guerrero) did not make much statement about it because it was forbidden by the Church. But then we knew from his talks, privately, that he was in, I mean, he approved that happening in Lipa. He found it supernatural.”*

*--- Mother Mary Margaret of the Sacred Heart, OCD  
(former prioress of Angeles Carmel)*

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid. p. 115

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. p. 115

<sup>42</sup> One of the signatory bishops of the verdict

<sup>43</sup> June Keithley. “*Lipa – With the Original Account...*” p. 116

“Bishop Cesar Guerrero used to come here every year on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November. He used to come here to pay his respect to our Blessed Mother. And he says Mass. After saying Mass, he used to see the community. I was then a very young novice, and I remember in one of his visits he said that, ‘You know, I am really waiting for the Church approval of the apparitions of Our Lady.’ I saw tears in his eyes.”

--- Sister Bernadette of the Mother of God, OCD

“He informed us that every November 21<sup>st</sup>, he will come here. Alam mo [you know], by November, ay, it’s still dark, so we do not open the gate until around five-thirty, quarter to six, like that. But during that time, when he was still living, we used to open even before five. Because coming from Pampanga, he would just appear. Then he would park his car in front of our church. And then he told us also, ‘You know, I tell our Blessed Mother, ‘Mama Mary, I am here to present myself.’”

--- Sister Elizabeth of the Sacred Heart, OCD

- Fr. Lorenzo Maria Guerrero, SJ, former head of the Marian Movement of Priests in the Philippines, disclosed that his uncle, Bishop Cesar Guerrero stated that he believed in the veracity of the apparitions. Fr. Guerrero has since suffered a debilitating stroke, but in his desire to set the record straight, has signed his official testimony to this effect (dated February 11, 1990).<sup>44</sup> He made an affidavit<sup>45</sup> stating Bishop Guerrero’s deathbed confession.
- Bishop Godofredo Pedernal, former bishop of Borlongan, Eastern Samar said these in an interview by June Keithley:<sup>46</sup>

“Bishop Guerrero was already living in Hospicio de San Jose and once in a while, Bishop Obviar would go there to visit him. And he always talked about (holds up imaginary petal) the petal. **The same thing with all the other ones who signed like Archbishop Juan Sison of Vigan.** It’s the same thing with Sison --- all these bishops who have signed --- they never did away with the petal that they got, that the sisters gave them.” (suppresses a chuckle) [emphasis mine]

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p.117

<sup>45</sup> See appendix for the copy of the affidavit

<sup>46</sup> June Keithley. “Lipa – With the Original Account...”p. 117

- This next account is very sensitive and alarming. It involves prominent people of the Catholic Hierarchy during the time of the alleged apparition. I will just present here the testimonies of some people interviewed by Ms. June Keithley:<sup>47</sup>

*“I was transferred in 1956 to Angeles Carmel as Subprioress. Now, every now and then, when he [Bishop Guerrero] became the bishop of San Fernando, he used to visit us....One day, when he was talking to us, we were talking about Lipa and he said, ‘I always go there every November 21. **Someday the truth will come out.**’ ...He said, **‘It’s the fault of that man!’**...He did not mention the name. I don’t know, he did not tell the name.” [emphasis mine]*

---- Mother Therese of the Holy Face, H.F.J.

According to Ms. June Keithley, a reliable source which they cannot disclose in the interest of prudence, testifies that Bishop Patrick Shanley of Isabela [*sic* Infanta] was reportedly so disgusted by the conduct of the investigation and the manner in which certain church officials influenced the outcome of the verdict. In a fit of anger, he denounced the proceedings and revealed that the bishops had been forced to sign the verdict by the papal nuncio<sup>48</sup> upon the pain of excommunication.<sup>49</sup> Bishop Padernal says that Vagnozzi did not believe the reported apparitions at Lipa to be authentic. He believes that it was just an invention of the sisters.<sup>50</sup> Fr. Pablo Fernandez, O.P.<sup>51</sup> thinks that Vagnozzi should not have interfered with the matter of the petals. According to him, that should have been done by the Philippine hierarchy, by the bishops.<sup>52</sup> He also believes that there is a high possibility that some of the bishops would have signed the pronouncement because they were intimidated: *“It is possible, yes, it is possible that a white man in those times had a superiority, either real or supposed over the Filipinos because you were still close to the times of colonialism.”*<sup>53</sup> According also to Bishop Pedernal, the considerable influence of Monsignor Rufino Santos<sup>54</sup> cannot be discounted: *“Bishop Obviar, he was a good friend of Bishop Guerrero and he said, ‘Why did you sign that? I know you believe it,*

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p.118

<sup>48</sup> Monsignor Egidio Vagnozzi --- apostolic Delegate to the Philippines 1949-51; then Apostolic nuncio 1951-58

<sup>49</sup> June Keithley. *“Lipa – With the Original Account...”* p. 118

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p119

<sup>51</sup> Former Provincial Archivist at the University of Santo Tomas

<sup>52</sup> June Keithley. *“Lipa – With the Original Account...”* p. 120

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Apostolic Administrator of Lipa then Archbishop of Manila

*you always have your petal there.’ And the late Bishop Guerrero said, ‘I had to sign because the Cardinal (referring to Monsignor Santos) said we all had to sign this.’”<sup>55</sup>*

However, Monsignor Vagnozzi was not who decided the whole thing. The director general of the Carmelite Order was the one who investigated the whole thing. He used to go to the nunciature and make his progressive report. And on that progressive report, he made a progressive report to Rome.<sup>56</sup> Strangely, there was very little on file on the case of Lipa in the Discalced Carmelite Generalate in Rome. There weren’t any records of who had been sent, why, and for how long. **More importantly, there was not even an official report from Fr. Michael Moylan<sup>57</sup> on the nature of his investigation or the reason for the negative decision on Lipa.<sup>58</sup>**

Another document provoked another question. Dated September 26, 1962 (Protocol Number 220/49), it was written by Cardinal Ottaviani in reply to a letter concerning the status of Mother Cecilia and Mother Mary Anne. It was addressed to the Most Reverend Father Anastacio of the Most Holy Rosary, Prior General of the Discalced Carmelites.<sup>59</sup>

*“Your Most Reverend Father sent to this Supreme Sacred Congregation a letter from the Prioress of the Carmelite Convent of Quezon City (Philippines), which inquired whether the Sisters, Mother Mary Cecilia and Mother Mary Anne of Jesus ought to remain temporarily or permanently in the said Convent. At the same time, the same Prioress asked whether the Convent of Lipa would be prevented from holding the canonical elections.*

*In relation to this, I wish to communicate to You that from this Holy Office, we gather that on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 1953, the then Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Vagnozzi, had been authorized to admit candidates to the novitiate and to simple or solemn profession in accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law and of the particular Constitutions of Carmel, **provided that they be informed of the judgment and the decisions made about the happenings in Lipa.** [emphasis mine]*

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<sup>55</sup> June Keithley. *“Lipa – With the Original Account...”* p. 120

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p. 120

<sup>57</sup> Fr. Michael Moylan, OCD is the general delegate of the Discalced Carmelite Order who investigated the case of Lipa. He is to submit his findings to the Carmelite Generalate in Rome and to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith headed that time by Cardinal Ottaviani.

