

# THE GREEN SCAPULAR AND ITS FAVORS

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(from a 1923 original *LE SCAPULAIRE VERT ET SES PRODIGES*)



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## PREFACE

This work that appears today on the Green Scapular, with its origin and the countless favors of which it is the instrument, has been in demand for a long time.

It is true, its marvelous effects were well known, but its origin remained shrouded in an almost impenetrable mystery, upon which, however, people were most anxious to be enlightened.

One can easily understand why this mystery might have prevailed during the life time of the happy seer of whom God chose to make use for the transmission of this pledge of salvation, namely Sister Justine Bisqueyburu, Daughter of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul.

Now her death having occurred on September 23, 1903, the reasons for keeping the secret no longer exist, and we may at last satisfy the pious curiosity of the faithful.

I should have wished to do so sooner, had I not been deterred by insurmountable obstacles. As these obstacles have now disappeared, I am happy to set to work and share with my readers the precious information which for a long time has been in my possession.

At first, I intended not to sign my name to this work and most gladly would I have remained in obscurity. But, after revolving the first impulse in my mind, it seemed to me that since I am acting as a witness it would be wiser to reveal myself, considering that an anonymous declaration has not, as a rule, much value.

From the year 1870 on, being then a very young priest, I was put in touch with Sister Bisqueyburu by the Most Honored Father Etienne, our Superior General, who, the year following authorized me in a still more explicit manner to receive the depositions of the Sister, who then

was Superioress of the Hotel-Dieu (the 'Hotel of God') of Carcassonne, France. This authorization, bearing the date of June 24, 1871, was thus worded: "I beg Sister Bisqueyburu to say and confide to Father Mott, Priest of the Mission and Director of the Seminary of Oran (Algeria), all that had happened to her and all she knows concerning the Green Scapular."

In order to receive these depositions, I undertook, in 1872, the journey to Carcassonne; but I must confess that, in spite of that authorization so explicit and bearing almost the character of a command, I could not draw much out of the exceedingly humble seer. She shrouded herself in an almost absolute silence, as she felt the utmost repugnance to speak of these matters, giving as a pretext that since 1840 (the epoch of the first apparitions), she had forgotten everything and, for the time being, had no other concern but to fulfill the obligations of her state the best she could.

To these reasons must be added, it seems to me, the difficulty which a Superior of fifty-four years of age must have found to open herself in such a matter to so young a priest, scarcely twenty-six years old, and who, after all, was to her but a stranger.

Fortunately, Carcassonne is not far from Narbonne, where the hospital was in charge of Sister Buchepot, former Directress of the Seminary (the mistress of novices) of Sister Bisqueyburu, and who had received all her communications.

Hence, it was to her I then applied and she gave me all the information I could wish for. She even lent me letters which Sister Bisqueyburu had written to her at the time of the apparitions, together with the correspondence carried on with her director, Father Aladel, who likewise had been the director of Saint Catherine Laboure, the seer of the Miraculous Medal.

Later on, I was able to procure a few autographs of Father Aladel concerning this affair, as well as other precious and perfectly authentic documents, which were a great help to me.

The following is the plan of this little work:

I deemed it useful to begin, in *part first*, by introducing to my readers Sister Justine Bisqueyburu.

For the items of this biographical sketch, I am indebted to several of her former companions who wrote them out for me. Having for long years lived side by side with her, they are true eyewitnesses of her saintly life, and most trustworthy witnesses they are too.

In *part second* is found the account of the apparitions to which the Green Scapular owes its origin, the manner of using it, its efficacy and the approbations of which it has been the object.

Finally, *part third* tells of some of the countless wonderful cures, but especially of the conversions of which the scapular has been, and continues to be the instrument.

May Our Lord make use of these pages to glorify more and more the Immaculate Heart of His Holy Mother, whose badge the Green Scapular is. May He inspire those who shall read them with an ever increasing confidence in the goodness and power of this Holy Heart, Refuge of Sinners; and, thanks to His most efficacious intervention, may He see return to His fold great flocks of strayed sheep who one day in Heaven shall forever praise His Divine mercies: *Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo*: 'The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever.'

**Fr. Marie Edouard Mott**

## PART ONE

### BIOGRAPHY OF SISTER JUSTINE BISQUEYBURU

Daughter of Clement Bisqueyburu, merchant, and of Ursula Albine d'Anglade, our Sister was born at Mauleon (Lower Pyrenees) on November 11, 1817, feast of Saint Martin, and was Baptized the following day, and received the name of Justine.

We know almost nothing of her connections and early childhood, unless it be that her mother's kinsfolk lived at Loteron: There she at an early age (for what motive is not known) was entrusted to her maternal aunt, Miss d'Anglade, and to Mr. d'Anglade, who took a great liking to her and at his death left her all his fortune. With them, she grew up, received her First Communion and was educated.

When the time came for her decision as to a state of life, the Divine call came to her, though we know none of the circumstances. All we do know is that she was then twenty-two years old and that she asked this permission of her aunt, Miss d'Anglade, who loved her dearly and who would have wished to keep her. A thorough Christian, however, she would not thwart the designs of God upon this soul and hence let her go, toward the end of August, 1839, to make her postulancy at the hospital of Pau under the guidance of the venerable Sister Vallier.

Her postulancy having expired, she left for Paris to begin her Seminary or Novitiate. Strange to say, she made the journey in care of the saintly priest who was soon to become the confidant of the extraordinary graces with which she was favored, a circumstance willed by a particular design of Divine Providence.

This was Father Aladel, Director of the Daughters of Charity who, happening to pass through the city of Pau on his return to Paris, willingly agreed to accompany the

young postulant on her journey. She entered the Seminary November 27, 1839, on the ninth anniversary of the famous apparition of the Immaculate Virgin to Saint Catherine Laboure, an apparition to which the Miraculous Medal owes its origin. The good Father Aladel, who was so wisely directing Sister Catherine Laboure in her extraordinary ways, did not suspect that confidences somewhat similar were soon to be reposed in him by this postulant.

After nine months of Seminary training, she was placed in the house of Charity of Blangy (Lower Seine.)

We should like to have some details of the time spent in the Seminary and the manner in which she conducted herself, but we may draw a fair conclusion from the remarks written about her, in truly eulogistic terms, at the time of her taking the habit:

"Sister Bisqueyburu (Justine). Tall. Knows how to read, write, cipher, knows her grammar. Gentle disposition. Is sensible, has judgment and an ardent imagination. Skillful, intelligent, courageous, pious and virtuous. Fit for school."

As one can see, her piety had not escaped the eyes of her Directresses who, in these remarks, had condensed the results of their observations. But the First Directress alone, Sister Buchepot, had been able to see, from receiving the communications of the young Sister, to what degree her soul was united to God. Favored as she was from the beginning of her Seminary with extraordinary graces, of which we shall speak at length in part two, she knew how to keep them secret and spoke of them only to those charged with her direction.

The remarks written at the time of her receiving the habit end with these words, "Fit for school." And, in fact, her first employment on leaving the Seminary was that of school teacher at Blangy, a small place situated in the

Department of Lower Seine. Yet she did not stay there long, for in 1841, we find her in the House of Charity of Notre-Dame parish at Versailles, where she remained until 1855. It was there she made her first Holy Vows. There also she had the opportunity of spending herself unreservedly in the practice of charity, revealing the extraordinary aptitude with which she was gifted for the care of the sick. Her good Superior, Sister Le Pelletier, was afflicted with a cancer on the tongue which caused her cruel sufferings and required delicate attentions most repugnant to nature. Sister Bisqueyburu considered herself happy to bestow this care upon her and did so with great affection. Night and day was she at the bedside of the venerated patient, endeavored to soothe her pains and anticipated her last wish; and when the moment of supreme separation arrived, her filial devotedness inspired her to render less painful the ever-momentous passing from time to eternity.

When the Crimean war broke out in 1854 and military authorities made an appeal to the devotedness of the Daughters of Charity for the nursing of the wounded soldiers on the battlefield, the Superior readily complied with her expressed wish to be employed for that purpose. She left for Constantinople in 1855 with the other Sisters destined to the same charitable functions, and, like them, she devoted herself unreservedly to this work.

The devotedness of the Daughters of Charity in the painful labor of the ambulances, aroused an admirable enthusiasm in those who witnessed it regardless of religion or nationality, and provoked a generous emulation, even within the ranks of schism and heresy.

An English lady, Miss Nightingale, who had been for a long time at the head of the Anglican Association of Charity in London, conceived the thought of endowing her country with an institution similar to that of the Daughters



of Charity. She even went to Paris for the purpose of an interview with Father Etienne, their Superior General, begging him to show her the rules and organization of that Community that she might take a copy of them. After having obtained all that she wished, she left full of confidence in the success of her enterprise.

