

TWO FULLY DOCUMENTED MIRACLES

Praise God in all His Saints (Ps 150:1)

THE MIRACLE OF "ROSE" :

One day in february, 1995, a few days after the feast day of ST. Paul the Anchorite (Anba Paula the first hermit), Rose (not her real name) discovered a lump in her breast. She saw a surgeon who took a biopsy of the lump. The result was very tragic, it was found to be malignant.

Rose, who works as a pathologist and a member of the teaching staff of the University of Western Ontario Medical School in London, Ontario reviewed the slides made from the tumour with the rest of the members of the Department of Pathology, including the head of the Department. The verdict was; definite malignancy.

In relating the story to me she told me, "Abouna, not only is it malignant, but the kind of malignancy is such that it would kill within one year." I believed her, for she ought to know.

A dark veil fell upon the whole family. Rose's husband broke down, the children aged 9, 11, and 13 were devastated. Rose tried to put on a brave face, but sseeing the condition of her husband and children, she too broke down.

One time, she came from outside, un-noticed by the children to find them kneeling, with tears in their eyes, sobbing and pleading, "Please God, don't take our mom from us." She went into her room. locked the door and cried her heart out. She repeatedly told me, "I don't mind going to be with Christ, but I feel sorry for my husband and the children."

Rose prayed a lot, but in the end she surrendered her fate to God and accepted God's will. One time, sitting in the living room of their house in London, she confinded in me, "When I'm gone, please help Adel (not her husband's real name) find a suitable wife. He cannot cope with the children alone." I fought very hard to conceal the tears in my eyes by pretending to Look at the wall across from me, It was then thsat I noticed an icon of ST. Paul the Anchorite, in whose name the Coptic Church in London is registered. Where is your faith Rose? I said. "This is your Saint (pointing to the Icon), ask him to perform a miracle." I then added, "Let us make a deal with him, if he would cure you, then you would buy the furnishings of the Sanctuary and Altar of the Church we will buy or build in his name." I then added jokingly, "And if he dosn't cure you then we should change the name of this church to ST. Mena's !" That conversation took place on the eve of the operation to remove her breast.

On the morning of the operation, Rose was very calm. She was even joking with every one aroud her. She had **faith** that God, through the prayers of ST. Paul the Anchorite, can cure her. She also had **hope** that He will cure her. Most importantly, she had completely surrendered her will to the will of God.

On the operating table, her last words to the surgeon before being put to sleep were these, "The slides look very bad, but there is still room for a miracle."

Under anesthesia, the surgeon re-examined the lump. He was surprised to find that it had shrunk in size. It was also freely moving in the breast and not fixed. As usual, he opened the breast, removed the lump, sent it to the Lab for confirmation of the diagnosis, and waited.

We were waiting outside, her husband, myself and a few friends of the family. Suddenly, the head of the department of Pathology, a sweet elderly lady, rushed into the waiting room with a perplexed look on her face, "I can't understand it ! It is not malignant. But .. how can this be, I was very careful looking at the slides before the operation. How on ..." Seconds later, the surgeon joined us, still in his operating gown, with his surgical mask hanging around his neck and he is screaming, "It's a miracle .. it's a miracle. She asked a miracle and she got one ! I have never seen anything like this in my life."

It was total confusion, a dozen people talking in the same time, some were screaming, some were crying, every body was hugging the person next to him, sobbing and laughing at the same time.

After the pandemonium settled down, we all sat down trying to absorb what was happening. Word came that she could go home in a couple of hours. The husband rushed to bring the children from their schools in order to take Mom home. The same Mom they entreated God not to take away from them.

For one week after the operation, every Pathologist around reviewed the slides (before and after the operation) trying to find any mistake in the initial diagnosis, but there were none. Grudgingly and reluctantly they had to admit it, "It is a miracle !"

The congregation of the Church of Saint Paul the Anchorite in London had no problem accepting this. Saint Paul is *their* Saint, and time after time, they all had experienced their own little miracles that he performed among them.

One thing became clear to them: the time had come to have a church building dedicated to that great Saint. A place where people can come and light a taper in front of his Icon. Where people in distress can come seeking his prayers and intercessions. And .. where they can come later paying their vows and venerating this great Athlete of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Glory be to God who has given His saints the gifts of healing and doing wonders, and praised be His Saint Abba Paul the Anchorite.

"Praise God in all His Saints."

THE MIRACLE OF HESHAM:

Hesham (his real name) came to Canada from Egypt a year ago. He is a pharmacist, married with two children, a member of the congregation of ST. Mary's Church in Kitchener.

To obtain his licence in Pharmacy, Hesham had to write several exams, all of which he passed except for the English Proficiency exams, which he repeatedly flunked. The passing grade was 75% (225 out of 300), but he never even came close to that.

To make things worse, the college changed the rules, making the passing grade 80% ! He fell into despair. "If I couldn't make it even to 65%, how can I get 80% ?"

The miracle of Rose was still fresh in our minds, so I told him, "Why don't you ask ST. Paul for help?" I then added, "Make a little vow to him, if you pass your exam, you would buy a silver set of Altar Vessels for his church in London." He agreed.

A week later, he came to me after church. He was so dejected. He told me that he did so badly on the exam, that he doesn't believe that he will score even 50%. Not only that, but the exam now had an oral part to it, in which he had to listen to recorded questions and record his answers. It was this part that worried him most. "I didn't understand half the questions and I was saying anything to the recorder !" In answer, I told him, "I'm glad that you didn't do well!" So surprised, he asked, "Why?" I said, "Because if you pass now, you will know for sure that it is ST. Paul's prayers that did it for you !"

A few days later, he phoned me. He was so excited. "I passed with full marks 300 / 300 !" "Are you sure?" I asked him. "Yes" He answered. "I have the papers to prove it .. and I already got my Licence. Even the girl who gave me the licence told me I have never heard of any body scoring 100% in this exam !"

The problem is that Hesham now speaks only in English !

A few days ago, he came to me complaining that his friends make fun of him, "Zey don't bileev zat I gut sree handred in bronanciation !" "Neither do I Hesham, *habibi* !" I said. It was probably ST. Paul's voice on that recording machine.

Hesham started looking for a job, asking for ST. Paul's help. He got a job on his first interview. He told me that the guy who interviewed him told him, "You speak very good English !" then he added "The guy was Chinesee !" Guess where Hesham got his Job? Of course, in London Ontario, where else?

Father Athanasius Iskander

In the space below, we are printing reproductions of the Pathology Department slides taken from Rose's tumour, before and after the miracle,

BEFORE
AFTER

In the space below, we are printing reproductions of Hesham's scores, before and after the miracle,

BEFORE
AFTER