<sup>58</sup> June Keithley. *“Lipa – With the Original Account...”* p. 121

<sup>59</sup> Ibid

*In this particular case, then, and with the letter of this Supreme Sacred Congregation dated 29 December 1959, it has been communicated to Your Reverence that the abovementioned Sisters implicated in the presumed extraordinary happenings at Lipa be rehabilitated in their position as Choir members, but permanently deprived of both active and passive voice. [emphasis mine]*

*Inasmuch as there exist no other data in the Archives of the Holy office [emphasis mine], Your Reverence can consult the Sacred Congregation for the Religious for whatever future official decisions”.*

Question arises because it was Cardinal Ottaviani who for 50 years, as head of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, was responsible for all decisions relating to the matter of apparitions and private revelations. So, if there was **“no other data in existence in the Archives of the Holy Office,”** where could they be? The question then is, had the case of Lipa been merely decided on at the local level? Could it be that it had never been officially elevated to the investigation of the Holy See?<sup>60</sup> Bishop Pedernal believes that the decision was prematurely arrived at and points out that official church investigation into reported apparitions throughout the history of the church normally last several years.<sup>61</sup>

Bishop Pedernal also recounted the very interesting account of Monsignor Morelli.<sup>62</sup> Pedernal had accompanied Bishop Obviar on his visit to Rome, and had been present at the meeting between Morelli and Obviar:<sup>63</sup>

*Morelli started about the state of Lipa. He said, “Bishop Obviar, why did the bishops in the Philippines not insist in asking the Holy Father to approve that the Virgin Mother, Blessed Mother, had gone to the Philippines, to Lipa? Because I myself, personally, before I left the Philippines, twice I experienced in Lipa what had happened in Fatima about the sun while I was there in Carmel.”*

*And Bishop Obviar, you know, the typical temperament of a man from Batangas emerged. He said, speaking, they were talking in Spanish, he said: “Tonteria!” he said. “How is this possible? You were one of those who signed this thing about the petals and about that foolishness!”*

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid. p. 122

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. p. 123

<sup>62</sup> Monsignor Morelli is the Charges d’ Affairs of the Holy See to the Philippines prior to the appointment of Monsignor Vagnozzi.

<sup>63</sup> June Keithley. *“Lipa – With the Original Account...”* p. 123

*And the poor monsignor, "You know at that time, I was not a bishop. But you see, "he was insisting that, "I am only a retired Monsignor." In fact, Bishop Obviar still said, "You are here at the point of the nose of the Holy Father, so you tell the Holy Father, you approve that the Blessed Mother went to the Philippines, there in Lipa."*

*He said, "What can I, I cannot do that, I am nothing here. I am only praying as an old retired Monsignor, canonigo. But I say you bishops in the Philippines, you have more influence and power to tell the Holy Father, please declare that the Blessed Mother..."*

*And so the Bishop afterwards, he was explaining, saying, "You say that when you were there, you said you signed that document that there was nothing. Now here you are, you're telling me now that you believe that the Blessed Mother went there!"*

*So during the lunch and before we left, again, Monsignor Morelli, he pulled out from his pocket, "Monsignor, this petal which I got from Lipa during the shower will not be --- I will never separate from this petal until I die."*

## **CONCLUSION**

In this paper I only discussed the theological implications of the said event. Based on the limited resources that were available (since an order to destroy all the files were given), I found no contradictions as regards matters related to faith and moral, it even verified and strengthened it. Though some new understanding regarding the interpretation of certain accepted truths were being implied by the event, we cannot immediately judge it either as correct or not in conformity with the Faith that was handed down to us from the very beginning since all these ideas have never been given yet a serious and critical reflection by theologians and Church authorities. We should remember that albeit no new revelation is handed down, the Church' understanding about that truth develops and mature as time progresses. What seems unthinkable today may become acceptable in the future.

With regard to the basis of why the Catholic Hierarchy back then condemned it, I leave that to the arguments stated by Ms. June Keithley in her book. So many controversies regarding personal agenda and the technicalities of the investigation were discussed there. As a theologian,

after studying the event particularly the main messages, I can say that there is no threat of great harm or consequence if the Church should consider re-opening the case. As a matter of fact, it may even help increase the fervor of the faithful, especially if the message and devotion will be propagated on a wider scale. This is evident if we study the fruits of the said event.

Test of time. After more than 50 years of silencing the witnesses, still the faithful's interest never died down. In fact, devotions continue to increase as fruits were very evident. The message of prayer, penance and conversion is a constant call even up until today. The Church cannot simply ignore the undeniable spiritual goods that come out of the alleged apparition.

Key persons in the event lived/ are living a holy life. The four major key persons (those who believed in the apparition) were known to live holy lives. Monsignor Alfredo Versoza, Bishop of Lipa, and Monsignor Alfredo Obviar, Auxiliary Bishop and chaplain of Carmel --- both bishops believed in the authenticity of the apparitions but were never questioned by the investigative committee, and after the Church verdict, maintained an official silence and suffered tremendous persecutions. The cause for the beatification of Bishop Obviar is now on process. Mother Mary Cecilia, OCD after being exiled to another Carmel was stripped of her passive and active voice as a choir nun. She also maintained an official silence regarding the matter up until her death in 1982. Finally, the seer, Teresing, the only living among the four is living a simple life. She was sent out of the monastery after the event. After so many years she remained obedient to the Church, known to be sincere and humble rather than given to exaggeration and story-telling. Compared to the now-condemned visionary of Agoon who became transvestite (practicing homosexual), Teresing is known for her simplicity and humility. She still fulfills her promise to our Lady to attend mass in the Shrine of Our Lady Mediatrix of All Grace in Lipa.

Whether the event has a supernatural origin or not, we cannot deny the fact that it is important to the people ---- it had become a strong source of faith, hope and love as seen and proven thru the test of time. As what Ingo Swann as said, *“If the devout are responding to*

*Mary's call, then there is nothing church, science, or philosophy can do about it. Such is the power of Mary's apparitions to the devout, and her power seems to be theirs and theirs alone. Through the years I've developed an abiding respect, not only for the intentions of the lay and religious devout, but also for their collective power.*"<sup>64</sup>

The present Archbishop of Lipa, Ramon Arguelles, DD, STL expressed publicly his belief in the authenticity of the alleged apparition in 1948 but opted not to give orders of re-opening the case.<sup>65</sup> However, it is interesting to note that a National Day of Prayer<sup>66</sup> will be held in Lipa Carmel. Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, D.D., the current president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, has called this event highlighted by the Third National Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady Mediatrix of All Grace. The date of the said event is also very significant --- September 12. It is the date of the first alleged apparition of Our Lady to Teresing in the garden requesting her to return to the spot for 15 consecutive days, rain or shine. The Madonna also requested that a mass should be celebrated every 12<sup>th</sup> of the month in that place. The Prayer intentions of the said gathering also reflect exactly what the Lady said during the alleged apparition. Is this an indication that the Catholic Hierarchy is beginning to consider the alleged messages given in 1948 by Our Lady in Lipa? In time, I will not be surprised if the Hierarchy will acknowledge the faith experience of the devotees of Lipa. Their deep devotion to Mary, tied up with a personal encounter of conversion, healing and love with her is unsurpassable by any Church decree or sanction. As what is written in Scriptures, if it's the work of God, no one can stop it.

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<sup>64</sup> Ingo Swann, "The Great Apparitions of Mary..." p. 15.

<sup>65</sup> See Appendix for Archbishop Ramon Arguelles' Pastoral Letter. April 17, 2005

<sup>66</sup> See Appendix



# APPENDIX

Original Account  
of  
The Events at Lipa Carmel, 1948  
by  
Mother Mary Cecilia of Jesus, O.C.D.

+  
J.M. J.T.

After much difficulty, on July 4, 1948, the day when she completed her 21 years of age, at 5:00 in the morning, Teresita Castillo was able at last to escape from her paternal home to enter Carmel of Lipa. For fear that her parents would follow her, the doors of Carmel were opened immediately as soon as she arrived, and she was able to hear the Holy Mass already dressed as a Carmelite postulant.

Her two brothers came after her and one of them threatened to kill her with his pistol if she did not return home, but the young postulant was decided to follow her holy vocation and was able to answer with a determined will that she was ready to die because of her, it was a great joy to die in Carmel. Cheerful and contented, she followed the Community Acts but after Compline, the Mother Prioress dispensed her from assisting at Matins; after such a heavy trial, the poor Sister needed a good rest. Scarcely had she rested when she was awakened by the tooting of the horn of the jeep of her elder brother who demanded with a forceful voice that his sister be allowed to go out. The Mother Prioress calmed the new postulant who pleaded not to abandon her at the mercy of her brother. The latter, on seeing that his shouts were not heard, began to bang the doors so that the Prioress was forced to send word to the authorities to seek protection. Thanks be to God and to the Blessed Mother, before the authorities arrived, the unwanted visitors had left.

The first three weeks of postulancy were passed with great fervor and enthusiasm of a newly-accepted postulant, but aside from this, there was observed in her a firm determination to put efforts to be perfect Carmelite. All in Carmel was sweet and attractive to her, and like everything else, she did all with love, and all appeared easy for her. Her sister and brothers did not cease to importune her to return to their paternal home for her parents would die of grief. But God have her courage, and her convincing words proved her determined conviction that it was her will to follow what God had asked of her.

