



A Miracle?

Supernatural Celestial Phenomenon Witnessed at the Shrine to Our Lady of Dong Lu in 1995

Summer 1995



What can only be described as a supernatural phenomenon was witnessed by about 30,000 underground Catholics and the majority of the concelebrants on May 23, 1995. These faithful had gathered at the Marian Shrine of Dong Lu in the Province of Hebei, China, to attend a Holy Mass concelebrated by four underground bishops and about 110 underground priests in an open field. During the opening prayer of the Mass and the consecration of the Holy Eucharist, the congregation and the majority of the concelebrants witnessed and were comforted by a supernatural phenomenon of the sun in motion. Many compared the incident to the miracle of the sun at Fatima.

As described by several witnesses, and confirmed by the Bishop of the Diocese, the sun suddenly lost its overpowering brightness so that the people gathered could look directly at the sun with ease. The sun spun alternatively to the right and to the left. The center of the sun was covered by a white host, with the sun's circumference surrounded by multiple layers of colors. Rays of various colors emanated from the sun. With the passing of the minutes, the sun changed colors, first to yellow, then red, blue, and followed by other colors. Subsequently, people saw different apparitions in the core of the sun: a holy cross, the Holy Family, Holy Mary, and the Holy Eucharist. At times, the sun would approach the crowd and then retreat. People were heard crying out: "Holy Mother, have pity on us, your children", "Holy Mother, please forgive my sins", and other expressions.

The congregation was so transfixed at the phenomenon that when they witnessed the changing colors of the sun, the whole congregation spontaneously shouted and applauded with joy: "Yellow, red, blue..." This lasted about twenty minutes, when followed by a sudden white ray, the sky returned to normal.

This phenomenon happened on the vigil of the feastday of Mary, Helper of Christians. On this day, we pray especially to Our Lady for her miraculous victory over the evil one.

There are two nationally famous Marian shrines in China, Dong Lu in Boading and Sheshan in Shanghai. While the Shrine of Our Lady of Sheshan in Shanghai is now unfortunately controlled by the Patriotic Association, the Shrine at Dong Lu remains firmly with the loyal underground Roman Catholic Church. With the exception of the Cultural Revolution, Catholics, since 1924, have journeyed every May from all areas of China to Dong Lu to pray before the Blessed Mother of Christ.

Since the communists came to power in China, pilgrimages to Dong Lu have been unauthorized, considered an illegal religious activity. These pilgrimages often involve months of preparation under grave risks. Every obstacle has been deployed by the government to stop this annual pilgrimage. Still, tens of thousands of people braved the physical abuses, roadblocks, and other restrictions to pay their respects. During May, all roads leading to Dong Lu were blocked by the government. Tickets for all modes of public transport to Dong Lu and neighboring towns were selectively sold to only officially deemed non-Catholics. Those caught driving to Dong Lu would have their driver's license revoked. Yet, multitudes of loyal underground Catholics, over 100,000 in 1995, arrived at Dong Lu.

The Roman Catholic Church is loyal to the Pope, and has been persecuted by the Chinese Communist government and forced to go underground since 1949. These persecutions still continue today. The Roman Catholic Church is illegal in China and is commonly referred to as the underground, loyal, clandestine, or suffering Roman Catholic Church.

In contrast, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (CCPA) was established by an atheistic Chinese Communist Government. It continues to reject the Pope's authority and is not recognized by the Roman Pontiff. All CCPA bishops are appointed by the Chinese Government and are ordained without the Pope's approval.

In recent years, the CCPA presented itself to the free world as the "Catholic Church in China", causing great confusion in the west while generating enormous financial support from unsuspecting, well intentioned Catholics in US. and Europe.

In union with other Roman Catholics worldwide, underground Chinese Catholics pray to Mary during the month of May. This year, well over one hundred thousand people knelt and prayed, keeping a 24-hour vigil, before the statue of Holy Mary. After 40 years of religious persecution, they could no longer control their emotions and love for

Mary. Kneeling at the feet of their mother, Mary, many cried openly and poured their hearts out. They had finally come home. They were desperate for Mary's intercession. They prayed privately such as:

"Mother of the Church and queen of China. Have pity on your children! Keep the suffering Church in China in your heart, show solicitude for our sufferings, our weaknesses, and our needs. Do not leave us. Protect and direct us so that we may not fall into the snares of the devil. Grant us the courage to continue our struggle. Dear Mother, we beg you to look after the Church in China."

It would appear that Holy Mother this year has come to comfort her children at Dong Lu, rewarding them for their enormous sacrifice and risk in taking this pilgrimage, with a spectacular, supernatural statement in the sky.

In his signed statement about this phenomenon, the underground Bishop, His Excellency Most Reverend Su Zhimin, Bishop of Baoding, Hebei, China, whose jurisdiction includes Dong Lu, expressed his belief that the Holy Mother has:

1. Manifested her great power to strengthen the faith of the pilgrims, because many of them had to overcome various immense obstacles to be at Dong Lu;
2. Reaffirmed that the Church who is allegiant to the Pope is the true Catholic Church, supported by God; and
3. Asked us to repent and return to God.