At her return to France in 1856, Sister Bisqueyburu was given a duty which was like the sequence of the one she had efficiently fulfilled in Constantinople. She was placed at the military hospital at Val de-Grace in Paris, (a former Benedictine convent, the 'Valley of Grace') where she remained two years. One of the Sisters who lived with her at that time and later was placed under her charge at Rome - Sister Bergasse - testified that she was deeply devoted to her patients and that she possessed all the qualities of a true servant of the poor.

Qualities as precious as hers determined Superiors to place her at the head of an establishment. The one first entrusted to her in 1858 was the Military Hospital of Rennes, which she was commissioned to open. But she remained only a few months and the last days she spent there, were very painful, for, a month before her departure, she had received an order to be in readiness to be sent to Algiers at the first signal, and at the same time, she was to keep the most absolute silence about it. The secret was indeed well kept, but the affectionate heart of the new Superior suffered from it. As she dearly loved her companions, as well as the hospital which she had put in excellent order, the thought of the impending separation was most painful to her and her grief was so much the greater as exteriorly she was not to betray the least sign of it. In this circumstance, she revealed great strength of character, and when the order for departure arrived, she at once complied with it and knew how to leave without commotion.

At Algiers, she was placed at the head of the Dey's

Military Hospital, a very important house which necessitated a sure and firm hand to direct it, together with a kind and motherly heart that would be guided by correct judgment. Sister Bisqueyburu showed herself equal to her task during the nine years she held this office, from 1858 to 1867.

One of her companions who had the great privilege of spending seven years under her direction at Algiers, (Sister Naude) and who became Superior of an important house in foreign lands, gave us the following statement of this epoch of her life under the date of March 22, 1907, less than four years after the death of the Sister:

"I am trying to recall memories of long ago of this fervent soul whom I had the happiness to know and to love in Our Lord.

"On leaving the Seminary, I was for seven years under her direction. I was constantly thanking God for it, for, in the midst of the duties of that large hospital of the Dey at Algiers. I could fancy myself still under the direction of the saintly Sister Buchepot, our dear and venerated Directress of the Seminary.

"Sister Bisqueyburu was a living rule. She drew our attention to the military exactness we had the opportunity to witness on the part of the nurses and patients in order by a comparison to inspire us with a greater, higher and more supernatural fidelity to our Holy Rules, of which she gave us a perfect example herself.

"Everywhere the first in the accomplishment of duty, she surpassed us in the practice of humility and mortification.

"Under an austere exterior appearance lay hidden a great kindness of heart. The illness of one of her companions was to her a most painful trial and when

the patient died, she was inconsolable.

"In 1886, eight of our sixteen Sisters were stricken with cholera within less than forty-eight hours and three died immediately, This good Sister multiplied herself in order to attend to them all and at each new death she offered herself to God as a victim, begging Him to spare her companions. Thus long ago did Saint Louise de Marillac. Her grief was truly painful to behold, and our worthy Director, the Very Reverend Father Doumercq, had great difficulty in cheering up this otherwise energetic soul. Five successive times I have seen her maternal heart submitted to this trial. It was really heartrending. And yet her resignation to God's will was perfect.

"Her esteem for our dear vocation was so deep that she could not understand the slightest hesitation on our part in the duties and sacrifices she imposed upon us.

"For our venerated Superiors she had a respect and obedience inspired by her great spirit of faith and she was prompt in executing not only their orders, but their least wish. Likewise, civil authorities, military officials, doctors and administrators placed an entire confidence in her.

"In the beginning, she had numberless difficulties, finding herself at variance with many prejudices which she succeeded in overcoming, adjusting everything with much wisdom and firmness, for she knew how to convert the sentiments of those most opposed to her into admiration for her virtuous and saintly life. The strength necessary was the outcome of her solid piety, her unreserved confidence in God and her tender devotion to the Most Holy Virgin. But nothing would ever make one suspect that she had

been the object of supernatural favors.

"In 1867, Superiors sent her to Italy in the service of the Pontifical Army which, with so much heroism, was devoting itself in defense of a cause, alas! already despaired of.

"After spending three days and three nights on the battlefield of Mentana, she went to Rome to equip and organize three ambulances; that of the Quirinal, that of Saint Agatha, and another whose name escapes my memory.

"On this new field of action, where she displayed the same zeal as at Algiers, God had several consolations in store for her. Pope Pius IX, who soon appreciated her valor, often saw her and gave her more than one token of his fatherly kindness. He even sometimes allowed her to accompany him in his walks through his private gardens. Monsignor de Merode, who occupied a superior rank at the Pontifical Court, also held her in the highest esteem.

"She was very far from taking pride in these favors. She never even spoke of them, but it is probable that God permitted them in compensation for what she had suffered at her departure from Algiers."

In 1868, she left Rome to take the direction of the Hotel-Dieu of Carcassonne, where God granted her a great consolation. She received the visit of the Very Reverend Father Doumercq, Director of the Daughters of Charity in Algiers, who, happening to pass through Carcassonne, came to see her.

The Hotel-Dieu of Carcassonne was her last mission. She remained there thirty-five years (from 1868 to 1903), giving there, as she did in other places, the example of many virtues and accomplishing much good. June 16,

1868, Tuesday in the octave of Corpus Christi, she was installed Sister Servant of the Hotel-Dieu of Carcassonne by Sister Roche.

Many adjustments were necessary in this establishment when she took charge of it. Yet without being discouraged by difficulties, she resolved to reestablish order, and courageously set her hand to the work which, with the help of God, she brought up to excellent standards.

The following was written to us, May 18, 1907, by one of her companions who lived with her during the last seven years of her life:

"Sister Bisqueyburu, very intelligent, and of a quick and ardent disposition, took personal interest in all the details of the house; making her rounds through the duties in the twinkling of an eye, visiting the sick in their wards, having for each a cheering word and devoting herself untiringly to the service of God and the poor.

"From the start, she undertook to put in good condition the old Hotel-Dieu of Carcassonne, which was very dilapidated at her arrival. She had the floors of the corridors repaired, as they had suffered from the dampness that arose from the earth. The large stairway leading up to the second floor was built and iron beds were procured for the poor sick, who had been very uncomfortable heretofore. Near each bed she had a red marble slab fixed for the convenience of the service, she even furnished the section reserved for the officers at her own expense, had gaslights put everywhere and had a clock set in top of the cupola. As previously it had been very poor, the usual fare of the patients and the Sisters was improved under Sister's watchful direction.

"The chapel, which had just been built, lacked the

barest necessities. It was the pious Superior who supplied it with linen, sacred vessels, feast day vestments and all the objects required by the liturgy. She organized a choir and selected as an organist a young girl who had suffered from reverses of fortune and whose musical talent could be used to her benefit.

“The administration of the Hotel-Dieu, whose extreme ideas were in opposition with hers, furnished her with the occasion of displaying a great patience, to which she united deference in their regard, but not to the exclusion of firmness when duty required it, and she at last triumphed over the great difficulties first encountered. In consequence, they esteemed her to such a degree that she possessed their respect and veneration. She was consulted by them in many matters and by degrees, they entered into her views. Thus, she had the consolation of seeing the Crucifix put back in its place of honor in the wards from whence it had been taken. At the same time, public prayers which had been suppressed in the wards were resumed.

“The doctors likewise appreciated her devotedness, her virtue and particularly, her exactness in carrying out their orders.

“Besides this, she was pleasant to deal with, and secular persons, as well as members of the clergy with whom she was acquainted greatly enjoyed even a slight contact with her.”

Another companion of hers, Sister Moy, who for twenty years lived under her, in a similar manner eulogized her:

“She loved the poor sick dearly with a maternal love. It was a happiness for her to visit them, to listen to

their complaints and to relieve them whenever she could.

"Her vigilance was remarkable, and as she was quick on her feet one would have thought she was everywhere at once.

"Doctors and administrators greatly appreciated her. Persons of the world had recourse to her as to an oracle, and always received from her light, consolation and strength. She did a great deal of good by opening both her heart and her purse to all sorts of woes and needs; but she was very clever in throwing a mantle over her good deeds.

"She was most pious and regular, always up at four o'clock and the first to be in the chapel."

The following may be read about her in a circular letter of the Most Honored Mother, Superior of the Daughters of Charity, January 1, 1905:

"Sister Bisqueyburu, Superior of the Hotel-Dieu of Carcassonne, concealed under an austere exterior and a quick manner a great depth of kindness and devotedness, exercised exemplary regularity and possessed a great spirit of faith. To this, all her companions agree.

"She had more than an ordinary devotion to the Blessed Virgin; a devotion which betrayed itself in her words and in the fervor with which she said the chaplet. When a patient refused the succors of religion, Sister Bisqueyburu did not wish that the Sister in charge should complain about it openly, but she herself went before the Blessed Virgin in the Oratory and recited a Memorare ('Remember us, Most Blessed Virgin'), and rarely was her prayer fruitless.