On July 31 at about 8:15 p.m. while Sister Teresita was praying in her cell, she heard three hard knocks at her door. As it was "Great Silence", she answered in a low cough as is customary in Carmel. She did not see anyone but heard a man's voice, rather hoarse, who told her: "You will never persevere here because you will always be tempted. It is time that you should follow me for you have done so much already to follow your God. Remember I am Satan. So that you will believe all this is true, I will leave something in your cell." A bad odor was perceived, very disagreeable, before she heard the voice. Sister Teresita, who trembled with fear, had courage to light her lamp and see if there was something new in her cell. She found near her bed a black footprint.

With great fear, she ran hurriedly to the cell of the Mother Prioress, who at the time was writing. She embraced her and cried. Her Reverence tried to console her and encouraged her to be generous and not to look back after she has put her hand to the plough, as she thought the postulant was only homesick and sad due to her separation from her dear ones, and that it was only a temptation of the enemy. "Why, Mother, can the devil speak?" she asked. "The Ass of Balaam spoke," answered the Prioress. She then explained briefly to the Prioress all that happened. The Prioress was incredulous until she said that he left something black in her cell. "Come, Mother, and see it yourself!" Both went to the cell and the Prioress saw the footprint. She was Stupefied, and with one finger she touched it. It was horrible soot.

At three o'clock in the morning of the first of August, Sister Teresita awoke the Prioress telling her Reverence: "Mother, did you hear?" "What?" asked the Prioress. "The same voice of last night telling me he will not molest me anymore, but he will do all possible not to make me as a saint." "No," answered the Prioress. "Is someone downstairs? I can hear as though someone is running," said the postulant.

After Mass, the Mother Prioress gave an account of what happened to the Auxiliary Bishop, [in his capacity] as Chaplain of Carmel. His Excellency entered the enclosure to see the footprint, and after having seen it, the Mother Prioress removed it with a piece of cloth. The footprint disappeared, but the cloth was stained with soot.

After the Little Hours, the postulant was called to the parlor and was examined by the Auxiliary Bishop. She was a bit agitated, but not nervous. His Excellency told her not to fear, to use holy water, and to pray much. Afterwards, His Excellency (Auxiliary BISHOP) went to Batangas to give an account of it all to His Excellency, Monsignor Verzosa, who counseled that the postulant be given enough care and food, and to sleep well to avoid her being a melancholic. This was fulfilled, and Sister Teresita did not think anymore of the incident.

On August 6, First Friday, on taking the card of the Sacred Heart, Sister Teresita got that of a Victim. On returning to her cell at about 8:00 p.m., she took the card and was about to read it when it escaped her hands as though blown by strong wind. Afterwards, she heard a voice accompanied by a very disagreeable odor who said: "Sister Teresita, a victim of Carmel you will be." She did not see anyone but a great fear encompassed her, so she ran to her Mother Prioress to tell all that happened. The card of the sacred Heart was found the next morning thrown in one corner of the cell.

The next day, Saturday, August 7, the Mother Prioress was obliged to go to the Carmel of Manila. At about 3:00 p.m. while Sister Teresita was sewing in her cell, she heard once more the voice of a man who told her: "I came to distract you because you always think of the Virgin Mary. Why do you obey your Mother Prioress? That displeases me very much." "Why do you meddle with my affairs?" answered the postulant. "I came today because your Mother is not here. I shall return for two more Saturdays." This assault lasted for about five minutes, more or less.

At about 5:30 of the same afternoon, while Sister Teresita was going upstairs to go to her cell, she smelled the strong perfume of *azucenas* [while lilies]. The fragrance increased in intensity as she approached her cell. On arriving in her cell, she heard a feminine voice, so sweet, who told her: "My child, sufferings and pains will accompany you until the end of your life," but she saw no one.

On August 11 at about 3:00 a.m. more or less, Sister Teresita was awakened because her bed shook violently. Then she heard the hoarse voice. "I have come today to visit you at this hour because it is the best, as your Mother is sleeping. Your poor parents and brothers are waiting outside. When will you pity them? Why do you love your Mother Prioress?" "Because in loving her, it is Jesus Christ I love," answered the postulant. "I visited you three times but I always failed. Why do you obey the Bishop?" And many other things similar were asked. Then Sister Teresita saw the face of her interlocutor on fire and very furious. She heard him taking something from her desk, the discipline, wherewith he beat her hands. As usual, she ran precipitately towards her Mother who saw the signs of the discipline on both hands of Sister Teresita.

The next day at about 10:00 a.m., being Saturday, the Community was occupied in the cleaning of the house. On crossing the garden to take water, Sister Teresita saw a rose and said to herself: "Oh, if only I could take that rose and offer it to my Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary." On arriving in her cell, as she was about to sweep it, she was surprised to see a fresh rose on her prayer book on her bed. And just then she heard the voice of the enemy. "Where did you get that rose? Who gave it you? Your Mother Prioress is in the parlor that is why I came now. Why do you love her? I have so many rivals; we will see who will conquer. Why do you love so much your Mother?" "But why do you meddle with my affairs?" Sister Teresita answered while throwing holy water. He ceased for a moment and then [answered] back again: "I will punish you." The postulant felt that he was beating her hands with a cord that left black marks on her hands.

On August 15 at about 3:30 a.m., Sister Teresita saw an ugly face on the wall of her cell. Without looking for a second time, she ran precipitately to her Mother Prioress.

The next day at around 4:30 in the afternoon while sewing in her cell, she heard again the voice of the enemy. "Why did you run to your Mother last night? I wanted to speak to you. I came for three consecutive days and I always failed. That is why I feel I have lost, but only partially. Why do you love your Mother Prioress?" Sister Teresita answered: "Why do you meddle with my affairs?" The enemy got furious and the postulant felt a pinch on her right hand. The nails were imprinted, thus causing it to bleed a little, and it had soot and bad odor.

That same day, the 16<sup>th</sup> of August at about 8:30 in the evening, Sister Teresita was walking towards her cell when suddenly she felt someone was pulling her back with her two hands and was pushing her towards the small door of the enclosure. Surprised, she was that the door was opened very widely, and they were pushing her furiously outside. With great force, she was able to mount the stairs and went up running to the cell of her Mother. Even on the stairs, they impeded her going up. But at last, she was able to reach the cell and with a sudden push, she reached her Mother who was then writing. There were black marks like soot on both hands of the postulant.

On August 18, Wednesday, at 5:30 p.m., while Sister Teresita was going to her before going to the garden, she smelled the perfume of the *azucena*. Upon arriving [in] her cell, she saw a beautiful lady with a long hair, some white already. she was dressed in white. She was surprised to see her as she could not understand how she was able to enter her cell, hence, she ran precipitately and was about to leave her when the lady stopped her by holding her by the hand: *“Do not fear, my child,”* and with a gesture, she bade her sit on the chair. The lady sat on the bed and she continued: *“He who loves above all things has sent me. I come with a message. You had a long and difficult battle with your enemies, but they will not molest you from hence unless it be for a last and strong assault. Do not fear and be brave. Your enemy is jealous because you love your Mother Prioress very much. Love her more now. Wash her feet, kiss them, and then drink the water you used for washing afterwards. Tell this message to your Mother, not to anyone else. So that you will believe me, I shall give you two pictures. Give them to your Mother for her to keep; the Community might need them someday. I took them for your prayer book; they are the ones you like best.”* This conversation lasted for about twenty-five minutes more or less; that is, the Lady disappeared five minutes before six.

Sister Teresita said that when it is the enemy who speaks, he does it precipitately as though fearful to be caught, while the Lady speaks sweetly and calmly.

At six, the Angelus bell is rung and after, the Community goes to the Refectory. Immediately after the Supper, Sister Teresita approached her Mother and asked to speak with her in the cell.

