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## The disappeared

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.B.

The Christian Science Monitor Weekly recently reported on the plight of the disappeared: “30,000 people disappeared under Argentina’s military dictatorship in the 1970s and ’80s, and more recent estimates say 30,000 disappeared in Colombia’s decades-long internal conflict.” The same insidious evil has invaded Mexico, where “an estimated 14,000 to 45,000 people disappeared between 2006 and 2012,...” (Whitney Eulich, “Mexican president vows justice,” Oct. 20, 2014).

Forty-three students recently disappeared in Mexico’s Guerrero State. On a more personal note, the older brother of a friend disappeared from their village in Sonora. He cared for their elderly mother and vanished while returning from an errand. Almost one person a week disappears from this village and the surrounding area. There are no ransom notes, no information. Prayer and courage are needed today to help the disappeared and their families.

Prayer is a steady beam of light shining in the darkness of despair. There may be no human information or communication, but angel messages, thoughts from God, can reach human consciousness to inform and comfort. These intuitions from God, the all-knowing, divine Mind, communicate in ways that meet the human need. “Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures,” by Mary Baker Eddy, explains the nature of angels as “God’s thoughts passing to man; spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect; the inspiration of goodness, purity, and immortality, counteracting all evil, sensuality, and mortality” (p. 581).

God’s thoughts can assure us that every individual is included in God’s loving care. No one can disappear from God’s awareness or be separated from God’s love. This is because God is all-encompassing, divine Mind and perfect Love; everyone is made in His spiritual likeness to reflect God’s loving nature and is forever known to God.

In the 1840s, Mrs. Eddy had her young son taken from her without her permission. In an age when women had no legal rights concerning their children, her child was surreptitiously sent to the western United States. No amount of effort on her part could locate him. To her, he had disappeared.

I can only imagine her fervent prayers for her son and herself. Does prayer help? Yes. Prayer can reveal spiritual truths to us. Christian Science teaches that God is the Supreme Being, supreme in earth and in heaven, and that God's supremacy is something we can increasingly understand and be conscious of. God is the divine presence – universal, infinite, always present. These spiritual truths reveal God as relevant in our lives. Wherever individuals are, God is. God is present and caring for His beloved sons and beloved daughters. Each individual is held in the comforting embrace of divine Love.

Our prayers might include scriptural inspirations that have strengthened and helped those who came before us. For example, Paul, who spent years fighting oppression, once wrote, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38, 39).

What a profound revelation! I find this inspired passage particularly relevant. If the disappeared are being held alive, God is present with them to encourage and comfort. No hardship can deprive them of hope. The infinite divine Mind, God, does communicate directly to their human consciousness with precisely the practical ideas that are needed in each moment.

If those who have been taken have been killed, Paul's revelation encourages us still. God is eternal Life. Physical death cannot separate an individual from his or her eternal connection with God, Life. Life is eternal, active and perpetual. The awareness of eternal life saves individuals. One's individual life continues in divine Life and Love. Nothing can deprive individuals of their eternal salvation and divine reward.

Affirming this spiritual ideal in our own prayers can shine the Christ light of salvation into the darkness of despair. Christ is the divine message from eternal Life and Love coming to individual consciousness. Christ is present to comfort. The saving, comforting action of Christ didn't end with Jesus' ascension. Christly salvation continues today, communicating the angel

messages that touch the heart and relieve sorrow. Christ comforts with divine assurance.

In the case of Mrs. Eddy, her son was alive and years later was reunited with her. But in the interim, she had not been paralyzed by grief or despair. Her fervent prayers led her to deep scriptural study and new discoveries of God's presence, power, and all-loving, all-powerful nature. The revelations gained resulted in her becoming increasingly certain of the supremacy of God's power and grace on earth. She discovered the divine laws of Life and Love, calling her revelation Christian Science. Not only did the discovery of these spiritual laws of God inspire and comfort her, but she was also able to save and heal others. This discovery is explained in Science and Health. Carefully reading this book can help us understand God's saving grace and our eternal life as God's image in profoundly meaningful ways.

I am uniting with all those faithfully praying for the safety of the disappeared and their families. I find encouragement by affirming Paul's revelation regarding our inseparability from God's love and applying spiritual statements from Science and Health. Everyone is known to God, embraced in eternal Life. Every individual can experience eternal salvation and find comfort in God's never-ending love.