"Always up at four o'clock as long as her strength permitted it, always first at all community exercises, a strict observer of silence, Sister Bisqueyburu held the Holy Rules in high esteem. But she was not like the Pharisees of the Gospel whom Our Lord reproached for laying upon others burdens which they would not touch with their fingers, and if there be Sisters who found her too strict, they must confess that she was still more so to herself than to others.

"She understood her vow of poverty and practiced it with zeal and to perfection, never wasting anything. On her bed of suffering where she spent the last ten months of her life, she still worked whenever her illness permitted it, thus being to her companions a perfect model of a true servant of the poor. Yes, dearly did she love her poor and the thought of having one day to leave them at her departure from Hotel-Dieu, rent her heart. Our dear Lord wished to spare her that supreme sorrow by recalling her to Himself before the secularization of an establishment which for many years had witnessed her devotedness."

Sister Naude, to whose testimony we have already referred, wrote May 7, 1907: "How can one speak in adequate terms of a life filled with years dotted with unusual incidents, especially in the beginning; years replenished with good works. How is it possible to give an idea of her solid virtue, sincere piety, a will strong in spite of the multitude of various events with which it had been in conflict, a patience amazing in so lively and impressionable a temperament as was hers?"

Another of her companions, Sister Corboz, who had been Sister's assistant in the later years of her life, wrote June 10, 1907:

"I shall give you very simply what I have remarked in



this worthy Sister. She was of a reticent disposition and if some persons have judged her less favorably, it was because they had neither sufficiently studied nor understood her.

“Severe toward herself, she sometimes seemed to be also with regard to others, even her companions when she thought they did not evince enough zeal for their perfection. Her keen eye noticed the least defect, the slightest resistance, which she reproved rather severely. But her severity soon changed into an unequalled sweetness as soon as she perceived that her admonitions were sincerely turned to profit. In consequence, she several times told me: ‘I have been severe toward my companions yet I never ceased to love them’. And more than one act of charity confirmed the truth of this statement.

“Her regularity, piety, and love of duty were exemplary and even in the most painful moments of her community life, she was never heard to utter a complaint. She was most attached to her Community and filled with respect toward superiors from whom the least attention caused her a true happiness.”

From the beginning of her vocation, this worthy Daughter of Saint Vincent had been the object of supernatural favors from the Most Holy Virgin, which we shall make known in the second part. Her humility managed to keep them completely secret for a long time; but in her last illness, her companions succeeded in making her admit several revealing details. She regretted it as soon as she was aware of it; but without doubt, God permitted this avowal so that we might have a full assurance of the authenticity of these favors.

Something of this secret, however, had transpired, though it cannot be told how it happened; for one day

when she still was at Algiers, some of her companions having gone to see good Father Girard, Superior of the Ecclesiastical Seminary, the conversation fell on the Miraculous Medal, the Scapular of the Passion and finally the Green Scapular which already had worked wonders in the conversion of poor sinners. "At any rate," they said, "if for the Green Scapular there were visions, the secret has been well kept, for nobody knows who the happy seer is." "But," answered good Father Girard, "that privileged soul is your fervent Sister Servant ... ; oh! That does not mean you should go and publish it broadcast." And they were faithful to the latter recommendation.

On her part, Sister Bisqueyburu skillfully eluded the pointed questions which at times were addressed to her.

"On several occasions," said Sister Naude, "we tormented her to make her admit it was she who had the vision. She never could be trapped and dismissed us in a manner that discouraged any further quizzing."

"During the last years of her life," said Sister Brun, another of her companions who had spent eighteen years with her, "we used often to speak to her about the happiness of souls favored with visions of the Blessed Virgin. We then more particularly dwelt on the Green Scapular, which she recommended us to use with the patients in enmity with God, which, by the way, always proved successful. When we had a patient whose condition was critical, we recommended him to the prayers of our good Superior, made use of the Green Scapular and were always heard.

"But when we tried to find out to whom the Blessed Virgin had revealed that scapular, she either smiled or referred us to our Superiors for better information, or she simply said: 'You bother me; leave me alone with all your visions. It is not well to believe too readily all that sort of thing'."

But toward the end of her last illness, God permitted

that she should be unaware of the purpose of certain questions addressed to her, thus betraying herself unconsciously. That illness lasted a long time, affording her an opportunity for the practice of many virtues to the great edification of those surrounding her.

To make sure of not missing any of the exercises of piety prescribed by the rules at the time appointed for them, she requested two of her companions to come and recite them aloud near her bed, and she joined with them the best she could. Moreover, she kept in touch with all that was going on in the house and she still directed it by her orders and advice.

"When her condition grew worse," wrote Sister Naude, "we should have liked to speak of her about receiving the Last Sacraments, and yet, in spite of the saintly disposition we saw her in, the courage to do so failed us. We would have liked her to ask for them herself. But she very likely did not believe her state so alarming, and did not think of it. I therefore resorted to the following scheme: I slipped the Green Scapular under her pillow, saying to myself: 'If she is the one to whom this scapular was revealed, the Blessed Virgin will not permit that Her privileged daughter should leave this world without the succors of religion.' At once, wonderful to say, she asked for a priest and received the Sacraments with the deepest piety.

"This was two weeks before her death and during these last days, so painful for her, she edified us all by her patience, her gentleness, her kindness with regard to all.

"Her weakness was as great as her emaciation, and her life could be prolonged only by means of constant stimulation.

"As she felt her end drawing near, she frequently raised her eyes to Heaven saying:

'Heaven! ... Oh! Heaven ... Heaven!'" And her look

seemed to say: 'Will that beautiful Heaven be mine?'

"She dreaded death, not that she was afraid to die, but, as she expressed herself, she feared to appear before the Sovereign Judge void of merits. 'What?' said one of her companions to her. 'Do you count as nothing those sixty-four years you spent in serving God and the poor?'

"She replied, 'It is true.' Then she added, 'but what are they worth, these works? I have been the object of so much adulation! Did I not receive my reward here below?'

"But her fears soon vanished and she henceforth spoke of nothing but Heaven and the Blessed Virgin.

"She often repeated to us: 'Do love the Blessed Virgin, love Her much. She is so beautiful!' 'Sister, one would think you had seen Her,' said Sister Louise to her. But instead of answering, she repeated: 'Love Her much. She is so beautiful!' 'But what must we do to love Her?' 'You must imitate Her virtues.'

"I then ventured to ask her some questions of which she did not notice the purpose and which she answered without being aware that she was revealing a secret kept for more than sixty years. 'What was the color of Her dress?' 'White.' 'And Her mantle?' 'Blue.' 'How did She wear Her hair?' 'It was hanging loose about Her.' And she illustrated every statement with a gesture, whilst her eyes seemed to behold sweet visions of the past.

"I showed her the Green Scapular and she at once said: 'Yes, that's it exactly.' And she piously kissed it.

"I also asked her whether the Blessed Virgin had appeared to her at Carcassonne too. But then she became aware that she had given herself away, and she replied in a tone not very gracious: 'I don't know,' adding: 'Why did I say that anyhow?' And as if to destroy the favorable impression produced upon us by her revelation, she quickly

said: 'I am nothing but a conceited creature, and Father Aladel who knew the whole thing told me I was deluded. Do not bring this up any more. Leave me alone.' From that time she refused to speak of it."

And shortly after, on September 23, 1903 (anniversary of Saint Vincent's ordination to the Priesthood, in 1660), she sweetly surrendered her soul to God in the sentiments of deepest piety, being in the eighty-second year of her age and the sixty-fifth of her vocation, leaving a perfume of sanctity behind her. There is no doubt that she now in Heaven beholds with happiness the august Virgin who so often deigned to appear to her in this place of exile!

This was the conviction of the Sisters who best knew her and had come in closest contact with her. Three days after her death, one of them wrote to Sister Naude: "Oh! let me weep with you! It is such relief to be able to pour the abundance of one's heart into the heart of a friend! Yours, dear Sister, understands mine, and they both had for the dear departed the same affection, the same veneration. Now they share together the same sorrow ...

"How I love to recall her humility, fervor, regularity! Ever in the path of duty, strong and noble in the hour of sacrifice, in sufferings, in all sorts of sorrows, she was for us the type of a true Daughter of Saint Vincent de Paul ...

"Now she, is in Heaven and gazes in holy rapture on Him Who here below possessed all her love, Who was the ultimate Object of all her actions. I am sure that her happiness has not bereft her of the memory of those who weep her loss. We have in her a very powerful advocate in Heaven."

How much must her glory in Heaven be increased by that train of souls whose salvation was wrought through the Green Scapular revealed to her by the Immaculate Heart of Mary!