Both went up and the postulant told all that had happened. The Mother was doubtful of it all, saying that as she was not sure who the Lady was, she did not permit her to wash her feet, and if the Lady returns, to ask who she is. Both Mother and child went to recreation and to Compline and both forgot about the incident. When Sister Teresita went up to her cell to pray, she found the Lady waiting for her there. Without allowing Sister Teresita to say a word, she said: *“I placed my identity on the table of your Mother. Go to her and tell her that she will find there who I am.”*

The postulant obeyed, and she went to the cell of her Mother. She found her Reverence writing, and told her what the lady said. What did she find on her table? The Mother went up after Compline to work, and found on the table the prayer book wherein according to Sister Teresita, the two pictures had disappeared. The Prioress believed that the postulant had placed it there to show where the two pictures had come from, hence, she did not mind it; but Sister Teresita assured her Reverence that she was not the one who placed it there. They understood that the prayer book was the means given by the Lady to make known her identity. Her Reverence opened it and read the title: *“Treasury of the Virgin Mary”*. The Mother did not give importance to it and told the postulant that the book did not reveal who the Lady was, hence, she cannot permit her to wash her feet, nor to kiss it, nor to drink of the water afterwards.

One day, the Lady told Sister Teresita: *“I have some questions to ask you. why are your parents very opposed to your vocation?”* *“They were opposed from the beginning,”* replied the postulant. *“And you, what do you think of it? You are sad about it?”* *“No,”* answered Sister Teresita, *“because that is the will of God for me.”* *“From now on, whatever new thing you find in your cell, give it to your Mother to keep. I was sent by the One who created you. I go now. Tell all this to your Mother Prioress. Do not fear, tell her though you fear it might hurt her.”*

Immediately after the Little Hours of August 19, she gave report to her Mother of all that occurred to her. The Mother Prioress related to the Auxiliary Bishop, asking His Excellency at the same [time] if it was permissible to approve what the Lady asks: to wash the feet, etc. his Excellency counseled it is better to exercise great prudence, and better if she could ask for a sign from the Lady to know who she was. On leaving the Parlor, the Mother Prioress stepped on three *azucenas* and on a piece of paper which, according to her, was placed at the door by a postulant whom she saw and who immediately disappeared. She took the flowers and the little paper and she read

the following: *“Conform yourself with what your child asks.”* Thinking it was Sister Teresita who brought it on the part of the lady, the Mother showed it to the Bishop. At the beginning of recreation, the Prioress called Sister Teresita and asked what is the meaning of the three *azucenas* and the small paper that she placed at the door of the parlor. Sister Teresita was surprised and said she knew nothing about it. Hence, the Mother Prioress did not question, further awaiting what will happen next.

At about one in the afternoon, Sister Teresita went hurriedly to her Mother who was busy directing the workmen who were constructing the well. She approached her and begged that her Reverence follow her to her cell as she had something to tell her. The Mother noticed that Sister Teresita did not lift her veil that covered her face, though she spoke to her at her cell. Mother, the lady returned to visit me and without even telling her what your Reverence told me, to ask for a sign, she told me that your Reverence will see the sign in my eyes.” The veil was lifted, and the Mother saw that the eyes of Sister Teresita were encircled with fresh blood. The postulant was a bit agitated, and when she was asked why she was fearful, she said that she did not know what was in her eyes. “What do you feel or what did you feel in it?” “When the Lady told me that your Reverence will see the sign in my eyes, I felt as though my tears bedewed my eyes, and now it seems as though it is all wet. The Lady told me that when I go to call for your Reverence, I must not show my face to anyone nor lift my veil, except to your Reverence.” “Do your eyes not hurt you?” asked her Mother. “No,” answered Sister Teresita, and [she said] that the Lady repeated what she formerly asked: to wash the feet of the Prioress, to kiss them, and to drink the water – and if possible, to do it at three o’clock of that same afternoon, Thursday, August 19. The washing of the feet is for the salvation of their two souls, that of the Mother Prioress and of Sister Teresita, added the Lady.

At three in the afternoon of that day, the Mother Prioress and Sister Teresita obeyed the Lady’s message. At 8:30 in the evening as the postulant was praying in her cell, a nun entered, and thinking it was her Mother Prioress, Sister Teresita knelt. But the voice was that of the Lady! *“Your Mother had an upright decision (that of obeying me.) Now that you have given me proof of your humility and your Mother of her simplicity, I can proceed. You two will always be under my mantle.”* Afterwards, she gave fresh instructions to Sister Teresita with regards to her great temptation or combat that awaited her. *It might last the whole day. Tell your Mother to be patient with you that day. I will tell you later why you had to undergo that terrible temptation.”*

Sister Teresita slept after Matins. At about 2:30, the Lady who was dressed in sky blue awoke her. Again she gave counsels to Sister Teresita. *“Obey always your Mother not only when she commands you to do something, but even her least desires. Why do you prefer to pray in your cell?”* “Because here I can practice more faith. In the choir, I know that God is there on the altar, but here, I need faith to believe that He is here,” answered Sister Teresita. “How is it, my dear Mother, how is it possible that you who are so holy and blessed come to me who is nothing but dust and ashes and a sinner?” asked Sister Teresita. *“That is what I was waiting to hear from your lips, my dear child,”* answered the Lady.

On August 20 after Mass and before the Little Hours, Sister Teresita was arranging her cell. Suddenly, she saw fall from the wall rose petal that fell on the floor in the form of a cross. In obedience to the Lady, Sister Teresita called her Mother to see the cross. The Mother gathered the petals and she kept them.

The Mother Prioress was asked by Sister Teresita why when the Lady appears, everything disappears in her cell! The Lady is surrounded by a bright light and Sister Teresita sees nothing else around.

On Sunday, August 22, feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, at about 12:30 in the evening began the terrible combat announced by the Lady. Sister Teresita saw herself despoiled of her robe. At about 1:30 more or less, Sister Teresita ran to the cell of her Mother, and for the first time, the enemy followed her. “Mother, pray to the Blessed Virgin to guard my chastity!” The battle was a cruel and hard one, and the Mother Prioress did all that she could help Sister Teresita. The poor postulant felt they were pulling her hands and her feet; she pressed on her Mother and fought against the enemy. Afterwards, a legion came to assault her, spoke badly of her Mother, and laughed at the Bishop, etc., etc. at the end, Sister Teresita said: “I have no eyes to see all your indecencies!” At the sound of the clapper at 4:45 a.m., the enemies fled. Sister Teresita was looking for her Mother! Her eyes were opened but she could not see; she was blind!

The Community was not aware of what was happening to Sister Teresita. The Lady left a word not to tell it to anyone except to her Mother. They two alone were to keep the secret. When Sister Teresita got blind, the Mother

took care of her as a voice said: *“Have patience with your child. Three days she will be blind for the good of both.”* At 9:50 a.m. of the same day, Sunday, August 22, the Mother received this message” *“Love her much! Two more additional days of blindness for the salvation of her parents and for the beautiful destiny that is awaiting her in the next life. Do not leave your child from three to five p.m. It needs five days of sufferings and blindness for your good and hers. You will owe her much. Remain with her from eight until nine p.m. Give her good food. Love her much until the end! Patience!”*

At 3:00 p.m., the poor, blind postulant felt as though her whole body was filled with large pinpricks that gave her pain throughout. The pain was intermittent, and when the pins pricked her, she racked with pain. At times, she felt as though her back was pinched sharply until the bones. At five, the pains ceased.

At eight in the evening, Sister Teresita had again the pains of the pinpricks of the pins. At lasted until nine o'clock.

The next morning, Sister Teresita heard Mass and afterwards, her Mother brought her to cell. The Mother went down to take her breakfast. On going up, the Mother received instructions for every day until Friday, August 27. at 2:55 in the afternoon of the same day, the voice said to the Mother that Sister Teresita would recover her sight on September 7.

Sister Teresita suffered morally during the first days of her blindness. She asked her Mother if God did not reveal that she would regain her sight, and if her blindness would not be a motive for the Community to send her out. At times, tears fell from her eyes, and when her Mother asked her the reason for crying, she replied, “Oh, if only I could see my Mother before I die!”

On August 24, Sister Teresita told her Mother that she was grateful for having visited her twice during the night covering her with the blanket, a thing that the Mother Prioress had not done. As it was natural and necessary, Sister Teresita was segregated from the Community and whenever it was possible, her Mother stood by her side. As the Community was not aware of what was happening, God allowed that the Mother and children suffer terribly during this time.

