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*In certain areas, such as metropolitan New York, the same high quality soda is sold under the name COW BRAND.

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THE STRANGE MYSTERY OF THE WEEPING MADONNAS

(Continued)



Mrs. Pagona Catsounis kisses Bible held by the Rev. George Papadeas as her husband watches. Icon is circled by flowers.

as he did when he answered the first call to the Catsounis home—filled with apprehension that it could be a cruel hoax on his parishioners.

But when Father Papadeas began to examine the Catsounises' Byzantium-styled portrait, a tiny droplet appeared in the Madonna's eye and rolled down the cheek. He knew then that he had witnessed what he termed a "miracle."

Could it happen again? That was what ran through the priest's mind as he walked to the Koulis shrine and took the icon in hand to examine it. In silence, he removed the lithograph from its glass-covered frame. The bottom of the portrait was soaked, and Mrs. Koulis told the priest it got that way from the many tears the Virgin was shedding.

As Father Papadeas studied the Madonna's face closely, fresh tears reportedly welled in both Her eyes and streamed down the face. As before, Father Papadeas telephoned Archbishop Iakovos, head of the Greek Orthodox Church in North and South America, to come and see for himself.

THE ARCHBISHOP arrived at the Catsounis home after the tearing had ceased. The Catsounises and Father Papadeas had some misgivings about what the Archbishop would say, for there was no evidence then that the icon was anything but an ordinary painting.

But the Archbishop had nodded pleasantly to them as they led him to the shrine. It was like hundreds of others he had seen. Yet, he indicated later, there was something different in a spiritual sense—there was the feeling of deep faith and love, and it had spread beyond the small apartment to people thousands of miles away.

Wordlessly, the Archbishop knelt before the Catsounises' shrine. Later he declared the shrine hallowed ground and ordered the Madonna enshrined in the Catsounises' church.

He explained this decision was made not so much on the basis of whether the Madonna wept or did not weep, but rather that it was dictated by man's unquestioning faith in God's closeness and love.

Now, as he viewed the Madonna in the Koulis apartment, the Archbishop did not have to be guided by the faith of others: he saw the Madonna weep.

Then and there, the Archbishop proclaimed the occurrence a miracle and ordered the icon enshrined beside the first one in St. Paul's Church.

As the icon was taken to the church in an 80-car procession the following day—Holy Thursday—Mrs. Koulis wept openly. She couldn't help thinking of her prophetic dream of Christ on the Cross telling her: "You will see what happens on Holy Thursday."

What does it all mean? Why this phenomenon of weeping Madonnas? In the statement on page 2, Archbishop Iakovos gives his explanation of the "miracles."