## PART TWO

### THE REVELATIONS OF THE GREEN SCAPULAR

In part one, we sketched in rather rapid strokes the life of Sister Justine Bisqueyburu; a life full of merits and good works, a life which is a tribute to the great Saint Vincent de Paul, whose worthy Daughter she was. From her life, we may glean many lessons of virtue, which are for us a powerful incentive in the pursuit of virtue, of generosity in the performance of duty, of self-forgetfulness in the practice of Divine charity.

But in the religious family of Saint Vincent such examples are so numerous, that it was not the mere purpose of relating them which induced us to publish these pages.

God, by raising up this chosen soul in His Church and lavishing choice graces upon her, did not merely intend her to work out her own salvation, but had also destined her for a special mission in which the salvation of a multitude of souls was involved.

Just as He had made use of a Daughter of Saint Francis de Sales, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, for the purpose of manifesting the Sacred Heart of His Divine Son to the world, He likewise willed to make use of a Daughter of Saint Vincent de Paul, Sister Bisqueyburu, in order to reveal the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to present it to the veneration of the faithful, and to make of its sacred representation an instrument for the salvation of infidels and poor sinners.

True, a first manifestation of this most pure Heart had already taken place in the Chapel of the Mother House of the Daughters of Charity, on November 27, 1830. On the reverse of the Miraculous Medal, revealed to Saint Catherine Laboure, and since then known as the Miraculous Medal, the Heart of Mary appeared, pierced with a sword, opposite

to the Sacred Heart of Jesus crowned with thorns and surmounted by a cross. Likewise, later on, July 29, 1846, another Daughter of Charity, Sister Appoline Andriveau, was favored by an apparition of Our Lord, Who revealed to her a new scapular of a red color, on which, next to His Heart, was also that of His Mother, and which for this reason received the name of Scapular of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

But in the apparition which Sister Bisqueyburu had, it is Her Immaculate Heart alone which the Blessed Virgin wished to present to our veneration and our prayers, as we are about to see from the autograph notes of the seer, those of her Director, Father Aladel, and of her Directress, Sister Buchepot.

We have already seen that after the expiration of her postulancy at Pau, Justine Bisqueyburu undertook the journey to Paris, accompanied by Father Aladel, and that she entered the Seminary of the Daughters of Charity (140 Rue de Bac), November 27, 1839. As she did not arrive there in time to take part in the great retreat which had closed just a few days previous she had to wait until the following January before being able to make her little entrance retreat.

In those days, the retreat exercises were held in a hall situated above the chapel, in which there was an altar bearing a statue of the Most Holy Virgin. This statue, reputed miraculous, is of very ancient origin.

Now, it was in this hall and before this statue that the new little Seminary Sister made her entrance retreat; and it was during that retreat that the Blessed Virgin appeared to her for the first time on January 28, 1840.

The Sister was at prayer when suddenly the Blessed Virgin made Herself visible to her eyes. She was dressed in a long white gown which reached to Her bare feet, over which was a mantle of very light blue, but She wore no

veil. Her hair hung loose about Her; in Her hands, She held Her Heart, from the top of which abundant flames gushed out. The majesty of Her bearing was enhanced by a beauty all heavenly. At this sight, the young Sister, struck with admiration and awe, almost let a cry escape her lips.

Again, at the close of the retreat she was favored with the same vision, and also four or five times in the course of her Seminary on the principal feasts of the Blessed Virgin.

Up to that time, this favor seemed to have been quite personal and to have had no other purpose than to increase her tender devotion to Mary and Her Immaculate Heart. But the course of events showed that God had other designs which were soon to be revealed.

After receiving the holy habit, Sister Bisqueyburu, as already said, was sent to Blangy (Lower Seine) to teach school. Shortly after her arrival, September 8, 1840, Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, she had another vision. The Mother of God appeared to her during meditation, holding in Her right hand Her Heart surmounted by flames, and in the other hand a kind of scapular, or rather one-half of a scapular. It was a single piece of green goods, rectangular in shape and of middle size hanging by a string which was green also and closed as if destined to go around the neck. The whole thing looked more like a medallion of cloth, than a scapular properly so called. On one side was a picture of the Blessed Virgin such as She had shown Herself in Her preceding apparitions; and on the other side was a Heart all ablaze with rays more dazzling than the sun, and as transparent as crystal. Those are the very expressions made use of by the Sister to describe the vision. That Heart, pierced with a sword, was encircled by an inscription of oval shape surmounted by a gold cross, and thus worded: 'Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for



us, now and at the hour of our death.' At the same time, an interior voice was heard by the Sister revealing to her the meaning of the vision. She understood that this holy picture was by the medium of the Daughters of Charity, to contribute to the conversion of souls, particularly infidels, and to procure for them a good death; that copies should be made as soon as possible and distributed with confidence.

Sister Buchepot was the only one, at first, to whom Sister Bisqueyburu imparted this new favor, in a letter dated October 8, 1840; and this she did timidly and most secretly, "fearing lest all this be the effect of imagination, and requesting her to keep this communication secret." "However," she added, "if you believe it to be necessary for me to speak of it to Father Aladel, I shall do so."

The same apparition was again renewed August 15 and September 13, 1841, and Sister Buchepot informed Father Aladel of it by these few lines: "Sister Bisqueyburu again saw on the feast of the Assumption and this morning during thanksgiving, the Blessed Virgin and the scapular of which I already spoke to you. She feels strongly impelled to tell you so and this costs her so much that her anguish rouses my compassion. I promised her to write this little note to you, so that when on Thursday she will go to see you in the parlor, your charity might make it easy for her."

On Thursday following, September 16, Father Aladel received in fact this new communication. But whether he did not attach enough importance to it, whether prudence inspired him not to rush matters, in order to test whether these supernatural manifestations came from God, according to the Apostle (1 St. John 4:1), he did not seem as yet to take active measures for the making and distribution of the scapular.

The Blessed Virgin complained of it to the Sister in

a new vision which she was favored during the morning meditation of May 3, 1842, a Communion day. (Daily Communion had not then been established.)

This is how the Sister herself relates her vision to Sister Buchepot, in a letter dated from Versailles, May 20, 1842: "It seemed to me I heard a voice which told me that She was not pleased because they delayed so long in making the scapulars. She was so beautiful! ... I promised Her to make you acquainted with it, as well as Father Aladel, so that you might both examine whether it was indeed Her holy will, at the same time begging you to attend to it as soon as possible. I hope to come to Paris in the near future; then I shall tell you all that I have seen and heard. A want of time prevents me from writing to Father Aladel; I shall try to do so next week. Please pay him my respectful regards and ask him to pray for his humble daughter."

Two days later on May 22, Sister Buchepot sent this letter to Father Aladel, adding to it the following lines: "I am sending you a letter I received yesterday. You see we are being urged on ... If you advise me, I shall write again to Mr. Letaille. I am surprised that he who is so devoted to the Blessed Virgin thus delays Her affairs. After reading this letter will you kindly send it back to me, that I may answer it ... I beg you also to add a yes or no, concerning Mr. Letaille."

We can see hereby that the wishes of the Blessed Virgin had received attention as far as the preliminary steps were concerned, since Mr. Letaille had been entrusted with the engraving of the plate destined to produce prints of the image of the scapular and that partly he was accountable for the delay.

This is what Father Aladel answered Sister Buchepot on the same day, May 22: "It would seem a good thing for you to write again (to Mr. Letaille). I suppose the good works he is called upon to do prevent him from rushing

this affair. It may also be that his engraver does not hurry as much as he is expected to."

At last, the scapular could be made, although only in small quantities, but it was not given with sufficient confidence and more by way of experiment. Hence, the results were not very satisfactory.

The Blessed Virgin repeatedly showed Her displeasure in the course of the year 1846, to the Sister, who wrote on June 4, to her former Directress: "Above all, the affair must be hurried on; there is unfortunately much delaying..." There she excused herself for not going to Paris to see Father Aladel as she was kept at Versailles by a First Communion class. "But I may write," she added, "although it costs me. What must Father Aladel think of the little confidence I show him? I am going to correct myself and labor at becoming more simple."

And in another letter, bearing the date of the following month of the same year, 1846, and also addressed to Sister Buchepot, she told her: "For a long time I have had a desire to write to you; but I did not dare to do so, because I am always afraid to be in a state of illusion. Today I want to overcome this ill-founded fear, and wish to be toward you like a little child who speaks to her mother with complete openness of heart.

"I believe again to have seen, yes I saw, I am sure of it. It is absolutely necessary that Father Aladel attend to the scapular, that he should disseminate it and so with confidence. Heretofore, I am sure, he did not attach great importance to it. He was very wrong. True, I do not deserve to be believed, for I am only a poor girl in every respect. May I entreat him to do this, not for my sake, but I ask him in the name of Mary to do it for these poor souls who die without knowing the true religion; yes, if it be given with confidence, there will be a great number of conversions."

But, feeling that it was not very pleasant to transmit

such a message, she wondered whether she should not give it herself. She therefore added: "Help me out, good Mother. Do you advise me to write to Father Aladel? I think it would be more proper if I should speak to him of it; what is your idea? It has been almost a year since I last mentioned the matter to him. I fear to see him, he still awes me very much. I cannot help it ..."