One day, Sister Teresita said: “Oh Mother, how I wish today was Saturday!” “Why?” asked the Mother. “Because your Reverence promised me that on that day you will bring me to the garden and will permit me to cut two flowers, one white for your Reverence, and the other red for me.” The Mother was surprised as she has never told her that, but the Mother did not let it be understood by Sister Teresita.

Everyday during her blindness, Sister Teresita was to suffer the pinpricks from three to five in the afternoon, and from eight to nine in the evening. Once, the Mother counted 95 attacks of pinpricks during the three hours.

On Friday, August 27, the pains grew worse and lasted for a longer time. She suffered from 8:30 to 10:00 in the evening, from 11:30 to 2:00, from 3:00 to 5:00, from 8:00 to 9:00 in the evening until midnight! The Mother knew beforehand all these hours of pain as it was announced.

At last came the long sighed for day of Saturday, August 28. As was promised, while the Mother Prioress was in the choir for the Little Hours, “someone” brought Sister Teresita to the garden and made her cut two flowers, one white and the other red. Sister Teresita was in full belief that it was the Mother Prioress went up to the cell after the Little Hours, she found two flowers on the table and many petals of roses scattered over the bed where Sister Teresita was, and also on the floor.

On August 30<sup>th</sup> after supper when the Mother led Sister Teresita to her stool to attend recreation, as she was about to sit, she immediately jumped and told her Mother: “Someone is on the chair!” The Mother did not see anyone. Afterwards, Sister Teresita directed herself towards the invisible person (it was invisible to both as Sister Teresita was still blind). It was the voice of the Lady, and a conversation ensued between the two. The Mother could hear Sister Teresita but not the other one. The recreation lasted for an hour but before leaving, the Lady allowed Sister Teresita to kiss her feet.

The next day, Sister Teresita passed her recreation hearing the canticle of the angels. Once telling her Mother, she recalled the following verses:

Now we shall not remain for long  
That is why we shall sing a beautiful song  
To our very dear little friend  
Who with us will be in heaven.

She loves tenderly Our Lord  
So with His Mother, the Virgin Mary.  
Not all that she asks will be granted  
Because they will be delicately selected.

On September first at noon, the Lady came again. Sister Teresita heard her voice but she doubted if she came from heaven or from the enemy, as she asked several times who she was and received no response. To test it, Sister Teresita pronounced the Holy Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Lady answered: *I love that name very much.* Hence, the postulant once more asked who was the Lady. "If you do not like to give me your name, at least tell me the first letter to it," insisted Sister Teresita. *I will give you three letters, not only one.* And immediately after the Angelus at noon, the Lady said: *"I am B.V.M. (Blessed Virgin Mary)*

On the First Friday of September, Sister Teresita suffered much. The pinpricks were often, but the Mother Prioress was consoled greatly as she heard the voice repeating that Sister Teresita would recover her sight on the seventh when her Mother Prioress kisses her eyes.

The next day, Saturday, September 4, at five in the afternoon, a little more or less after Sister Teresita kissed the feet of the Crucifix, she heard a sweet voice that told her: *"You will always be my daughter so suffer much for me."* On Sunday at three of that day, the Mother learned that the postulant would have additional pains for the salvation of a sinner, and so it was fulfilled.

The next morning after the Little Hours, the Mother and Sister Teresita went to the Parlor to greet His Excellency, the Auxiliary Bishop, and in his presence, the Mother kissed the eyes of the postulant and immediately after the act, she recovered her sight.

On September 9 at five in the afternoon, Sister Teresita fell in a trance and saw herself walking in a path filled with thorns and thistles. After a short distance, they disappeared (the thorns) and she went up a stairway covered with roses. Angels were on both sides and on arriving on top, she found a multitude of angels and saints who smiled at her.

On September 11, Sister Teresita saw a beautiful bluebird in the garden. She noted that it flew towards the *jazmin* (jasmine), took a flower, and carried it on its beak. She went up to her cell and was greatly surprised when she saw the bird enter through the window and leave the little flower at the feet of the image of our blessed virgin.

In the afternoon of that same day, Sister Teresita had a trance and she saw a very beautiful garden. The Lady was taking a walk by her side. In the garden there were many beautiful flowers and many birds of different colors and among them, she saw some like the bluebird. In the middle of the garden there was a fountain, and in the center was the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The water, red, flowed from the pierced side of the Heart. The Lady and Sister Teresita sat at the border of the fountain.

The Lady gave counsel to Sister Teresita: to be good, obedient, humble and simple. "Why, Mother dear, yesterday when I saw you in the *sala* you did not tell me anything?" queried Sister Teresita. "*Because I had no permission,*" answered the Lady. "How is that? You who are the Mother of God, do you still need permission?" answered Sister Teresita. "*Yes, my child, it is true I am His Mother, but my Son is God, King, and Lord of all creatures, that is why I have to obey Him,*" answered the Lady. Then she added: "*When your Mother I perplexed and does not know what to do, tell her to pray one Ave Maria and I will help her.*"

On September 12, Sunday, feast of the Holy Name of Mary at about five in the afternoon, Sister Teresita went to the garden to take a walk as was counseled by her Mother. She went towards the *jazmin* to see where the bird had taken the flower. On arriving nearby, she noted that a vine was moving, and as there was no wind, she was surprised very much and she approached it. She heard the voice of the lady who told her: *“Do not fear, my child! Kiss the ground. All that I tell you, you must obey. For fifteen consecutive days, come visit me in this spot. Eat a little grass, my child.”* Sister Teresita told her Mother all that had happened and she asked permission to obey the Lady.

Having obtained permission, the following day at the same hour, Sister Teresita returned to the same place of the garden. She knelt and began to say the Ave Maria. On reaching the words “full of grace”, the vine moved, and suddenly appeared before her eyes a very beautiful Lady with hands clasped on her breast with a golden rosary hanging from her right hand. She was a bit inclined. Her dress was very white, very simple, and around her cincture a narrow belt was tied. Her bare feet were resting on clouds about two feet from the ground. She was radiant with beauty, and was smiling. “Be faithful to come here in this place even if it is raining,” she told Sister Teresita. The postulant asked: “Beautiful Lady, who are you?” *“I am your Mother, my little one,”* and having said it, she disappeared.

On Tuesday, September 14 at 5:15 in the afternoon, Sister Teresita returned to the place. The Lady was already there waiting for her. Her arms extended as though desiring to embrace her little one with a maternal embrace. *“I would like this place to be blessed tomorrow,”* she said. *“At the hour that your Mother Prioress likes, my child,”* said the Lady, *“I prohibit you to forget the incidents of these fifteen days,”* and blessing the postulant, the Lady disappeared.

The next day, the Mother received instructions about the blessing of that part of the garden. The Chaplain of Carmel, His Excellency, Monsignor Alfredo Ma. Obviar, was to enter to bless it and that the Community should be present. The Lady said she had a message for the Community. In the instructions to the Mother Prioress, it is said that the Bishop and the Community had to cast down their eyes, and that after the blessing, the Bishop should preach to the Sisters about the message of the Lady. During the preaching, the Mother should not separate herself from Sister Teresita, because according to the instructions, she would faint and would not be able to breathe so that the Community may see how much she is suffering. All these instructions and other things that the Mother gathered and received were unknown to the postulant; she was not aware about it, and many times when her Mother seemed to anticipate what was going to happen, she gets very surprised.

The blessing of the nook was done at 3:20 in the afternoon of September 15. the Auxiliary Bishop went with rochette and stole, and the Community followed to the place. On arriving at the place, Sister Teresita saw the Lady with extended arms as though desiring to embrace all with her maternal embrace. As soon as Sister Teresita knelt before her, she said: *“My child, kiss the ground and eat a little grass. Take paper and pencil and write down what I will tell you for the Community.”*

The following is her message:

*“My daughters:*

- 1. I ask you believe in Me and to guard this as a deep secret among yourselves until I tell you to do otherwise.*
- 2. Love one another as true Sisters.*
- 3. Come frequently to visit me in this place. Love much your Mother Prioress. Your little Sister is suffering much, but no one knows except your Mother. Do not envy your little Sister because she suffers much. All these are only for my daughters in Carmel, not for people outside, that is why I prevent you to tell this to anyone. Make this a sacred place and gather the petals, my children. Respect the place. I would like this Carmel to be called Carmel of Our Lady. I bless the whole Community.”*

And looking towards her little one, she added, *“Eat a little grass and ground, my child.”* After this, the Lady disappeared.



