

Story of Charles Anthony Francis Untz's Birth into Eternal Life

By Ellen Untz

This evening I am going to share with you the story of my son Charles' birth into eternal life. First I will relate to you the human side and then the incredible miraculous side.

“Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.” I will show you how you should not take these words lightly. I have a much greater appreciation of how this seemingly simple prayer may be answered.

On the morning of Charles' birth into eternal life, we had completed our farm chores and eaten breakfast and Charles had gone into his office to start some schoolwork. I was tutoring my other son Bryant. About quarter to nine, Charles came out his office to leave to go to work at the turkey farm across the street. He had a different look on his face, and something told me not to speak to him. I always said the Mommy things, I love you, have fun at the turkey farm, watch the road but this time something held me back. I struggled inwardly the whole time as he went out the door.

We heard emergency sirens and they seemed to stop at our house. I went to our front door to look out and all I saw was an empty ditch. However, I know now that Charles was there, the car that hit him, the emergency vehicles and the bystanders. I went back upstairs and Bryant and I prayed for those in the accident. And then continued the schoolwork.

A police officer came to our door and asked if we had seen anything. She said there had been an accident and wondered if we had seen anything. She wasn't supposed to go door to door, but something had told her to come to my door. Charles hadn't any ID on him. I ran across the street to the turkey farm in hope that he was there. Charles had already been transported. I started to pray Hail Marys. His employer met me on the driveway and said Charles hadn't checked in for work. I asked him to double check while I ran back home. The police offered to call a priest, and I asked them to call Epiphany Catholic Church and request a priest to come to the hospital. I left Bryant at home and the Officer drove me to the hospital.

When we got to the hospital, the doctors didn't want to let us in, but I saw a foot and a hand and said I was 90% sure it was Charles. Then I asked if they had found a Benedictine crucifix and brown scapular, which they handed me. It was Charles. As I watched, Charles was struggling for breath as one on a crucifix does. However, all I felt was calm acceptance, there was no mad dash to storm heaven for a miracle. I asked the officer to bring Bryant to the hospital for me and to contact the grandparents, and I called

my husband. All I got was his answering machine. I hated to leave that kind of message, but I did. I kept calling back in hopes I would catch him before he heard the message. Fr. Tom Wilson arrived. I knelt by Charles' bed as Fr. Tom administered last rites. Charles had not regained consciousness since he was hit.

As we waited for word from the doctors, I reminisced with Fr. Tom about Charles and I remember saying that I knew he was a gift from God, that he was God's and that he was only on loan to me.

Steve and Bryant arrived. Charles died with all of his family and Fr. Tom around him. We said our good byes.

When we arrived home, I wasn't sure I could continue to live in the house that looked out upon the accident scene since it happened right in our front yard. I walked the ditch. I didn't know any details of the accident at this point, but I couldn't find a blood spot. The next day, I looked again and found nothing.

That is the human side of the story. Now I want to share with you the incredible God instances.

Why didn't I say I love you to Charles the last time I could have? Who robbed me of this? I prayed about this. One day one of my friends offhandedly mentioned to me she saw Charles at Mass on the Monday he died. I told her he didn't go that day, since because of the farm chores we only go on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday to the 6:30 am. Monday the Mass is at 8:20 am. I passed it off as she made an error, but continued to pray about it. Then it dawned on me. I contacted her to grill her for information. How did she know it was that Monday, March 20? The she shared her incredible story. She was lector for that Mass. She always prepares for reading by asking the Saint of the Day to help. Monday, March 20, 2000 was unusual because St. Joseph's Feast Day was moved from March 19th to March 20th because it had fallen on Sunday. She looked up as she was reading the scripture and she saw Charles engrossed in the word, totally intent, and immersed. I had my answer. Charles had been given the gift of bilocation. If I had spoken to him, I would have robbed him of this miraculous gift. And it doesn't stop here. With the timing of the accident, He would have received Jesus in the Eucharist at Epiphany, then been in heaven with Jesus and Mary, brought there by Saint Joseph her spouse. Charles never was there by the side of the road. He was at Epiphany then in heaven. Only the empty shell was hit by the car.

The next miracle is the fact I saw nothing in the ditch outside our home. How is this possible? One of the first things I checked later was if I could see the area involved from

the window I looked out. The answer is yes, I should have seen everything. However, if I had been by Charles in the ditch, God would not have been able to touch others as He did. I am convinced that Charles, already in heaven, asked Mary to spare me. Mary then blocked my view.

The next miracle is the police officer coming to my door. This was against police procedure. She was breaking the rules. She listened to God. I wrote a thank you to her after the funeral to let her know what her actions meant to us. Charles would have died alone as John Doe at the hospital. We would not have suspected anything was wrong until the afternoon. Her actions allowed Charles' family to be with him (something we needed more than he did) as well as allowing time for Fr. Tom to administer last rites – once again something God had already taken care of through his bilocation to Mass and the reception of the Eucharist now viaticum. An interesting side note is that I heard from the officer one year after Charles' death. She said that she touched Charles' hand as he was put in the ambulance and she felt God's presence. It changed her life both personally and professionally.