"Answer me, I beg of you, as soon as possible; we cannot lose any time."

The apparitions of 1846 had this particularity, that the hands of the Blessed Virgin were filled with rays. This is what the Sister says of it in a letter to her former directress, dated Versailles, August 10, 1846:

"Has Father Aladel arrived? I forgot to tell you that he asked me whether the scapular (such as it had been made with the plates of Mr. Letaille) was really exact. I answered in the affirmative, that I did believe it was; but perhaps I answered too hastily, for now, as far as I can remember, it seems to me that it had no rays proceeding from the hands of the Blessed Virgin and reaching to the hem of Her garment. And however, it seems to me that is the way She appeared the last time. It seems to me, understand well, for I am always tempted to consider all this an illusion of the devil, who perhaps makes use of this means for my destruction, making me believe things that are not.

"But I told you that I would say all; I want to keep my word. Do not speak of this to Father Aladel, I would rather tell him myself, because I fear he thinks I have not enough confidence in him, for which he has already reproached me."

And she asked that they should send her the picture of the scapular that she might add to it with lead pencil the

rays as she saw them at the last apparition.

They did not believe it was necessary, however, to have the engraving made over, and it remained and still is without rays. It was thought that this omission of detail would not prevent the scapular from corresponding substantially to the desires of the Blessed Virgin.

They did better; they went more actively about the printing and making of the scapular, and distributed it with more confidence.

But one difficulty arose whose solution could not be found in the preceding revelations. What were the conditions required to render this scapular effective? Must it be submitted to a special blessing, be imposed with certain ceremonies, oblige those who wear it to certain prayers or practices, should it be used only on behalf of infidels and in foreign missions only?

To solve these diverse problems there was but one way, namely that the Sister would beg the Blessed Virgin to give the answer. But as she had a great repugnance to do so, her director had to oblige her to do it. "I am going to obey," she wrote to her former directress, "but it costs me; I hardly feel fit to ask for anything. I am in so wretched a state." She obeyed, although with repugnance, and on the eighth of September (1846), the Blessed Virgin, having again appeared to her, Her hands filled with rays, the answer was in substance as follows:

That the scapular, not being like other scapulars, the habit of a confraternity, but is merely two holy pictures put on a single piece of goods and hanging by a string as would be a medal, no special formula is requisite to bless it and there can be no question of imposing it. It suffices that it be blessed by a priest and worn by the infidel or sinner whom we wish to benefit by its happy influence. It may even

be slipped unknown to him in his clothes, or his bed or room. As to the prayers to be recited, there is but one that should be said every day, the one that forms the oval inscription with which the Holy Heart is surrounded on the Scapular. 'Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death.' If the person in whose behalf this scapular is applied should not say it, then the one who makes use of or gives the scapular must say it in their place. This scapular may be used in France, as well as in foreign lands. The greatest graces are attached to its use; but these graces are more or less great in proportion to the degree of confidence which accompanies it. This was the meaning of the different kinds of rays which fell from the hands of the Blessed Virgin at the last apparition.

These indications were exactly complied with, and the scapular being applied under these conditions, produced henceforth, and is ever producing an incalculable number of marvelous conversions and sometimes cures. In the third part the relation of some of these marvels will appear.

Are not these wonders like an authentic proof of the supernatural origin of this devotion, and of the sanction which God Himself seems thus to give it?

But it may be wondered whether or not it has been submitted to the decision of the Church; whether it has some ecclesiastical approbation to recommend it.

In the first place, everything leads to presume, though we have no written token of it, that our Father Aladel, so wise, so prudent and so cautious, did not authorize the making and distributing of the Green Scapular without making sure, beforehand, of the approbation of the Archbishop of Paris, Monsignor Affre. Thus, we saw him in 1832 humbly asking of the predecessor of Monsignor Affre, Monsignor de Quelen, the authorization for the striking of

the Medal revealed in 1830, known since then under the name of Miraculous Medal. How can it be thought that for the Green Scapular, which is a kind of medallion of cloth, he should have believed himself dispensed from a similar measure? How can it be thought that Mr. Letaille, so Christian a publisher as he was, would have been willing to take a share in the diffusion of a devotion which would not have been sanctioned by the first pastor of the diocese?

However, for this devotion, spreading little by little not only throughout France but even abroad, an approbation merely diocesan might have appeared insufficient to certain doubtful minds. Hence, it was resolved to solicit from Pope Pius IX an ampler approbation which would silence any scruples.

This was done by Father Borgogno, Procurator General of the Congregation of the Mission at the Holy See, who achieved complete success. He gives the following statement of it in a letter dated April 3, 1870:

"Having spoken about the Green Scapular to the Holy Father, I related to him the details of its origin adding that particular graces of conversions among hardened sinners had been obtained by means of it. When asked me whether I had any with me, I answered in the affirmative and showed him one. The Holy Father took it, examined it attentively and said to me: 'This is a beautiful and pious picture.' Then he added, 'Well, what do you wish in this matter?' I answered, 'Nothing else than the permission for our Sisters (the Daughters of Charity) to make and distribute scapulars similar to this one, with the faculty of distributing them.' Then he said: 'I give full permission for that. Write to these good Sisters that I authorize them to make and distribute them.'"

Hence, it is plain that it was with a full knowledge of the matter, after attentively considering this image, that

the Pope, while praising its beauty and piety, gave his sanction thereto.

What more could be desired? In fact it is here a question of nothing but a pious image and not of the badge of a confraternity. And the new Canon Law [promulgated in 1917,] (Canon 1385, 1, 3:2) which forbids the printing of any pious picture without an ecclesiastical authorization, says that this authorization must be given by the Ordinary of the place inhabited by the author, or that where the picture is to be printed, adding that for religious a permission from a Major Superior is moreover required (Canon 1385, 3). Now, in 1911 there appeared at Lille a pamphlet of eight pages on the Green Scapular with a reproduction of its two pictures; and this pamphlet bore the approbation of Most Honored Father Fiat, Superior General of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity (July 8, 1911), and also an authorization of Monsignor Delamaire, Coadjutor and soon afterwards Archbishop of Cambrai (July 13, 1911).

It may be remarked, by the way, that the Green Scapular was not a stranger to Our Holy Father Pope Pius XI, since it had a place on his working desk side by side with the Miraculous Medal. The following is what the Most Honored Mother of the Daughters of Charity wrote on the subject as she was relating her journey to Rome and her audience of January 27, 1923:

"The audience with the Sovereign Pontiff was consoling. As I was telling him that our Sisters were using with success the Green Scapular for the conversion of sinners, I offered one to His Holiness who took it in his hands, then placed it on his writing desk with the Miraculous Medal."

Hence, there need be no anxiety about the legitimacy of this devotion. Not only does it fall under no censure, but



it moreover presents itself to the piety of the faithful with all the warrants required by the Church.

Also after living for a long time in obscurity (too long, perhaps), it does not fear now to appear in broad daylight. And the Community of the Daughters of Charity, while keeping the monopoly of the Green Scapular, has decided to put it on the market. Therefore those persons who wish to procure that precious pledge of salvation must have it blessed by a priest (any priest has this power), and they must observe the conditions previously pointed out.

## PART THREE

### THE FAVORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GREEN SCAPULAR

The wonders attributed to the Green Scapular are truly countless. Almost constantly we are informed of conversions of infidels or sinners who, first rebellious, declared themselves vanquished as soon as the Green Scapular was used. Thus are realized the words spoken by the Blessed Virgin to Sister Bisqueyburu in 1846:

“Yes, if it be given with confidence, there will be a great number of conversions.” Cures obtained by the same means are not so numerous, though there have been some.

It is absolutely impossible here to mention all these favors. We shall confine ourselves to relating just a few. They will suffice to justify the promises of the Blessed Virgin, and to inspire confidence in the use of this new pledge of salvation, which we owe to Her maternal kindness.

This story of Mr. Copin is very likely the first or one of the first attributed to the Green Scapular, for it took place September 30, 1842, and the first Scapulars were only made in July of 1842.

This wonderful conversion may be considered as a reward not only for the zeal which Mr. Letaille displayed in bringing about the conversion of his bookkeeper to the practice of religion, but also for the religious eagerness he showed in attending to the engraving of the plate used in printing the Scapular.

The relation that follows is most authentic, based on the testimony written by persons who were in closest touch with the event: the convert himself, Mr. Copin, then Mr. Letaille, Father Aladel, and Sister Grand. It is from

these testimonies, carefully preserved in the Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, that the following details are drawn.

### **MR. COPIN'S CONVERSION**

Mr. Copin, who was born about the year 1792 amid the disturbances of the Great Revolution, had not received a Christian education. Having had no religious instruction, he knew the Catholic Church, her doctrine, her ceremonies and her ministers only through her detractors.