At five of that afternoon, Sister Teresita returned to the place of the apparition, and the Lady was already there waiting.

*“My child, I have many things to tell you.” “Do you permit me to write them, my Mother?”* asked Sister Teresita. With permission, Sister Teresita wrote her words.

*“I will ask something from Carmel. I would like a statue of mine to be placed here, to clean this part of your garden so that it will be a real place of prayer. You do not need to tell me all that your Sisters are asking because I know them already. Tell them they have to believe, or else they will lose grace. I shall bless the Community always, my child.”*

On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the Lady said:

*“My little one, you suffered much last night because two of my daughters are not pleased to have me here. They were doubting and do not like to believe. I would like my statue to be placed in this place. I would like you to describe me to your Chaplain because I want the statue to be as you see me, and as big as the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes that is in the cloister. Tell your Mother Prioress to say the rosary here with the Community everyday in the afternoon during these days. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, I would like a Mass to be said here in my honor, and if possible, that the statue be here on that day. Give to all my daughters my motherly love. Tell them that I love all my daughters in the Carmel of Lipa, that I will always be with you all.”*

The next day, the 17<sup>th</sup>, the following message was given by the Lady:

*I ask you to kneel before your Mother and ask her pardon for the many bad thoughts you had of her for the care she has bestowed on my little one.*

*My child, tell your Mother to permit you to recount some incidents that happened to you to your dear Sisters because they would like to know something more. I can read it from their hearts.*

*One of my daughters is still doubting. She must believe if she desires to obtain peace of soul and for the love of my Son, Jesus Christ.”*

On the eighteenth, the Lady did not appear. Sister Teresita only heard her voice that said:

*I am very sad. My Son Jesus Christ gave to each one of you a free will. I can not force you to believe. I only told you to believe because I love you and I would not like you to lose graces. Take care of the temptations of the devil. Time will come when you will be able to reveal all these to your confessors and to your parents.*

On the 19<sup>th</sup>, the Lady appeared. Her words were:

*I was very much consoled by your tears and your compassionate hearts, my dear daughters. I hope you will always share my sorrows and my joys. Take care of the devils, my dear daughters. Tell me if what I ask is difficult to give.*

*My children who believe in me, do not refuse graces that are offered to you.*

*My daughter, do not tempt my children who believe in me. If what I ask you is difficult, then this is what I ask of you: do not tempt, child. My little one, your sister is well and has no physical defect, that is why, child, think it over and reflect. Time will come when you will see all clearly. I know that you are still in darkness. I do not oblige you to believe, my child.”*

On the 20<sup>th</sup>, the Lady appeared but she did not give any message to her little one.

On the 21<sup>st</sup>, the following were her words:

*Pray, pray, pray for a soul, my dear daughters! I ask you to honor me on Saturdays especially in the following devotions.\**

1. *Our Lady of Mount Carmel*
2. *Our Lady of the Snow*
3. *Our Lady of the Holy Rosary*
4. *Our Lady of Perpetual Help*
5. *Immaculate Heart of Mary*
6. *Our Lady of the Abandoned and Refuge of Sinners*
7. *Our Lady of Lourdes*
8. *Our Lady of Peace and good Voyage*
9. *Our Lady of Good Counsel*
10. *Holy Name of Mary*
11. *Our Lady of Loretto*
12. *Our Lady of Remedy*
13. *The Seven Dolors*

*I give you my blessing and motherly love to my dear daughters.*

*To my daughter who does not believe in me, I do not oblige to believe, child. However, it is enough for you and for me, and it will not be disagreeable for me if you do not believe. But do not laugh at nor despise my sacred place and my words which really come from my heart, child. I know the place does not please you, nor do you wish to hear my message, but you are obliged by obedience, child. That is why your incredulity is enough, child. Do not despise my sacred place nor my words. This may be my last message for you. my message for you. My message for the Community everyday is for you all, child. But I do not oblige you to hear nor to obey it is you do not like because you have your free will.*

*My daughters, I leave you my motherly love and my blessing.”*

On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, the message that Sister Teresita received was directed to the Mother Prioress:

*My daughter,*

*You will find on your table a note that you will read to the Community. I do not like my little one to hear it, if possible. Receive my motherly blessings.”*

The Mother found the following note on her table:

*“Your little Sister will be blind again on October 7. have patience with her; do not envy her because aside from her blindness, she will have yet to suffer terribly which your Mother only knows. Pray for her to have patience. Her sufferings and sight are necessary for the salvation of souls.”*

On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, this was the message of the Lady:

*“Beloved daughters of mine:*

*I blessed your rosaries and I hope you will always be faithful to use it. I heard your conversation during recreation and really I ask you all to be humble and simple. I love much these two virtues, and that is why you, too, should love it. I love sincerely all of you, and so I shall always speak to you as a mother.*

*My child, tell your Mother to decide it herself as she is the Prioress.  
I shall be with her.”*

On the 24<sup>th</sup> the Lady said: *“My child, you do not need to tell me all that my dear daughters are asking because I know them already.”* Afterwards, she gave some particular message to the Sisters. At the end she said: *Receive my motherly love and my blessing for all, dear daughters of mine. Be all very good.”*

On the 25<sup>th</sup>, the Lady told the following: *“I wish you all to consecrate yourselves to me on October 7 and be my slaves.”*

On the 26<sup>th</sup>, Sunday the last of the fifteen days that she asked, the Lady appeared at the usual hour and repeated to her little one her motherly counsels.

*My child, you have to obey and love always your Mother Prioress. Tell your Sisters to love one another as true sisters, to be humble and simple because humility and simplicity are the two virtues I love most. Tell them to love and obey their Superiors and not to forget the things that I ask. I would like a Mass to be said here every 12<sup>th</sup> of the month if that is possible. I do not ask high things from you as you all believe because you are my little ones. Do not forget to consecrate your selves to me on October 7. be very good. I am MARY, MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACE. I will bless the Community morning and evening.”*

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, petals were showered in the cells of the nuns. On the first of October, First Friday, sister Teresita suffered much the whole day; pinpricks of pins were felt throughout her body, and suffocation.

On October 3<sup>rd</sup> after Holy Mass, as Sister Teresita was going to her cell, she perceived a strong perfume of roses at the feet of the stairs, and suddenly, without seeing the hand that was scattering them, she saw petals that fell of the steps of the stairs before her. The invisible hand scattered it until the cell. Sister Teresita got frightened as she was no one, hence she saw the petals. She called the Sisters leaving Sister Teresita in the cell.

When the Community arrived, they saw Sister Teresita kneeling in her conversing with someone invisible to the rest. After a short time, Sister Teresita made the sign of the cross and kissed the floor. The Mother asked her with whom she was speaking, and the postulant simply told it was Our Lady and Saint Teresita who came to visit her to greet her for her feast. After breakfast which Teresita had to take as she was a postulant, being alone with her Mother, the postulant was surrounded by thirty little angels who greeted her with their trumpets and songs, it being her feast day.

At last came the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, feast of the Most Holy Rosary. The Mass was said in the hermitage of the Apparitions by the Chaplain of Carmel, Monsignor Alfredo Ma. Obviar. There were no other persons (from outside) besides him. before Mass, His Excellency told Sister Teresita to ask from the Blessed Virgin a sign by which he may believe that she, the Virgin, was present in the hermitage. After Mass, the Community made their Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to the spirit of Saint Grignon de Monfort. After, Sister Teresita made one step forward and spoke to a person invisible to the rest. After a while, she made the sign of the cross three times, she stood up with the head slightly inclined, and then reclined towards the Mother Prioress who was by her side. “Mother, the Lady after speaking to me, made the sign of the cross each of me eyes and now I can see no more. She told me that my blindness is the sign for our Chalpain to believe that she is here.” On leaving the hermitage, Sister Teresita could not walk by herself ; she was touching the place as she walked, hence, the Mother had to guide her until her cell. At the same time, her left arm was paralyzed.

