

A RESURRECTION

*Marie Savoye, Twenty-Eighth Miraculous Healing,
September 20, 1901*

1901 “*There is no hope for this little girl. I give her at most fifteen days to live.*” The doctor’s verdict coldly echoed in the hospital room. Mrs. Savoye, standing, doubled over for a moment in shock at the news. Then she straightened up and looked the doctor in the eye.

“There is hope yet,” Mrs. Savoye affirmed. “I have contacted the nursing sisters of the Lourdes hospital. Marie will take part in the next pilgrimage. She’s leaving in a few days.”

“Madam,” replied the doctor, “look at your daughter: She’s twenty-four and weighs fifty-five pounds. She’s all skin and bones! She’s been lying in this bed for six years now. She no longer has the strength to move, eat, or even speak. Not only is she suffering from infectious rheumatism, but also of cardiopathy: Her heart is affected. The fatigue of the trip will only hasten her demise... What are you hoping for, a miracle?”

“Yes!” the mother told him. “I’ve looked into it. Ever since the Blessed Sacrament processions were established, cures have been multiplying in Lourdes.”

“But Madam, these cures are the fruit of the autosuggestion of patients suffering from nervous illness,” the doctor responded. “Your daughter’s case is different: It is a strictly physical condition.”

“But there are miraculous cures, few, but there are,” she explained. “What else do you propose – to wait here, doing nothing, for her to die before my eyes?”

“I understand,” sighed the doctor. “Listen, I am not going to oppose this trip. I just wanted to guard you against excessive optimism.”

A few days later, in the violet-colored train from Cambrai, Mrs. Savoye, with a heavy heart, recalled the physician’s negative words. Marie was stretched out on a berth in one of the cars reserved for the sick. Would she survive the trip, the train’s jolts, the nurses’ handling? Mrs. Savoye doubted it. Before her, newspaper clippings were strewn, as well as the book by Dr. Boissarie, director of the Bureau of Medical Authentication, published the year before in 1900: *The Great Cures of Lourdes (Les Grandes Guérisons de Lourdes)*. In it, the doctor spoke of the phenomenal multiplication of healing cases and especially of the first eucharistic miracles. Indeed, since 1888, the daily ceremonies at the grotto had been followed by a great eucharistic benediction in which the priests in procession showed the Blessed Sacrament to the sick on their stretchers near the fountains and pools. The crowd of pilgrims would invoke the Lord by repeating the words of the Gospel: “*Lord, save me! Lord, help me! Jesus, son of David, have pity on us!..*” Astounding miracles had already taken place, like the case of a young twenty-two-year-old woman, Nina Kin, who had one leg burned to the nerves by an acid spill; she had arisen from her stretcher as the Eucharist went by. Twenty-two was nearly Marie’s age, and Mrs. Savoye wanted to hope still. As the northern plains streamed by outside the dull windows, she prayed amid the din of the train’s progress.

As they arrived in Lourdes, Marie’s state was critical. Pale and voiceless, she was spitting up blood. Bloodless, bones protruding,

motionless – she already looked like a corpse. Even the doctors dared not touch her! Mrs. Savoye answered questions mechanically: “No, she has not gotten up from bed in six years.” “No, she takes no solid foods, she doesn’t have the strength.” “No, she doesn’t have tuberculosis, but she spits up blood because of the lesion in her heart.” “Yes, she also suffers from a large sore on her back, a scab due to lack of exercise.” One of the physicians, Dr. Perisson, told her that because she was in such a state, Marie absolutely could not be undressed and dipped into the pools. On the other hand, she would be able to participate in the eucharistic procession at the grotto the following day.

On September 20, 1901, at nine o’clock in the morning, Marie was placed in front of the grotto on her stretcher. Her mother was at her side. She had heard everything these last few days: The doctors had predicted her daughter’s imminent death at least ten times. She also knew that Marie, too, had heard them. Yet her drawn little face did not betray fear, but only a sort of intense concentration. Perhaps she continued to believe in all this. Who knows? Mrs. Savoye closed her eyes to pray and clutched the stretcher’s handles with all her strength. An acclamation made her open her eyes again. Some of the sick lifted themselves up on their stretchers, eyes wide open. Then came the priests. One of them, in the middle under a canopy, showed the Blessed Sacrament to the crowd. He walked by each of the sick, elevating the body of Christ. The priest was coming closer. Suddenly, he was there, in front of Marie’s stretcher, and he elevated the host. Mrs. Savoye shook, a fog covered her eyes, yet she saw... yes, she saw all that took place then, as if in slow motion... the shudder, minute at first, under the stretcher’s sheets... then, a terrible convulsion: Her daughter’s body was violently hurled forward, bounding like a spring, and she fell on her knees at the foot of the stretcher, three feet away. Her frail figure got up and walked – yes, walked – toward the priest without any support. And her voice,

her lovely youthful voice that she hadn't heard for so many years, said: "*I am healed.*"

Mrs. Savoye dashed to her daughter. Marie turned around and took her hands: "*I am healed!*" The crowd cheered; the priest made the sign of the cross. Marie joined the procession.

Some hours later, she entered the door of the Bureau of Medical Authentication on her own two feet. The doctors stared at her, dumbfounded. Her vital functions seemed wholly restored. To be sure, she was weak, pale, and thin, but a new fire shined in her eyes. "*This is no miracle, it's a resurrection!*" exclaimed Perisson.

In a few months, Marie would grow three inches and gain seventy-seven pounds. The doctors who examined her in her native Nord concluded one after the other that this was *a complete and definitive healing attributable to no natural cause*. Seven years later, Marie was an active young woman, dedicated to the sick in order to provide them with the same care she had received during her own long illness. On August 15, 1908, Archbishop Delamaire of Cambrai rendered his canonical judgment after examination and investigation: Marie Savoye was declared miraculously healed.



HAIL MARY, FULL OF GRACE.
THE LORD IS WITH THEE.