He had at first entered upon a military career and served in the army of Napoleon I, taking part in several campaigns. He had reached the rank of under officer when, in a battle against the English, he was wounded and taken prisoner.

Returning to France and retiring from the army, he availed himself of his knowledge of bookkeeping and we thus find him in 1840 about fifty years of age, as bookkeeper in the house of Letaille (formerly conducted by Pintard, at 30 Rue Saint Jacques). "He acquitted himself of his duty," said Mr. Letaille, "with a perfect regularity and steadfastness up to his death. Being of a cold temperament, firm, perhaps somewhat headstrong, he had a tender heart capable of devotedness."

He married one of the employees of the house much younger than himself and was very good to her and practiced in his home all domestic virtues. Nothing was wanting to make of him a perfect man but to add to these natural virtues faith and the practice of religion.

At that time (1840) Mr. Charles Letaille, who had himself returned to God after two years of hesitation and prayer, felt in the fervor of a neophyte the need of imparting to others the faith he had regained and which he had attributed to Our Lady of Victory.

To satisfy this apostolic inclination, he undertook the

conversion of his bookkeeper, Mr. Copin, whom he held in great esteem and whose religious doubts and prejudices he had previously shared. Let us hear from him the story of the efforts of his zeal:

"When we became acquainted, we both were skeptical philosophers, discussing everything, doubting everything, but more through ignorance and presumption than prejudice.

"As soon as I had embraced the practice of religious duties, I felt the need of special studies in order to explain my conduct and to be able to answer as a Christian to the attacks directed against me on all sides. To this effect, I implored the help of the Most Holy Virgin.

"I consecrated myself to Her promising Her that if She would guide me in all things, I would no longer concern myself about anything but to serve Her Divine Son under Her banner.

"Mr. Copin became the companion of my religious studies and for two years (1840-1842) we interrupted our monotonous secretarial work only to discuss points of dogma or ethics.

"With God's help, I soon became a better example ...

"Recognizing that the efforts of my zeal were powerless and almost fruitless, and penetrated with the sentiments of my great weakness, I betook myself to prayer and entreated Our Lady of Victory to come to my help. I also recommended the conversion of this good soul to the interests of the priests and religious persons whom the great mercy of God had made use of to save my own self."

Among those persons were Father Desgenettes, the

saintly pastor of Our Lady of Victory and founder of the famous Archconfraternity which bears that name; a Jesuit Father who is not named; two Daughters of Charity of the Mother House, Sister Henriette and Sister Grand, on duty in the secretariat, lastly Father Aladel, Director of the Community of the Daughters of Charity, and confidant of the revelations of the Blessed Virgin to Sister Bisqueyburu concerning the Green Scapular.

It was thus God was pleased to surround this predestined soul, who was soon to appear before His tribunal, with all that could help him to secure a favorable judgment.

That moment, in fact, was not far removed. "Meanwhile," related Mr. Letaille, "the worthy Mr. Copin fell sick. At first, it was only a sore throat, a hacking cough which seemed not very alarming. However, the case was most serious. Mr. Copin, whose body was worn out by the privations and fatigues of his military campaigns, was by these facts predisposed to disease. His lungs became ulcerated and his condition grew critical.

"Although he was well aware of it, he did not seem disturbed in the least. For him it was a conflict to sustain with disease and he loved warfare, hoping to triumph by dint of energy. His energy, let it be said, was more than ordinary, and he gave many proofs of it during his illness. One day as he himself had applied a searing iron to his arm, he placed a silver coin on it and pressed on it so hard that it was all bent. And in the last stages, when his illness confined him to bed, he succeeded in overcoming his extreme weakness to attend to his bookkeeping which he kept up until his death."

Yet his state of soul inspired him with no anxiety regarding eternity. Fortunately, others thought of it in his place, and Mr. Letaille's zeal for his friend increased in proportion to the imminent danger.

"In this extremity," he said, "I had recourse to some means which I deemed to be decisive. I obtained the consent of the venerable Father Desgenettes, my Director, to pay my patient a visit. He came to see him several times, and each time had a long talk with him, but alas! without any success. The poor sick man said that he would be very glad to know the truth, but that he felt himself surrounded by darkness which prevented him from seeing the truth. As he was gifted with an upright and sincere soul, he did not wish to perform an action contrary to his convictions.

"As I was exasperated at seeing the disease progressing each day and the longed for conversion proceeding so slowly, I tried to put my poor friend in touch with the good Sisters of Charity whom he loved and revered."

There were in particular two Sisters of the Mother House, Sister Henriette and Sister Grand, who very efficaciously helped Mr. Letaille in his zealous efforts to bring about the conversion of the dear patient. Sister Grand took charge of pleading his cause with the Very Reverend Father Aladel, whom she induced to visit the patient.

"I saw Father Aladel this morning," she wrote to Mr. Letaille, on Saturday, September 17, "and he consents to see the patient, not thinking, however that he will be able to hear his Confession. Nevertheless, I look upon this visit as a great blessing; I induced him to pay it tomorrow, Sunday, after Vespers, that is about four or five o'clock.

"I think, it would be well if the patient were prepared for the visit. You might tell him that I am so grateful for the prayers he kindly said for my brother, that I should at any cost obtain this same happiness for him; that I beg him to give a kind reception to this venerable priest, to open to him his heart entirely and to tell him why he does not seriously begin to make his Confession ... etc.

"Tell him that this good priest, who is under rules, did

not hesitate to inconvenience himself to make this call for the sake of the glory God might derive from it ...

"Consider whether it is better for Father Aladel to meet at your house or at his and then come and tell me tomorrow, Sunday, before our High Mass, which is at eight o'clock.

"I dare hope that the Blessed Virgin will bless this visit. Please offer tomorrow's Communion for that intention. This soul must, must be saved, Our Lord wishes it the Blessed Virgin wishes it." It can be seen what a heart of an Apostle this good Daughter of Charity possessed!

The visit took place on Sunday, September 18; but it had not the expected result. "The worthy Father Aladel," said Mr. Letaille, "was received as the other priest who had previously called, with a courtesy deeply respectful, but his endeavors to persuade the patient to take the step that cost him so much, remained fruitless. Dear Mr. Copin was moved to tears at these marks of interest, and his grief was, so he said, not to be able in conscience to admit what was proposed to him with so much zeal."

"It was then that the idea occurred to have recourse to the Green Scapular. Monday, September 19, 1842. Sister Grand sent one to Mr. Letaille asking him to induce the patient to accept it, at least as a means to restore him back to bodily health. "Try," said she, "and if needs be, be insistent. Bring the Heart of Mary (whose image is on the scapular) near that unhappy heart, so that *Her power may break its lock*, and that grace may, as soon as possible, penetrate into that soul. All our Sisters are going to join in prayer for him."

Mr. Copin accepted the scapular to please his friend, and even wore it on his person, but without attaching much importance to it.

However, the disease made rapid strides and Father

Desgenettes advised Mr. Letaille to enlighten the patient upon the seriousness of his state and to tell him that his end was near.

"I was the only Christian friend," said Mr. Letaille, "who could venture for his salvation such an announcement and it cost me beyond words. I appealed to the Blessed Virgin for light and grace. I prayed myself weary and then went out to my patient.

"The conversation soon fell upon Heaven. It was our usual subject. And I told him gently, without effort, that the time had come for him to think of it ... that the end of his mortal career was near at hand...

"Overwhelmed by this news he sat on his bed, took my hands and after a few moments of silence he said to me: 'How different do the things of this world look when one is standing on the brink of eternity.' ... These words gave me some hope, and our conversation continued in its affectionate turn. But soon I understood that unless a miracle would happen, my poor friend would not ask for the priest, that he would content himself with using all his energy in order to die without weakness, like a disciple of Socrates. I was distressed."

"The moment however was not far distant when this distress was to be changed into great joy; the Immaculate Heart of Mary was soon to work a great favor. The patient spent the greater part of his time in bed; but he rose each day, worked at his bookkeeping and even ate at the table with his family.

On Friday morning, September 30, Mr. Letaille called to see him, but the conversation was very superficial and religion was not even mentioned. The little success of the preceding days lent no encouragement to a fresh attempt.

Now, in the evening of that very Friday, about seven



o'clock, Mr. Copin was at table with his family, when all of a sudden, he rose abruptly, left the table and retired in his bedroom. There he fell on his knees before an image of the Blessed Virgin and took his Green Scapular in his hands as a "medium" as he expressed himself; he kissed it respectfully, and shed abundant tears. Then he felt impelled to promise the Blessed Virgin that within the week he would seriously settle the affair of his conscience.

Rising, he went back to his family, but soon he retired again, went on his knees in a recess near his bed, weeping and praying, and finished by promising Our Blessed Mother not to wait a week but to attend to it the very next day.

