



Edel Quinn

Venerable

One day in 1937 a Dutch priest was driving an Irish girl to a Legion of Mary meeting some miles from his mission in Africa. They came to a river in such flood that the bridge across it could not even be seen. He was about to turn back when the girl cried out, "Oh Father, please go on, I'm sure Our Lady will protect us". He was aghast but found he couldn't resist such faith. Some men standing by formed a human chain to see if the bridge was still there.

It was, so he drove on blindly. The water flooded the engine and plugs but the impetus carried the car across and up an incline at the far side. He dried the plugs and tried the starter. The car got going and they were in time for the meeting. The girl was Edel Quinn and the incident is typical of her story. In 1936 she had been sent from Dublin to establish the Legion in East and Central Africa.

The difficulties were enormous but she met every challenge with unwavering faith and courage. When others faltered her invariable response was, "Why can't we trust Our Lady?" or "Our Lady will see after things". For nearly eight years, her health steadily declining, she worked over the vast territories committed to her. Hundreds of Legion praesidia and many higher councils were set up on an enduring basis. As a result, thousands of Africans are engaged in the Church's work of evangelization.

At the source of all Edel's activity was her deep union with God, sustained by constant prayer. The Eucharist was the center of her life: "What a desolation life would be without the Eucharist", she wrote. Her devotion to Mary was marked by childlike trust and utter generosity. She said she could never refuse Our Lady anything she thought she wanted. Mary's rosary seemed to be always in her hand.

Edel died in Nairobi on May 12, 1944. In 1957 the Archbishop of Nairobi initiated the process for her Beatification and many witnesses were examined, mostly in Africa and Ireland. Their evidence, published by the Holy See, points not only to outstanding holiness but to holiness in its most attractive form. The words love, joy, peace appear in almost every testimony. The Vicar General of Mauritius was speaking for many when he said "I want to lay special emphasis on her constant joy; she was always smiling; she never complained; she was always at people's disposal, never stinting her time".

It is for the Holy See to pass judgement on her heroic sanctity. In the meantime, hundreds of Bishops have written to the Holy Father in support of the Cause, most of them, it is understood, stressing its special relevance for the young people of our time. Edel, in the words of a Spanish Cardinal, was "an image of the eternal youth of the Church".

On December 15, 1994 Pope John Paul II declared Edel Quinn "Venerable". One miracle attributed to her intercession is still required for her Beatification.

***Prayer for the Beatification of Edel Quinn
(Venerable Edel Quinn)***

Eternal Father, I thank you for the grace you gave to your servant, Edel Quinn, of striving to live always in the joy of your presence, for the radiant charity infused into her heart by your Holy Spirit and for the strength she drew from the Bread of Life to labour until death for the glory of Your name in loving dependence on Mary, Mother of the Church.

Confident, O Merciful Father, that her life was pleasing to you, I beg you to grant me, through her intercession, the special favour I now implore, and to make known by miracles the glory she enjoys in Heaven, so that she may be glorified also by your Church on earth, through Christ Our Lord, Amen