Another miracle is the blood spot. After the accident, our home filled up with family coming for the funeral. We had moved from Vermont in December of 1996, so friends and Priests from New England were here too. We had 27 people staying at the house. On Wednesday, the doorbell rang. A gentleman named Dan identified himself and wanted to let us know he came upon Charles' accident. He saw everyone was with the driver who was OK, but no one was in the ditch with Charles. He went to Charles, turned him over and held his hand. He wanted us to know, parent to parent, that our son was not alone at that time. Charles had landed on his face, and there were many scrapes. In this day of fear to touch someone that is bleeding this was truly a heroic act. He said that it was not horrible, but there was such an intense feeling of the presence of God. We visited with Dan a year later and he stated then that going by our house on the way to work is a happy corner, it brings back happy thoughts! I asked Dan to show me where Charles had landed. He took us to the spot. There was a blood spot a foot in diameter. I was not supposed to see it until Dan showed it to me. An interesting aside to this is that no grass has grown on that spot for two summers.

Before I learned of Charles' bilocation, I prayed to know if he had suffered. One day I received a call from a woman who had been hit by a bus. She shared how you don't feel a thing. She said she had been spiritually prompted to call and didn't know if it helped me.

The fact that Fr. Tom Wilson was available at the time we needed him and that Fr. Reiser, who took the call deferred to Fr. Tom since he knew we were closer to him.

One of Charles' EMT's had been an EMT for 20 years and had always wanted to deliver a baby. On April 16, the Feast Day of St Bernadette Soubirous (date of the first apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes to St. Bernadette) almost a month after Charles' death – 200 feet West of where Charles was hit (in the opposite direction of where Charles landed)—Nicolas was born—delivered by Charles' EMT. The police officers were so struck by the coincidence, that they came to my door to tell me about Nicolas' birth the following night. It is also interesting that I am recounting this story on the Feast of St. Nicholas. (I gave this talk to the St. John Vianney Seminarians on December 6, 2001.)

The actual details of the accident became clearer months later when we asked for details. Charles was near our mailbox walking to work in the breakdown lane near the dirt edge. He was not crossing the road. The breakdown lane is as wide as the travel lane along the front of our home. The car that hit him missed the curve in the road and swerved out of the travel lane into the breakdown lane just before our driveway and hit Charles from behind. Charles was carried/thrown for 200 feet before he landed in the ditch. The car was travelling at least 45 mph yet Charles suffered no broken bones. The driver had smoked Marijuana the night before and was driving illegally. He had a limited license due to a DWI. He was allowed to drive to and from work only which he was not doing at the time of the accident. But once again there are interesting God Instances. The driver lived in St. Francis. His birthday is St. Francis' feast day and Charles' confirmation name is St. Francis. It all shows how God is in control.

These are the miracles of that day that have been revealed to us thus far. Charles continues to work in people's lives, whether or not they knew him here on earth. There have been spiritual and physical healings through his intercession. Ask for his intercession, he will help you to deepen your relationship with Jesus and Mary.

Charles was a normal active teenager. He enjoyed biking, horseback riding, farm work, electrical work, construction work, electronics, and computers. He read science fiction and liked Star Wars. He was a Boy Scout and earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He was very quiet and didn't talk much. Public speaking was not his thing. Now he indirectly, and God have me talking for him. Charles said yes to God. He loved to spend time in adoration, he would say up all night with Jesus on Youth 2000 retreats when we lived in Vermont. His face was always so radiant when he came back from retreats. Retreats are a wonderful way to get your battery recharged and your resolve strengthened. He loved to read saint's biographies. Consequently, I've done my best to keep Tan Publishing in business. He prayed the Liturgy of the Hours, the prayer of the church, daily. He had a particular devotion to Mary. He designed his own brown scapular on my embroidery machine and put My Lady on one side and Mary with 12 stars on the other. It is interesting to note that he felt so close to Mary to claim her as his own, My Lady. After

his death, I was looking for something in his room and came across an envelope addressed to Mary. I opened it and there was a Mother's Day card to Mary! He wanted only to do God's will. God will work powerfully in your life if you only let Him in.

You, too, can become a saint through your normal life. Not all of you will be called to heaven at 18 years of age, but all of you have a job to do—a very important one that only you can do. So be open and sometimes you'll have to do something that would normally be hard but when God asks you to do it you'll find an incredible inner strength that will make the job seem easy.

God has given you someone your own age to pray to and ask for help. This is now Charles' job. I believe part of Charles' job was to go to heaven to be a role model as well as available to help show you the way. He knows the struggles that a teenage goes through today. Many intercessory prayers have been answered – from help with tests to learning to pray, to conversion to the faith, to the healing of a gangrenous arm that was to be amputated.

Put Charles to work for yourselves. This is the job God has given him – to help all that ask to know, love, and serve Jesus, through Mary and become saints.