

## DEAR DEACON

June, 2022

❖ **Dear Deacon Jim,**

*I would like to know if it is true that some people have seen God, Jesus, or Mary and why some people may not see them?*

❖ **Response**

The simple answer to this question in general terms is Yes, it is true that some people have reported visions and or apparitions. However, a more specific response requires that we break this question down.

First, we are told in the Bible that no one has ever seen God the Father (John 1:18) except the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus tells us *"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father"* (John 14:7-14).

Regarding Jesus, throughout Church history, there have been numerous claims of having visions of Him. Additionally, similar claims have also been made of visions of The Blessed Virgin Mary.

The term "appearance" or "vision" has been used in different apparitions within a wide range of experiences. And its use has been different concerning Marian apparitions and visions of Jesus Christ.

Visions should also be differentiated from interior locutions. A locution is a private revelation, like an apparition, but rather than being seen it is heard or received within the person. As with all claims of private revelation, the locution must be authentic before any recognition or significance is determined.

The Catholic Church initially takes a skeptical view on a claim reported of religious visions. It is the Church's policy to require proof of the fact, since illusions and hallucinations can be common, and the influence of the evil spirit is also to be taken into account. On February 25, 1978, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) issued "Norms of the Congregation for Proceeding in Judging Alleged Apparitions and Revelations" and was approved by Pope Paul VI.

As to why some people may not see them, I can only say it is God's purpose in publicly revealing visions to emphasize some aspect of His message. These revelations constitute a call if you will of Christ and His Church. Apparitions of Mary are considered evidence of her continuing presence in the life of the Church, through which she *"cares for the brethren of her Son who still journey on earth"*.

*Deacon Jim*