

Spiritism often implies divination or magical practices; the Church for her part warns the faithful against it. Recourse to so-called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of powers or the exploitation of another's credulity" (Ibid., no. 2117; emphasis original).

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Pope John Paul II Society of Evangelists

14818 Ranchero Road

Hesperia, California, USA

Telephone: 760-220-6818

FAX: 760-948-7620

E-mail: pjpiisoe@earthlink.net

www.pjpiisoe.org

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The miracle of St. Joseph

The purported revelations, known variously as "The miracle of St. Joseph" or "*The City of God-St. Joseph's Hill of Hope*" were given to Frances Marie Klug, known as "*Mother Frances*" to her devoted followers, in Southern California beginning in 1967. The contents of the revelations are contained in a thirty-five-volume series of books titled *Stories from Heaven*.

According to her devotees, Klug acts as the spiritual medium for Christ and the saints. Her voice is said to change when the heavenly personages are supposedly speaking through her. She is referred to as the "funnel"* and "instrument" of heavenly teaching.

Unlike most private revelation, the "miracle of St. Joseph" boldly claims to be the source of new doctrinal revelation. The "miracle" is the heretofore unrevealed belief that St. Joseph is the incarnation of the Holy Spirit, as fully God as Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the Blessed Virgin Mary is also "part of the Divine." It is unclear just what Klug means by this statement but her followers maintain that the Virgin Mary is the incarnation of God the Father.

The so-called "*locutions*" of Frances Klug are at variance with the authentic and authoritative teaching of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. St Joseph's Hill of Hope is **NOT** a Catholic institution.

More than twenty years ago, His Eminence, the late Most Reverend Timothy Cardinal Manning (Archbishop of Los Angeles), and Their Excellencies, the late Most Reverend William R. Johnson (Bishop of Orange in California) and the Most Reverend Phillip F. Straling (then Bishop of San Bernadino) promulgated a document declaring the alleged "locutions" of Frances Klug to be inauthentic and warning the faithful against this fraud. Their joint statement of condemnation refers to the "heretical" doctrines espoused, the "spurious" revelations received, and characterizes the organization "St. Joseph's Hill of Hope-City of God" as "independent of the Roman Catholic Church, its jurisdiction, and its favor."

For more information, contact His Excellency, the Most Reverend Tod D. Brown, Bishop of Orange in California (*the diocese in which St. Joseph's Hill of Hope is located*) at:

Diocese of Orange
2811 East Villa Real Drive
Post Office Box 14195
Orange, California 92863-1595
(Tel. 714-282-3000)

***Channeling** is a practice in which one relinquishes his free will so that a deceased person or angelic spirit may communicate through him to himself and others. A recent document from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life: a Christian*

Reflection on the New Age (2003), discusses the phenomenon of channeling:

One of the most common elements in New Age "spirituality" is a fascination with extraordinary manifestations, and in particular with paranormal entities. People recognized as "mediums" claim that their personality is taken over by another entity during trances in a New Age phenomenon known as "channeling," during which the medium may lose control over his or her body and faculties. Some people who have witnessed these events would willingly acknowledge that the manifestations are indeed spiritual, but are not from God, despite the language of love and light, which is almost always used.... It is probably more correct to refer to this as a contemporary form of spiritualism, rather than spirituality in a strict sense. Other friends and counselors from the spirit world are angels (which have become the center of a new industry of books and paintings). Those who refer to angels in the New Age do so in an unsystematic way; in fact, distinctions in this area are sometimes described as unhelpful if they are too precise, since "there are many levels of guides, entities, energies, and beings in every octave of the universe... They are all there to pick and choose from in relation to your own attraction/repulsion mechanisms." These spiritual entities are often invoked 'non-religiously' to help in

relaxation aimed at better decision-making and control of one's life and career" (2.2.1, citations omitted).

Channeling is wrong not only because it violates one's free will (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1738-40), but because it is a form of divination:

"All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to 'unveil' the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers.

They contradict the honor, respect and loving fear that we owe to God alone" (*Catechism*, no. 2116, emphasis original; cf. no. 2115).

"All practices of magic, or sorcery, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others — even if this were for the sake of restoring their health — are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. These practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone, or when they have recourse to the intervention of demons. Wearing charms is also reprehensible.