

## My Unificationist Memoirs Chapter 99

J. Scharfen  
October 19, 2021



### The Daughters of God in Vietnam

One of the great blessings of my life has been to associate with people who, with little or nothing, have lived lives of dedication and sacrificial love in service to others. Often, as I measure myself against their standard, I feel utterly lacking in devotion to Heaven. On MFT, our Japanese Team Mothers embodied this standard and inspired me to go beyond myself time and again as I struggled to keep up. On the other side, I always met what I now know to be the Maternal Heart of God. I believe my wife benefits from this devotion--and the capacity that has been drawn from me by my lived experience with our Japanese sisters--to see the Feminine Divine.



The feminists and postmodernists write disparagingly of the "male gaze," as one that diminishes and sexualizes the feminine. I understand their reaction as a phenomenon of the Last Days. Though these thinkers and writers dip their words in the deep well of historical resentment, their refusal to accept the status quo, their identification of the "male gaze" as an expression of sexual exploitation, reveal an unconscious sensitivity to the feelings of Heaven in the Era of True Mother. The inclinations and habits of the secular and fallen world need no longer be tolerated. We need to see the Maternal Face of God in our mothers, sisters, wives, daughters, friends, and strangers. In the universe of embodied positivity and negativity, of plus and minus, masculine and feminine, how we gaze upon the "other" exposes the state of our heart and determines the dividing line between Heaven and Hell. The unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit, noted by Jesus in the gospels, may be easier to commit than we have heretofore imagined--it may be hardwired into the "male gaze" so characteristic

of our dysfunctional world.

Knowing the origins of human alienation from God, Jesus called his followers to a chastity that extended

the expectations of sexual purity much farther and deeper than simply refraining from adultery. We are to check not only the inclinations of our eyes but also the movements of our hearts. Sadly, as we know, the commandment "not to eat the fruit" became a seemingly unending imperative with the execution of Jesus on the cross. Since Jesus died without a bride, the most fervent followers also chose the celibate path of life as brothers, priests, or nuns. They sought this lonely course to fully and completely separate from the sin characteristic of "the world." As we live in this age of transition, many faithful and celibate souls remain on this Christian path, living out their vows while being committed to the work of Heaven. If Christianity had accepted our True Father at the end of WWII, these would have been those chosen sons and daughters first invited to the Marriage of the Lamb.



Prior to the worldwide COVID lockdown, each year I would take my students to the Central Highlands of Vietnam to work with the Catholic sisters in a leprosy community. Though our cultures and circumstances are literally "worlds apart," our shared love for God and willingness to serve the poor, allow a closeness in heart between us we find difficult to feel elsewhere. There are more than 600 sisters, the Daughters of Charity of Vietnam, working in 65 communities throughout the country. Their order was established in Vietnam in 1928 with the mission to serve the poor. They trace their call to Matthew 25:35-40:35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

It has been my experience that the sisters have come to embody these words of Jesus as their charism and express it daily with love. The sisters' work covers a broad range of ministries and includes serving the poor and those marginalized by diseases such as leprosy, tuberculosis, or HIV, educating street children (many of them ethnic minorities), educating children with disabilities, and caring for orphans and those abandoned by their parents due to extreme poverty.

When I am with them, I feel the Maternal Love of God. Not only are they "sisters" in the sense of their religious consecration to God, but they are my sisters in the most true sense of the word. We share the same heart. I do not often find this heart in the world, almost never outside of our movement. When I do, I savor the discovery.



The sisters in Di Linh have decided they want to learn English. Two evenings a week, (5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time is 7:00 a.m. the following morning in Vietnam), we meet via FaceTime and practice conversational skills. In the course of these sessions, I will begin to introduce a more nuanced understanding of the Heart of God and the reality of Jesus. Because of the sister's vows and their institutional commitment, I recognize this will inevitably be a long term project. Many times in the past, when witnessing to our faith, I have been too hurried--to the detriment of those with whom I spoke. In this regard, I must repent. If these sisters are precious to me, how much more are they precious to God? Although I feel external pressure to be direct, God has entrusted the lives of His daughters to me and I must trust my own heart and inclinations. I will exercise care. In Micah 6:8, Heaven tells us "To act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God." In the course of our relationship, I have many times felt the Heart of Our Heavenly Parent, how She longed to reveal Herself and renew the face of the earth. Yet, our Heavenly Mother has spoken to us in a manner that matched our understanding and respected our spiritual condition, even though She and all of Heaven felt tremendous spiritual urgency. She has loved us tenderly. I will do the same. I will bear the burden and the pressure and release the water of truth and life and love, drop by drop, until the banks will hold a stream and then a torrent. After all, these Daughters of Charity are first and foremost the beloved Daughters of God.