Immediately he wrote the following note to Mr. Letaille:

"Most dear friend: I have to speak to you about many things; and if you could give me a few hours tomorrow afternoon, I would consider it a great favor. I made a promise to our good Mother, I prayed hard to Her yesterday and am most anxious to see you about it. Goodbye, pray for me, I need it so much! It is in your house I should like to see you; here my emotion would be too great.

Sincerely Yours,  
Copin."

What a sudden and truly miraculous change! That man, usually so cold, so matter of fact, so far from any religious practice, now weeps, prays, promises Mary not to put off his reconciliation with God, and writes to his friend to declare himself vanquished!

On receiving this note, Saturday morning, October 1, Mr. Letaille could not control his joy; he sent the note immediately to Sister Grand, adding to it the following lines. "Dear Sister: This morning on returning from Mass, I received a very consoling letter from our poor dear

patient. Our good Immaculate Mother came to his help. I am sending it to you that you may see for yourself. How edified I am by his humility and confidence! 'I made a promise to our good Mother.' ... This is the first time, as far as I can remember, that he made use of this appellation in speaking of the Blessed Virgin. I do not know as yet what this promise is ... I went right away to see our dear pastor (of Saint-Severin's) Father Hanicle and gave him a general account of this sad story, showing him the enclosed note. He will come at half-past three. Perhaps Mr. Copin will still be there. We place everything in the hands of our good Immaculate Mother. It makes me happy to see that it happens on a Saturday and the eve of the Feast of the Holy Angels, to whom I am going to begin a novena for him tomorrow. I wrote to Father Desgenettes in order to recommend him to the special prayers of the Archconfraternity; and with the help of our good Mother, I shall go tomorrow evening to pray at the shrine of Her Immaculate Heart. I know that it is needless to ask you to think of us from noon until four o'clock, as I know full well the extent of your charity for him and for us. Help us, Sister, we beg you so much. Will you kindly tell this to Father Aladel and keep the note for me?"

That very day, in fact, Mr. Copin, bracing himself up against his weakness, was able to call on Mr. Letaille to tell him about his sudden conversion and the promise he made to the Blessed Virgin. The two friends fell into each other's arms. "The time of discussion was over," said Mr. Letaille, "we agreed in humbling ourselves and thanking God." And the pastor of Saint-Severin who arrived could begin hearing the Confession of the happy convert; of which event Mr. Letaille hastened to inform good Sister Grand: "My dear Sister," said he, "our good Mother has triumphed! Alleluia! The poor sick man just went to Confession to Father Hanicle, from four until five o'clock. It was the Green Scapular that conquered him." [It will

be noted that Mr. Copin was unusually scrupulous in his conscience and that the good Father went to extreme lengths to accommodate his scruples.]

And Sister Grand answered October 2: "How good Mary is! How powerful! How liberal! How merciful! ... How we thank you for telling us the good news! We are so interested in it! Tell the happy patient so, while awaiting the time when we may call on him ourselves, October 4, to rejoice with him and express our happiness ... The demon is overcome! But what a triumph! and what a feast must be held in the heavenly home! All the Angels are celebrating this longed-for return. All sing 'Glory to God, love to the Divine Mother.' And we too, let us not weary returning thanks, especially by greater fidelity and fervor."

On the same day, she also imparted her joy to Father Aladel: "Father, how happy I am at this new triumph of our powerful Mother! The poor patient is to continue his Confession tomorrow (Monday evening, October 3) Sister Henriette and I will go to see him on Tuesday (October 4), and I dare hope that you will have the charity to go there also on one of these days ... These are good beginnings to recommend the new Scapular ... ! This first trial is well calculated to encourage us ... How evident it is that Heaven is blessing it and how true has the revelation proved itself to be ... As a consequence I do love that Green Scapular. But especially do I love Mary, our good Mother, who is giving us this new pledge of Her inexhaustible Love. Yes, indeed! In Heaven, there must be a great feast at the conversion of a sinner. I can well feel this by the almost excessive joy which I experience."

On the Tuesday following, October 4, the patient received the visit of Sister Grand and the day after, on Wednesday the 5th, that of Father Aladel, who

joyfully convinced himself of the reality of this surprising and sudden conversion.

However, Mr. Copin had not yet ended his Confession which had already required two interviews. It was only on Monday, October 17, that he received absolution and on the next day, Tuesday the 18th, feast of Saint Luke, he made at the Church of Saint-Severin his first and last Communion. Here is an account of it by Mr. Letaille, given to Sister Grand the very day of this happy Communion:

"My dear Sister, I am sending you this note to ask you to help us to thank Our Immaculate Mother, for the protection She never ceases to show us.

"Everything went well. Our dear patient has been somewhat tried but I do hope that with the help of God this will make him much the stronger.

"Yesterday, Monday, Father Hanicle (the Pastor of Saint-Severin's) as he intended to come to hear his Confession, had to go to the ministry and returned only at nine p.m. Our poor sick man waited for him patiently, went to Confession at nine o'clock and then returned home.

"The next day, that is to say, this morning, he had to undergo a fast that was extremely difficult for him, considering his condition. He had to abstain from every drink, lozenge, etc., from midnight until after eight o'clock.

"This morning, exactly at eight o'clock, he came with his wife to Saint-Severin's and I arrived with my mother. He was very weak; but you know how brave he is. As it was somewhat cold, we took him to the sacristy to warm himself, while waiting for the priest, who was not long coming. He had a few scruples of conscience which he wanted to submit to

Father but they could not have been much for it did not look as if Father gave him absolution.

"After that we went to the altar of Our Lady of Holy Hope. We followed him, the four of us he, his wife, my mother and I united in one same thought, in one same sentiment.

"To spare him every subject of confusion, I told him to do everything he would see me do, and you may believe I kept him sitting as much as possible.

"At last, the moment of Communion arrived, and under the protection of our good Immaculate Mother he received our dear Master! Praised and adored be at all times the Most Holy Sacrament of love, and blessed be forever the purity and Immaculate Conception of our good Mother! Amen! Oh! my dear Sister, how good God is... ! And Our Blessed Mother, too!

"After the last Gospel, I sat with him to help him make his thanksgiving; when our dear Lord Who just now had reassumed His rights over our poor hearts, willed by a magnanimous gesture to take us all together to Himself. How welcome to me was the thought with which he then inspired Father; for as I am thinking it over, it seems to me as if Our Lord wished thus to bind us to Him before everybody. This is how it happened.

"At the end of the Mass, before leaving the altar, Father stopped, recollected his thoughts for a moment, then turning around, he said aloud: 'My brethren, I spoke to you of an elderly gentleman whose conversion we obtained, together with that of his wife, by our prayers to Our Lady of Hope. I had asked you to pray in order to draw down the

graces of heaven on his First Communion which he had not as yet had the happiness of making. He made it at this Mass, under the protection of Saint Luke who, as you know was a physician; this is a good omen. We asked and obtained by our prayers the cure of his soul. Let us now ask of Our Lady of Hope, Refuge of the hopeless, the cure of his body, under the patronage of Saint Luke. Let us for that intention say a Pater and an Ave {an Our Father and a Hail Mary}.'

"After that, Father knelt down and we answered the prayers which he said aloud ... ! O! how I wished you had been there! You would have been so happy ... !"

What were the sentiments of the happy convert at the moment when Our Lord, coming to him in Holy Communion, took possession of his soul? We learn it by a letter of Sister Grand to Father Aladel, dated Saturday, October 22:

"Last Thursday I went to see that poor patient, to congratulate him for the great grace of his First Communion. What a sweet impression I carried away from this visit! If it were possible that I could doubt the infinite goodness of God, I confess that I would there have found incontestable proofs of it ...

"Sister Pineau was with me. We found Mr. Copin in bed, very weak, but calm and perfectly resigned.

"As I expressed the anxiety which I had felt on the day of his Communion at the thought that it would be very hard for him to stand the fatigue of waiting until morning, followed by the long stay in the Church, he answered:

'No, Sister, I was not tired that day. On the

contrary, I went to bed at eight o'clock in the evening and the whole day was spent in the sensation of my happiness. In the morning, I had something that worried me, and, as I wished to prepare calmly for this action, I wanted to see Father Hanicle once more to settle it. He soothed me by saying that I had already confessed it.

'I feared lest I should be very cold and yet I could prepare myself better than I had dared to expect. And afterwards, all the remainder of the day I felt too happy. You see it was something so overpowering that it was a case of telling our dear Lord it is enough. I could not bear so much, I thought I was gone; nevertheless I was calm and peaceful, saying to myself that I ought to accept that consolation, not for its own sake, but for the precious memory of it that would remain with me. I was so full of my happiness that it seems to me I could not have spoken of anything else ... I was wishing that everybody would love God, that everybody would come to seek Him here in Holy Communion, and I so much regretted not having loved Him sooner!

