

From a Postulator's Diary

Meeting of the Postulator and Vice Postulators.

In February, the vice postulators Sheila Carney RSM (Americas), Anne Hannon RSM (Europe and Africa), and Mary Duffy RSM (Australia, New Zealand, Philippines), together with the postulator Brenda Dolphin RSM, met for three days in Baggot Street in Dublin. This was the first time a face to face meeting of this group took place since the establishment of the Mercy Worldwide Committee for the Cause for Canonisation. There had been an inaugural meeting of the ten member committee in April of 2007 in order to get the work for the Cause worldwide, off the ground. The other members of this Committee are Diane Smyth RSM (New Foundland), Mary Hanrahan RSM (New Zealand), Maria Villegas RSM (Philippines), Maura Meaney RSM (Union, GB), Dolores Magee RSM (Federation, GB) and Mary McNamara RSM (Institute, GB)

The normal means of communication between the members of the committee, who are scattered around the world, are conference calls, telephone calls and emails, all of which are very useful but none of which has the flexibility for pursuing issues in depth that a face to face meeting permits.

Sharing the Story

One of the important results from that meeting was a decision taken to maximise the use of the space allotted to the Cause on the Mercy World Website. To this end, as a committee, we agreed to send in to Fraynetwork on a regular basis, stories, articles or reports that will try and capture a flavour of the multifaceted projects that are undertaken in relation to the Cause in each of the Mercy Congregations around the world. The submission of these stories and articles will be done on a rotational basis by the members of the Committee, starting in April 2009.

So don't forget to tune in to www.mercyworld.org, to the canonisation section and keep yourself up to date on what is happening.

Graces Favours and Miracles

Another important topic for discussion at the February meeting was that of alleged miraculous healings. To date, since Catherine was declared Venerable in April 1990, about ten presumed miraculous healings have been studied in depth.

Stories about favours received through Catherine's intercession are too numerous to count. These are a confirmation of her reputation of holiness *in genere*. Many of these stories are in the areas of spiritual healing, profound peace and acceptance in the face of loss and even death, as well as physical healing. *You will find some of these poignant and absorbing stories in the canonisation section of the Mercy World Website under*

"Meeting Catherine Today"

The alleged miracles that have been scrutinised in depth relate to physical healings. There are many people alive today who are quite certain that the fact that they are well and active today is due to Catherine's intercession on their behalf and we have no doubt that that is true. The last healing that we had under scrutiny, a case from Philadelphia USA, was not accepted by the Medical Council for the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in February 2009. We have the possibility of new medical evidence in this case and are waiting for documents before proceeding further.

We firmly believe that the day will come when Catherine will be beatified. When Jesus was asked for a miracle he always asked for faith. *Please do continue to commend people who ask for the support of your prayers to Catherine's care and intercession and get in contact with the vice postulator in your area or the Congregational representatives on the canonisation Committee if you need prayer leaflets or if you have stories about graces, favours or healings received through Catherine's intercession.*

Non Medical Miracles

Many times I have been asked if it is only physical healings that are considered for beatification and canonisation in the Church. The legislation permits the admission of miracles other than healings, but such cases are very rare. There is a board of medical experts in the Congregation for Causes whose responsibility is to examine healings which are proposed as miracles. At no time in the history of the causes for saints has there been a permanent consultant body consisting of technical experts other than medical ones. Since the promulgation of the new legislation dealing with the causes for saints in 1983 there were only two causes for beatification for which miracles other than healings were proposed. One example was the miracle considered for the beatification of the Servant of God, Margarita Bays, who was beatified on 29 October 1995 by Pope John Paul II. This miracle concerned the miraculous escape of Marcel Menetrey from a tragic accident that occurred while climbing the mountain Dent-de-lys in Switzerland on 25th March 1940. The other cause was that of the Servant of God, Maria Antonia Bandres y Elosegui who was beatified on 12 May 1996. The miracle proposed was the miraculous saving of Antony Bandres Nararro from a train accident that happened at the station of Malaga on 25 October 1961.

Your ever affectionate, M.C. McAuley

The idea of making an aural CD based on the letters of Catherine McAuley was mooted by the Committee for Canonisation more than a year ago. The idea behind it was to introduce colleagues and associates to the mind, heart and soul of Catherine through her letters. It was also felt that Sisters would be interested in such a CD for personal reflection and also for prayer services with young and old.

So, the CD ***Your ever affectionate, M.C. McAuley*** was born!

This CD contains a short version of Catherine's life, readings from her letters with a short contextual introduction and a brief reflection on Mercy today at the end of the reading. It also has musical interludes and background music, much of which is both written and played by Mercy sisters, associates and colleagues from around the world. *The CD, excellently produced and beautifully presented, is now ready to be launched at the Europe/Africa symposium on Catherine McAuley that will be held in Castleblayney, County Monaghan, Ireland on Saturday 25 April 2009. The keynote speaker at the event is Sr. Sheila Carney RSM from the Institute of the Americas, USA and a vice-postulator for the Cause of Catherine McAuley. Check out mercy e news for more information.*

My prayer is that you be ever surprised by the depth of Mercy alive in you.

Brenda Dolphin RSM

Postulator