

Het wonder van Baltic

Zuster Mary Tharsilla werd in 1852 als Mary Agnes Smith in Liverpool geboren. In 1870 trad zij in bij de *Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of Mercy*. Dat is de Nederlandse Congregatie van de *Zusters van Liefde van Onze Lieve Vrouw, Moeder van Barmhartigheid*, opgericht in Tilburg in 1832. Zij was 18 jaar. Vier jaar later, 22 jaar oud, was zij samen met vier andere zusters, een van de eerste zusters die in september 1874 naar Amerika ging. Een paar weken later, oktober 1874, kwam zij in Baltic aan waar zij les ging geven. Daar werd zij na verloop van tijd, hoofd van de school.



In mei 1878 werd het volgende in de boeken genoteerd:

May 31, 78 was a day of receiving and blessing for Baltic on account of Sr. Tharsilla's thumb, miraculously cured. This happening was thus described in the Annale of our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Last April one of the Sisters accidentally broke the second joint of her right thumb. The doctors set it and kept it bandaged for about ten day. It was very painful and rendered the Sister quite incapable of writing, playing, etc. though she was still able to preside the class. When the bandages were removed the sinews were so contracted, though the broken bone had been well set, that the Sister could not move her thumb. She discovered too that it was paralyzed.

At the next visit the doctor seeing that Sister was quite powerless to move the thumb took hold of it and by force brought it quite close to the hand. The pain caused by this was to great that our patient fainted. When the pressure was removed the thumb returned to its former position and though afterwards by often bringing it in contact with the hand, it caused no pain, still there seemed to be less probability of its cure then at first as the whole thumb had become paralyzed. Our anxiety for our poor Sister and our desire that she should be cured became so ardent that seeing no chance of succeeding by human means, we turned to an unfailing source of compassion namely the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart was approaching and through her powerful

intercession we determined to seek our Sister's cure. We began a novena to Our Lady promising that if the favor we solicited was granted before the first of June, we would do all in our power to extend this Association. On the third day of the novena, Sister felt sensation in part of the thumb which circumstance greatly increased confidence. No further change took place and we concluded the novena on the feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart by a general Communion: Holy Mass was also celebrated for the same intention. No visible response was granted to our prayer but our confidence was not yet diminished because we knew our Pleaser in Heaven could obtain more favors than the one we were asking.

The novena was finished but the day itself had not come to a close and so we still kept hoping on. School time came and Sister had to go to her class with but little courage.

For seven weeks she had not been able to hold a pen and another Sister had to write exercise on the blackboard for her. She had hoped to be cured but now, feeling the thumb was just as dead as before. The thought that it was not God's will that she should be cured so she resigned herself perfectly to her class duties. Suddenly she felt a warm glow rush through her hand and arms in an instant she could move the long immovable thumb. We cannot describe our joy and gratitude, the cure seemed incredible and it was with a deep feeling of gratitude that we returned thanks to God and to our Lady of the Sacred Heart. When Sister recovered from the joy and surprise and the feeling of awe which she had experienced the effect of that invincible power which nothing can resist had partly passed away, she wrote a sentence on the blackboard to convince the children that the cure was complete. On the same day Sister wrote a letter and since then can use her hand just as well as if it had never met with an accident.



Tot zover wat er over dit wonder in de annalen staat.

Zuster Tharsilla bleef tot 1880 in Willimantic, daarna vertrok zij voor Pantasaph (augustus 1904), Willimantic (juni 1906), Pantasaph (oktober 1920), Dartford in Engeland (januari 1928) en terug naar Pantasaph juli 1931 waar zij op 11 juni 1932 overleed.

Bron: Generaal Archief van de Congregatie Zusters van Liefde in Tilburg.