'When I found myself alone, closing my eyes, I let my tears flow, and my wife inquired if I had had some sorrow. I could give her no other answer except that my tears were from an excess of happiness and if it should continue, my heart must burst, as it could bear no more ... But now, Sister, all is passed, and of that great happiness nothing remains but the memory. I feel again today, as well as yesterday, dry and cold, yet though our dear Lord should seem to abandon me a little, how could I complain, I who for so long a time had abandoned Him.'

"I then told him that very likely Our Lord intended by these moments of sensible grace, to strengthen his faith and relieve him forever of the doubts which had so painfully affected him since his conversion, to make him realize by these lights and consolations that He is truly hidden in the Sacrament of Love. 'Oh! yes, Sister,' he replied, 'that is indeed what I was clearly given to know and to understand.'

"I was wishing, Father, you could witness as I did, the sweet peace with which he spoke of the graces received on that beautiful day. With what emotion he recalled them!

"In presence of such sentiments, and contrasting them with those that animated Mr. Copin a few days ago, one cannot help considering such a change as humanly inexplicable, as a real miracle of grace."

That Communion, as well made, imparted to him a strength and courage that never left him during the few days he had still to spend on earth.

"I remember," related Mr. Letaille, "that when he finished his thanksgiving, he reached me his hand saying: 'Now I have received enough to last to the end; I ask for nothing more.' He felt that henceforth it would be his turn to give.

"His strength returned a little at first; but soon he had to confine himself again to his room and bed, without ever interrupting his work or the little practices of piety he had embraced. He always received his relatives and friends calmly and there was in his greeting something more cordial and affectionate than before his conversion; he let them see without affectation that he was using the rosary which never left him, as well as the Green Scapular that hung on his breast. He spoke to them with humility, but



also with firmness, of his conversion, which he considered the greatest good fortune of his life.

“At last the end of his suffering came, for he did suffer greatly, but he knew how to conceal his pain with great fortitude. He liked especially to reassure his wife by assuming a cheerful countenance. As he judged her too weak to assist at his death, he begged me to keep her at a distance, and he bade her farewell in a note which he placed under the marble slab of his writing desk.

“His agony was incredibly sweet. Even then, when he could no longer hear what I said to him, with eyes riveted and face aglow, he repeated three or four times very distinctly: ‘Ah! how glad I am! Ah! how glad I am!’ Then he passed away gently.

“This is, in all simplicity, the relation of that conversion so surprising to those who knew the previous dispositions and the mental caliber of Mr. Copin, suddenly conquered and transformed by the application of that blessed Scapular. God has granted me the grace to witness other very edifying conversions but none has ever impressed me so strongly as did this one.”

**‘MARRIAGE’ TO A DIVORCEE**

It was time for classes to begin in a large High School, and all the pupils were ready and interested in the subject, except one, and where was she, she who was always on time and fully alive to the day’s work? Alas poor Noeline, (not her real name for the sake of her family’s privacy,) had a heavy little heart that morning and she was waiting to see the Sister Superior, to unburden her sorrow to the kind Sister whom she felt would help if anyone could.

“Good morning, Noeline, what can I do for you?” asked Sister.

In tears and sobs the young girl said, “Oh, Sister, my mother will die today, my mother will surely die today!”

“Now, Noeline,” Sister said, “surely your dear mother is not that ill.”

“I tell you, Sister, my mother will die of a broken heart today, because my sister is to be married to a divorced man and nothing will stop her. She has it all arranged, and they are to be married this morning. Oh, Sister, my poor mother will die!”

And the poor girl stood weeping by Sister’s side. Suddenly Sister said: “Your mother will not die nor your sister marry that man either. Take this Green Scapular home this minute, tell mother to start saying the prayer: ‘Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death’ and to say it over and over and not to stop, and I tell you that man will not marry your sister. Hasten on now, and tell mother this and to say the prayer with confidence in Blessed Mother, and all will be well.”

Poor Noeline started on the way home and did as she was told. The sorrow stricken mother received Sister’s message and with a heavy heart, but as one clutching at a last straw, she began the hours of prayer for her poor deluded child. Surely, Mary would help in this hour of

anguish!

The morning dragged on, the mother prayed, and Sister Superior too, and her students implored Blessed Mother for 'something very urgent that morning'; and all waited almost breathlessly for the outcome.

Early the next morning Noeline arrived in school, but oh, with what a different feeling. No, her sister did not marry that man as planned on the previous day, and this she hastened to impart to Sister Superior. With animation she came to tell Sister that the man who was in the army and who was permitted to have the day off for the marriage, when he came and saw how heartbroken the girl's mother was, said to his intended bride, "We had better wait, I could not go through this with your mother feeling as she does, let us wait a short while and see if she will not get over this and give her consent." What a surprise; what a moment of intense relief! Yes, the Blessed Mother was doing Her work and would continue to shield Her child who had been so faithful to Her in days gone by. So the marriage was put off indefinitely. However, it was decided between the couple that if the groom-to-be could get a furlough, they would be married, hoping by this time the mother would be reconciled. Sister urged the girl to tell her mother to continue the prayer and she knew Our Blessed Lady would not let that marriage take place. The prayer was answered. Just a few days before the furlough, all leaves of absence were withdrawn, that division of men ordered to start for parts unknown (in fact it was to Indochina) and all communications between the man and the girl were broken off. Thus, did Mary show Her power and reward the confidence of Her humble servants who confided in Her.

**TWO CONVERSION STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVES**

A patient was entered in the hospital as a Protestant and was operated on. A short time before she was to be discharged, the patients in the room with her received the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion. One day she remarked that she was a Catholic and had been brought up in a Catholic orphanage till she was almost twelve years of age. Then she had gone out to work in a good family. Later, she was married out of the Church and had brought up her children as Protestants, which Church she herself had joined, about thirty-two years before. She very much resented being asked if she would not like to return to her own Faith, notwithstanding which she willingly accepted a Green Scapular. The next morning, the Sister, who had given her the scapular, came into the room and she noticed a worried look in the eyes of her patient. On inquiring if she could assist her, the woman said she would like to see a priest. Throughout the long years, she had been most unhappy for having left her childhood's faith but the friends she consulted had told her she never could return. She received the Sacraments and sent for her husband and told him she was determined henceforth to live up to the Catholic Church. 'Thanks to the Green Scapular she continues faithful to her good resolutions now she is again at her own home.' (Thus the note in the Archives.)

A young couple who were very wealthy suffered by losing all they had and were reduced to a state of great poverty. The wife was a Catholic but the husband a Protestant; their three little boys were being brought up Catholics. After they met with reverses, the mother became careless about her religion and neglected sending the children to church or catechism because "she had no fit clothing for them", and in time, all religion became a thing of the past in the family. Again, the wheels of fortune turned and they not only retrieved what they had lost but

became millionaires. The mother gradually returned to the practice of her religion, as did also two of the boys, but the oldest one did not. This was a source of continual worry to the mother who realized she was responsible before God, for, the son, now 55. He ignored all efforts to win him back. A neighbor, learning the facts, gave the mother two Green Scapulars and told her to have him wear one. He laughed and refused to do so. She then placed one on his bed and sewed the other in his suit. A few weeks later, he said to his mother: "Guess where I have been. I have been to the Jesuits to have them instruct me in my Faith and prepare me to approach the Sacraments." Shortly after, he made his First Confession and received his First Holy Communion. The family are extremely grateful to Our Lady of the Green Scapular.

### A GANGRENOUS LEG

The following incident occurred in a hospital conducted by the Sisters of Charity. A woman in one of the wards inquired for a Sister whom she had known some years before. The Sister went to see her immediately and found her suffering with a gangrenous leg and the Sister in charge of the ward gave the visitor very little hope of recovery, saying that it was well-nigh impossible to save the leg and she feared it would have to be amputated. This was sad, for the poor woman had no idea her condition was so serious. She was also a victim of diabetes. The leg was so swollen it looked more like a piece of stone than a human leg. Some days passed and as the leg was treated every day without showing any improvement, the poor patient began to be despondent about her cure.

Pitying her condition, a Sister gave her a Green Scapular, telling her to put all her confidence in Our Blessed Mother. Lovingly and with kisses, she put it around her neck. The Sister also gave her a prayer leaflet of Saint Joseph, and, since it was the month of March, she began a novena to Saint Joseph. On the nineteenth, Feast of Saint Joseph, she was much improved, for the greater part of the pain had ceased and the doctors now looked for her recovery. At the end of two weeks, she was permitted to return home, where later on two of the Sisters called to see how she was progressing. She told them her leg was getting on fine and that the attending doctor thought that he would only need to make two more visits before he discharged her. She was still wearing the Green Scapular and she said she felt sure her recovery was due to Our Lady of the Scapular. Again and again, her children, who are quite grown, expressed their appreciation of their Mother's cure and their gratitude to the Queen of Heaven.