On the eve of the Maternity of Our Lady, 10<sup>th</sup> of October, petals were showered in the choir at the feet of the statue of Our Holy Mother Saint Teresa. On the 13<sup>th</sup> after Mass, the Mother heard a voice that said: *“Before the Little Hours, kiss the eyes of your child and she will recover her sight. Now is the 13<sup>th</sup>, the day of my first apparition, and in honor of this I shall return the sight of your child.”* The left arm was restored, too.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, feast of Saint Teresa of Jesus, second Patroness of the Carmel of Lipa, petals were showered in the hermitage of the Apparitions and on reaching the floor, they fell in the form of a cross.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, there was a Investiture in Carmel. On the early morning of this day, the fortunate novice found petals scattered in her cell.

The next day, the Mother received a notice by a voice that Sister Teresita, by the ardent love she had for Jesus and Mary, would lose her senses several time during the day. That same night, Sister Teresita saw the Hearts of Jesus and Mary burning with flames of love and in the middle, she saw her little heart that burned, likewise, pressed between the two Hearts.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> after Mass, Sister Teresita fell unconscious. She felt a terrible heat in her heart, and said to her Mother that it was as though she had a stove on her breast, and felt heart burning. Before coming back to her senses, she saw the Immaculate Heart of Mary pierced with a sword. After the Holy Rosary in the afternoon of the same day, Sister Teresita lost once more her senses, and in the midst of her sufferings due to the burning heat that encompassed her breast, she saw the Immaculate Heart of Mary with only six swords and her own pierced by one.

On the 26<sup>th</sup>, she passed a whole sleepless night. In the middle of the night, she saw her heart pierced by seventh there was a small paper that said: "That you may suffer more for Jesus, leave your Carmel!" The mere thought of leaving her beloved Convent was as a sword that traversed her heart. Her Mother understood that this thought was a moral suffering that was most pleasing! But without waiting longer, another message was received which said: "That is possible. If you do not receive another, advise send her out on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November." The sorrows of Mother and child could well be understood!

On the afternoon of the 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:30, Sister Teresita fell unconscious. During the three hours, she suffered 33 attacks of intense physical pain as though her breast was burning and her heart aflame. She also suffered actually with the thought that she had to go back to the world which persecuted her incessantly. Before recovering herself, the Blessed Virgin consoled her, telling her to ask the sisters to pray much because there will be persecution, and to pray much for priests.

In the following days, Sister Teresita suffered unconsciousness. Etc. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November after one of her attacks (unconsciousness), she saw innumerable souls who, with Saint Peter at the head, left the fires of Purgatory and went up to heaven. Saint Peter had keys and a cock.

On the First Friday, November 5, Sister Teresita was dismayed two or three minutes before 12:00 at noon. Exactly at 12:00, she began to suffer the suffering of Our Lord on the Cross. The Mother and a Sister were the only ones who were present at this first time. They could easily follow the Seven Last words. The postulant was with extended arms and her feet crossed as if crucified. On the First Word, Sister Teresita looked heavenwards and she moved her head from one side to the other: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." At intervals between the words, sister Teresita rocked from one side to another, but her hands and feet remained fixed in their original position. The Mother and the Sister present tried to move and redouble her extended arms and to move her feet from the other, but it was impossible! They were rigid and heavy that it was not possible to change the position. On the Second Word, Sister Teresita turned her face towards the right side and then smiled. At the Third Word, she looked downward on one side and then to the other. The pains of thirst lasted about seven minutes more or less. The tongue went out of the mouth and the lips seemed to be white with thirst. The taste of the gall and vinegar was depicted on her countenance as though it were something sour and bitter. The Fifth Word, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsake Me?" was depicted with the movements of the head, the expression of the countenance was as though she was on the lookout for someone very dear. The Sixth, she lifted her head and eyes heavenwards with an expression of satisfaction: "All is consummated." Then began the death rattle. She could not breathe, the throat sounded as those of the agonizing, the head moved from one side to the other. The knees were raised somewhat, which gave the impression that the body hanging on the two nails of the hands was being pulled down by its own weight while the feet remained fixed 9nailed); the knees were recollected a little. At exactly three o'clock, after a brief look heavenwards, Sister Teresita reclined her head towards the right side and she remained quiet! After a short while, she was again conscious. Her limbs and bones pains as though after a quarrel. The Mother asked what she felt during those three hours. Sister Teresita answered that she neither saw nor heard those around her, but she felt really all the pains as though crucified on the cross.

At six in the afternoon of the same day, Sister Teresita was once more unconscious. The Mother, while speaking with her, mentioned the love of Jesus for souls and this made her lose consciousness. Afterwards, the Mother heard the voice that told her to call the Community. When the Sisters arrived, they witnessed the Crucifixion briefly as within an hour, the postulant passed all the dolours of Our Lord on the Cross.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November, Sunday, Sister Teresita was visited by her family. Since her entrance in Carmel, they always pleaded with sighs and prayers for her return to their paternal home. This same day, her parents, with tears and on their knees, begged her to have pity on them and not to leave them so alone. As it was not yet possible to reveal the secret, Sister Teresita could not tell anything to her parents of what was happening in Carmel, that is

why she had great difficulty to convince them to allow her at least to finish her postulancy, and that she would think it over and pray much to know what was the will of God. After all, she was still on probation, and the little note with the terrifying message could not be erased from her mind! Sister Teresita and the Mother Prioress remained for a while in the parlor. Sister Teresita lost consciousness and incidentally, an Out-Sister was on the other side of the grille. The Mother called and gave an order to call the Chaplain, who just finished the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, so that His Excellency, with the four Out-Sisters, could please be present at the parlor. When the five arrived, Sister Teresita was already in cross-form! The Crucifixion lasted for an hour, more or less.

At last came the 9<sup>th</sup> of November, the day when the Carmel in the Philippines celebrated its Silver Jubilee. Early in the morning after Mass, the Sisters found rose petals scattered at the feet of Our lady of Fatima. The Mother heard the voice that said that as a gift for the Silver Jubilee of the Carmel, Sister Teresita would no longer leave, and that the Blessed Virgin gave to all her motherly blessing. She repeated that we be all good, humble, obedient and simple, and to love one another.

The next day during the Little Hours, Sister Teresita fainted and had the sufferings which lasted for three hours. At about five in the afternoon, petals were showered outside of the Monastery, at the entrance of the former provisional chapel. Some persons saw it. The Postulant suffered the Crucifixion between 6 and 7 P.M.

On Thursday, November 12, a Mass was celebrated at the Hermitage of the apparitions. The Community alone was present. After the Mass, Sister Teresita heard a voice of an Angel that said that the Blessed Virgin was waiting for her in the place of the Apparitions. The postulant stood up and she approached the vine. There was the Lady waiting, radiant with light but somewhat sad. *“People do not believe my words. Pray, my child, pray much because there will be persecution. Pray for priests. What I ask here is exactly what I asked at Fatima. Tell this to the bishop and to the people. They do not like to believe in me and do not give what I ask. Tell the Sisters that I ask them to pray and to help propagate my devotion, to do penance for those who do not believe. When people come to ask me directly and not through you. all these can be revealed already. this is my last Apparition in this spot.”* And blessing sister Teresita and the Community, Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace disappeared.

L.D.V.M.

## **THE VERDICT**

We, the undersigned Archbishops and Bishops, constituting for the purpose a special Commission, having attentively examined and reviewed the evidence and testimonies collected in the course of repeated, long and careful investigations, have reached the unanimous conclusion and hereby officially declare that the above mentioned evidence and testimonies exclude any supernatural intervention in the reported extraordinary happenings--- including the shower of petals --- at the Carmel of Lipa.

Manila, April 11, 1951

(Signed) Gabriel M. Reyes  
Archbishop of Manila

(Signed) Cesar M. Guerrero  
Bishop of San Fernando

(Signed) Mariano Madriaga  
Bishop of Lingayen

(Signed) Juan Sison  
Auxiliary Bishop of Nueva Segovia

(Signed) Rufino Santos  
Apostolic Administrator of Lipa

(Signed) Vicente Reyes  
Auxiliary Bishop of Manila

Manila, 11 April 1951<sup>67</sup>

Concordat cum originali:  
(Signed) Egidio Vagnozzi  
Apostolic Nuncio

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<sup>67</sup> We have two copies of this pronouncement, one dated April 6, 1951, and another dated April 11, 1951. Due to length of time which has elapsed, we have no way of verifying which is the original date, We have reproduced the latter version as it contains the signature of Monsignor Egidio Vagnozzi. The two copies, however, are identical in text, except for the date. The following document was issued by Monsignor Rufino Santo, shortly after the pronouncement was made.

