

A K I T A

INTRODUCTION

In AKITA in Japan all kinds of supernatural phenomena are attributed to a wooden statue of Mary, made as a copy of the Lady of all Peoples in Amsterdam, such as light effects, sweat with a pleasant odour, human tears (101 times!), blood from the right hand, messages from an angel and miraculous healings and conversions from the statue.

Both Akita and Amsterdam were recognised as supernatural by the local bishop, respectively in 1984 by Mgr. Ito of Niigata, Japan and in 2002 by Mgr. Punt of Haarlem. Many people who believe in the Queen of all Peoples in Amsterdam therefore see this as an affirmation of the authenticity of apparitions to Ida Peerdeman.

In the Roman Catholic Church the diocesan bishop has jurisdiction concerning private revelations; therefore everything would appear to be in order. But after a thorough study of Akita from more than 20 different sources, I noticed to my amazement ever more agreements with Amsterdam, from which I could only conclude that both bishops had made the wrong decision.

This would not be the first time in recent church history. In the past even popes, bishops and saints have been misled by false apparitions, which they held to be authentic. Fortunately private revelations are not part of the contents of the faith. One must therefore be able to put this matter in perspective. As a matter of fact, both Mgr Punt and Mgr Ito point out that one is free to believe in them or not. They are certainly not infallible. Both bishops were also so unwise (with their own limited and subjective experience) to go against the recommendations of the episcopal commissions and against Rome. But let us first consider the phenomena of Akita.

REMARKABLE EVENTS IN AKITA

The port city of Akita lies in the mountains in the northwest of the largest Japanese island Honshu. In the hamlet Yuzawada of the village of Sugawa near Akita is a small convent of the Servants of the Eucharist. The founder of this secular institute is Mgr. Jan Shojiro Ito, the bishop of Niigata, who on 22 April 1984 recognised the phenomena as supernatural. In this convent has lived since 1969 Sister Agnes Sasagawa Katsuko, born in 1931, who plays the leading role in the sensational events.

She was invited by Bishop Ito himself to enter this new community, in spite of her bad health (at 19 years of age she incurred a paralysis after a failed operation). Beginning 1973 she also became deaf, because of exhaustion, and learned to lip read. On 12.,13.,14 and 24 June 1973 Sister Agnes saw rays of light coming from the tabernacle. On 28 June 1973 a painful wound formed in her left hand in the form of a cross. On 29 June 1973 she saw angels around the altar. On 6 July 1973 a woman appeared to her who said: "Fear not" (she thought that this was her guardian angel, who appeared under the appearance of her sister – an evil spirit can do this also). The

voice said among other things: "The wound in the hand of Our Blessed Lady is deeper than yours" .

When she arrived in the chapel, sister Agnes noted that the statue of Mary had indeed a bleeding wound in the palm of her right hand, also in the form of a cross! Sister Agnes now heard a voice from the statue and heard her first message: "My daughter, my novice, you have in obedience left everything to follow me. Your hearing will heal. Pray for reparation for the sins of humanity". On 27 July 1973 the voice of the angel said: "Your suffering will come to an end today". The blood which Maria has shed is for your conversion. (Sister Agnes had already been converted to Christianity before she entered the convent).

The painful wound of the Sister disappeared the same day; the wound of the statue of Mary after two months, but from that day it no longer bled. On 3 August 1973 Sister Agnes gets her second message from the statue of Mary: "My daughter, my novice, do you love the Lord? The Heavenly Father will send a great punishment to the whole of humanity. So often have I already tried with my Son to placate the wrath of the Father. Prayer, penance and brave sacrifices can help. Honour poverty, chastity and obedience. Let yourself be led by your superior". (this is the bishop).

On 29 September 1973 the wound of the statue of Mary disappeared, but now the statue proved to be covered with sweat, especially the face and neck. A wonderful fragrance of flowers surrounded the sweating statue. On 13 October 1973 came the climax with the third and last message: "My beloved daughter, as I have already said to you, if humanity does not convert itself, the Father will send a great punishment to the human race. Without any doubt it will be a terrible sentence, more terrible than Noah's flood, such as no one has ever seen. Fire will fall from the sky. Through this punishment a large part of humanity will be destroyed. The survivors will envy the dead. Pray the Rosary. The devil has penetrated the church; cardinals will rise against cardinals, bishops against bishops (cf. Garabandal - AVÉ no. 3), altars and churches will be devastated. If sins will still increase, the forgiveness of sin will stop to exist!"

Our Blessed lady also asked Sister Agnes to listen to her superior, the bishop Mgr. Ito. On 15 October 1973 the sweating statue of Mary exuded fragrance for the last time.

On 13 October 1974 Sister Agnes recovered her hearing again for a while. On 4 January 1975 the statue started to weep. This was repeated 101 times, up till 15 September 1981. There were about 500 witnesses, among which four times bishop Ito himself. The chaplain and spiritual adviser of Sister Agnes, Father Thomas Yasuda, had samples of the blood, sweat and tears of the statue of Mary examined in the universities of Akita and Gifu. The judgement was: human origin, blood group O (Which is the blood group of sister Agnes? In Civitavecchia-Italy there is also a weeping statue of Mary... of Medjugorje. The owner Fabio Gregori refuses to let his blood be examined. Here too the Italian bishop Girolamo Grillo believes in a wonder. The Vatican refuses recognition). Sister Agnes later still received messages of her guardian angel, and on 30 May 1982 her deafness healed definitively.

On Easter, 22 April 1984, Mgr. Ito published a long pastoral letter, in which he announced his resignation and explained that the inquiries *to date* did not allow the supernatural character of the events in Akita to be denied. "Consequently, in

expectation that Holy See adopts a definitive position, I do not prohibit the devotion to Our Blessed Lady of Akita. Even if Rome would give a favourable judgement, one is not obliged believe it. It concerns only a private revelation. One is only obliged to believe in the divine revelation. This contains everything what we need for our eternal salvation”.

In his declaration Mgr. Ito said that he had never before been confronted with such matters. He went to Rome for the first time in his life in 1975, and spoke there with Mgr Hamel. In 1976, he asked the archbishop of Tokio to establish a commission. This enquiry led to a negative result. In 1979, he asked the Congregation for the Faith in Rome for a second enquiry. The judgement in 1981 was again negative. Mgr. Ito addressed a further request to Rome by means of the papal nuncio in Japan. In October 1983 he went again to Rome and spoke there with three members of the Congregation for the Faith. They told him that the matter was still being investigated.

NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS AGAINST AKITA

1. Bishop Ito does not take into account the recommendations of his own Japanese commission nor those of Rome (cf. Mgr. Punt concerning ‘Amsterdam ‘).
2. The papal nuncio in Tokio, Mgr. Ambrose de Paoli, answered in 1999, to the editor of the British publication “Christian Order”, at the request of the Congregation of the Faith: " The Holy See has never granted any form of recognition to the events or messages from Akita" (the same applies to Amsterdam). This letter can be found on the Internet under: www.theotokos.org.uk/pages/unapprov/akita. This clarification was necessary because manipulators had put false declarations in the mouth of Cardinal Ratzinger (the same occurs concerning Medjugorje) ... and of Mother Angelica of the American T.V.-channel EWTN.
3. Mgr. Ito went three times to Amsterdam, and let himself be influenced by the so-called seer, Ida Peerdeman. The wooden statue in Akita happens to be a copy of the ‘Queen of all Peoples’.
4. Mgr. Ito recognised Akita just before his resignation as bishop. Afterwards one could therefore no longer call him for justification.
5. In the last message of 13 October 1973 Our Blessed Lady announces a sentence, more terrible than Noah’s flood. In Genesis 9.11 God says nevertheless: "There will never be another flood to devastate the earth".
6. Some texts from the so-called messages of Akita seem a plagiarism of the false third secret of Fatima spread in former days. Mgr. Hnilica, in his Amsterdam-Christmas letter of 2002, refers explicitly to this false third secret of Fatima in connection with Akita.
7. Other parts from the Akita-messages are plagiarisms of Garabandal (cardinals against cardinals, bishops against bishops...): cf. AVÉ no. 3.

8. Still other texts of Akita seem a plagiarism of the *Secret of Melanie* from La Salette, prohibited by the church (see AVÉ no. 4 page 88). This, among other things, is again being promoted by Fr.René Laurentin, against the Rector of La Salette and against Rome!
9. The message of Akita, namely that ‘the forgiveness of sin will cease to exist’, can in no way be maintained according to the teachings of the Catholic church. This message would imply the abolition of the Sacrament of Reconciliation which was established by Jesus Christ Himself. A skilful move by the opponent of God?
10. The Akita message that the devil had infiltrated the church seems to be a plagiarism of an earlier pronouncement of pope Paul VI (in 1972?)
11. Bishop Ito has said (see *Inside the Vatican* November 1998) that God would purify humanity before the year 2000. This has NOT happened.
12. Don Gobbi (a never recognised Italian seer - see AVÉ no. 5), also plays an important role in Akita just as in Medjugorje. In the publication *Chrétiens Magazine* of November/December 1985 (in which among other things Fr.René Laurentin propagates a lot of false apparitions), there is on page 7 a photograph of Don Gobbi (founder of the Marian Movement of Priests) standing beside Mgr Ito by the miraculous statue of Mary of Akita. As a matter of fact, the same Don Gobbi claims to have got a message from Our Blessed Lady in Akita on 15 September 1987, who said that she had already spoken in Fatima of a sentence more terrible than the flood! (sic)
13. The author of the book *Celle qui pleure au Japon – La Dame de tous les Peuples* (1985 Ed. Téqui-Paris) is a mission priest, Joseph-Marie Jacq. This supporter of Akita mentions in this book both Medjugorje (to see AVÉ no. 1) and Garabandal (see AVÉ no. 3) as well as San Damiano (see AVÉ no. 7) and Teresa Musco (see later in AVÉ) as if they were also real apparitions. And what is still more curious, he claims, just like Don Gobbi, to have received a message in Akita from Our Blessed Lady (see the French publication *L’Impartial* no. 99 from 1983 p 7)
14. In general I notice that authors as well as editors and promoters of books concerning Akita are at the same time proponents of many other, not-recognised apparitions

CONCLUSION

All the phenomena which are described at Akita have been known for a long time in the two thousand years of church history, from previous non-supernatural apparitions, which were later explained as parapsychological phenomena, human fraud, or as satanic influences. There is therefore nothing new under the Japanese sun of Akita...

There are many books and web sites which praise Akita to the high heavens. A critical evaluation is rare. The book *Faussaires the Dieu* by J. Bouflet (see AVÉ no. 1) and the web site www.theotokos.org.uk however provide a critical vision on this matter.

mark waterinckx dutch newsletter AVE march 2003