Diocese of Lipa  
Lipa City, Batangas

**Decree**

Having been declared by the Special Commission composed of several members of the Philippine Hierarchy that, after long, repeated and careful investigations, the evidences and testimonies on the matter exclude any supernatural intervention in the reported extraordinary happenings --- including the shower of petals --- at the Carmel of Lipa, I, the undersigned Apostolic Administrator of Lipa Diocese, in keeping with Decree-Statement of the said Episcopal Commission, BY THESE PRESENT LETTERS dispose and order:

- 1) No petals nor water should be given out to anyone;
- 2) The statue of Our Lady (actually in the church) should be retired from public veneration;
- 3) All out-sisters must be admitted within the enclosure for the time being, excepting Sr. Elizabeth, who shall remain outside to attend to the needs of the Community; and finally
- 4) All visits are suspended temporarily, no letters will be allowed, until final decision on the matter will come from the Holy See.

City of Lipa, April 12, 1951

Signed:  
Rufino J. Santos, D.D.  
Apostolic Administrator  
Sede Vacante

LETTER OF **CARDINAL OTTAVIANI** CONCERNING THE STATUS OF  
MOTHER CECILIA AND MOTHER MARY ANNE

ADDRESSED TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER  
ANASTACIO OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY,  
PRIOR GENERAL OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITES

Protocol Number 220/49

September 26, 1962

Your Most Reverend Father sent to this Supreme Sacred Congregation a letter from the Prioress of the Carmelite Convent of Quezon City (Philippines), which inquired whether the Sisters, Mother Mary Cecilia and Mother Mary Anne of Jesus ought to remain temporarily or permanently in the said Convent. At the same time, the same Prioress asked whether the Convent of Lipa would be prevented from holding the canonical elections.

In relation to this, I wish to communicate to You that from this Holy Office, we gather that on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 1953, the then Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Vagnozzi, had been authorized to admit candidates to the novitiate and to simple or solemn profession in accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law and of the particular Constitutions of Carmel, **provided that they be informed of the judgment and the decisions made about the happenings in Lipa.** [emphasis mine]

In this particular case, then, and with the letter of this Supreme Sacred Congregation dated 29 December 1959, it has been communicated to Your Reverence that the abovementioned Sisters implicated in the presumed extraordinary happenings at Lipa be rehabilitated in their position as Choir members, but **permanently deprived of both active and passive voice.**[emphasis mine]

Inasmuch as **there exist no other data in the Archives of the Holy office** [emphasis mine], Your Reverence can consult the Sacred Congregation for the Religious for whatever future official decisions”.

**Testimony of  
Fr. Lorenzo Ma. Guerrero, S.J.**



## AFFIDAVIT

I, Fr. Lorenzo Ma. Guerrero, S.J., of legal age, residing in Sta. Ana Manila, after being sworn to upon oath, depose and state:

1. That the Philippines Catholic Hierarchy issued the following Official Statement in the year 1951:

“We, the undersigned Archbishops and Bishops, constituting for the purpose a special Commission, having attentively examined and reviewed the evidence and testimonies collected in the course of repeated, long and careful investigations, have reached the unanimous conclusion and hereby officially declare that the above mentioned evidence and testimonies exclude any supernatural intervention in the reported extraordinary happenings--- including the shower of petals --- at the Carmel of Lipa.”

Manila, April 6, 1951

(Signed) Gabriel M. Reyes --- Archbishop of Manila  
(Signed) Cesar M. Guerrero --- Bishop of San Fernando  
(Signed) Mariano Madriaga --- Bishop of Lingayen  
(Signed) Rufino Santos --- Apostolic Administrator of Lipa  
(Signed) Juan Sison --- Auxiliary Bishop of Nueva Segovia  
(Signed) Vicente P. Reyes --- Auxiliary Bishop of Manila

2. That while my uncle, Bishop Cesar Guerrero, was still alive, I heard from his lips that he signed the above Official Statement under duress.
3. That the said Bishop had expressed his personal belief in the fact of the apparitions of Our Lady Mediatrix of All Grace in the Carmelite Convent of Lipa during the year of 1948.

In witness whereof, I hereunto sign this sworn statement this 11<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1990 in the City of Manila, Philippines.

(Signed) Lorenzo Ma. Guerrero, S.J.

Witnesses:

H. Mandadero  
Amelia Kison

**APRIL 17, 2005 Lipa, Phillipines**

**Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Ramon Arguelles, DD, STL**

Their Eminences and Excellencies, the reverend Fathers, Religious and Concerned People of God:

While I was being considered to become the Archbishop of Lipa, I knew that my being SERVUS, ANCILLAE FILIUS (I and Your Servant, the son of Your handmaid, Wisdom 9:5; Ps 116 :16 ) would be both asset and liability. Being an avowed devotee of the Blessed Virgin Mother, I would shepherd a deeply Marian Archdiocese. The same Archdiocese however is the site of a supposed apparition of Our Lady in the late forties and the early fifties, an event that has caused long-term pain to so many and yet faithfully endured without anyone in the least alienated from Holy Mother Church, an event the interest in which saw resurgence in the western part of the Archdiocese.

Some spread the word that the present archbishop of Lipa shows inclination to approve of the so-called apparitions. Others, mostly lay people would exert friendly pressure on the archbishop out of his attachment to the Blessed Mother to declare the apparitions authentic. Still others, however, would refrain joining organized prayer assembly with Mary, principally under the title MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACE, without any word from the Archbishop of Lipa. This is the WHY of this DECLARATION.

1. I will no longer keep it secret, whatever the consequences may be, that personally I never doubted the Lipa apparitions that took place in the early years of my childhood. As I grew up later as a seminarian, young priest and then bishop, even now as archbishop I would always find solace, peace and strength in spending time praying before the image of Our lady in the Carmel of Lipa. It is to her that I always I entrust my mission and seek solutions to my problems. But I will never question any decision made by the official church regarding the matter. Nor do I intend to create unnecessary controversy by reopening issues that should better remain quiet for no matter how long a time.

2. Many devotees come to Carmel and other places in the Archdiocese of Lipa. Bishops and priests are asked to join in their devotions and prayers . All of them sincerely care for our country and people and most of all for our church. I get invited at times too. I make myself available especially during the First Saturday Penitential Procession and Eucharist. I see no problem in joining or even initiating prayer assemblies for specific intentions like peace in our land and in the whole world, most of all I ask the faithful to pray for the sanctity of all bishops and priests. In fact, I encourage that prayer gatherings be held everywhere and anywhere in the Archdiocese to implore God through the intercession of Mary to strengthen the Church, sanctify her ministers and unite all peoples so that God's Kingdom of Peace, Unity and Love may be realized starting in our "Pueblo Amante Maria."

3. Some devout people promote the devotion to Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace. I have no objection to this beautiful Marian title as well as the image and devotion that go with it. I encourage these devotees and they have my blessing. I will even join all organized prayers for the conversion of sinners, the sanctification of all priests, the accomplishment of the mission of the Philippines to be the launching pad of evangelization in Asia. I am convinced, like many of these Marian followers, that our country is chosen by God, particularly loved by Mary, because Christ trusts that the Catholic Church in the Philippines will bring about "the new springtime of faith" also in other nations and will become a "great evangelization factor in the Third Millennium." I am convinced about what many others have told me: You Filipinos are the Missionaries of the Third Millennium. That explains why with Mary caring for us we have become known as the most prayerful and cheerful people. Allow me therefore to tell all my brothers in the episcopate, all priests and religious, all the faithful that I DO STRONGLY ENCOURAGE ANYONE WHO DRAW OTHERS TO A MARIAN ATTACHMENT TO JESUS . I SUPPORT ANY INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH BY A RENEWAL OF OUR FAITH AND PRAYER WITH MARY ALL FOR JESUS! (Underscoring mine -Deedee) Thank you for the attention you can give this declaration.