

Carl LeClair's Story



A Healing Miracle Attributed to “Little Rose”

Carl LeClair, VP of Rose Ferron Foundation of Rhode Island gave his healing testimony at the Foundation’s first annual “Little Rose” Fundraiser, Woonsocket, RI, Oct. 28, 2017 (photo above) as he has done several times since his life-threatening ordeal almost six years ago.

This interview took place in a side chapel, St. Anthony of Padua Church, Revere, MA, on June 09, 2017 with Mr. LeClair, Mrs. Concannon, the author, Deacon Joe Belmonte and his wife, and friend Sextant James (Dana) Gustavson in recalling the marvelous route to health in 2012 that Mr. LeClair attributes to “Little Rose.”

The author was struck by the power of Christian community; the visits, prayers, and the rallying of the whole parish around their friend in need was truly remarkable.

heard the bad news from Mrs. LeClair. Mr. Gustavson said, “I even tried pinching him and there was no reaction. He was white as a sheet.” Gustavson asked people in the parish to pray to Little Rose for LeClair and also began praying to her himself.

Joe Belmonte, who is a deacon at St. Anthony’s also came to visit LeClair. He asked the nurse if LeClair would be able to hear him if he spoke to him. The nurse did not know, but suggested he try. Mr. Belmonte explained to LeClair that he was going to pray the rosary and invited him to pray it silently if he could. He wrapped the Jacob’s Ladder rosary around LeClair’s hands as he prayed. Belmonte says that during the 3rd Glorious

Carl LeClair first encountered Little Rose while purchasing a lottery ticket at his favorite Bellingham, MA shop, over 20 years ago. Though he lived in Revere, he had been traveling an hour to Woonsocket once a month to play Powerball. This is where he discovered a prayer card containing a novena to Little Rose. When he asked the shop owner where Little Rose was buried, the man directed him down the road to Precious Blood Cemetery, only one block away. That’s where Mr. LeClair’s great devotion to Little Rose began. He says, “I would go there once a month to play Powerball and then I would go visit Little Rose.” LeClair, a locksmith by trade, gathered everything he could about the tiny Stigmatic from Woonsocket. He even met with Rose’s sister Flora, who gifted him a special type of Rosary in which the beads can roll easily through the fingers as they hang between two chains. This rosary, called the *Stairway to Heaven* or *Jacob’s Ladder*, became Mr. LeClair’s special project as he learned to make them himself and gave them away to priests, nuns, and other religious. It would be the same type of rosary dangling from his bedside when he woke from a coma, years later.

In March of 2012, at the age of 70, Mr. LeClair became sick with what he thought was an aggressive form of the stomach virus, but after spending several minutes in the bathroom, he asked his son to call for an ambulance. The paramedics that came to their home recognized that Mr. LeClair was experiencing cardiac arrest. On the way to the hospital, Mr. LeClair’s wife, Virginia, grabbed a ‘theca’ of Little Rose (one with a ‘memento’ attached). By the time Mrs. LeClair got to the hospital, the medical team had already tried resuscitating him twice, however they ended up resuscitating him four times after that before they were successful. Mr. LeClair’s cardiac arrest was finally stopped, however, he was in a coma and not expected to recover. Mrs. LeClair even called the funeral home so that they would be ready to prepare his body.

God, however, had other plans for Mr. LeClair. Having been an active member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Revere, helping at Masses and distributing communion to the sick, LeClair was a well-loved friend in the church. It was this community who rallied around his side that day, asking his favorite person, Little Rose, for help. Fr. George, the pastor, visited LeClair, gave him the Last Rites and prayed for him with Little Rose’s *theca* or ‘memento.’ James (Dana) Gustavson, a fellow parishioner and friend of LeClair, went to visit him in the hospital and



mystery, LeClair opened his eyes. Belmonte laughs and says at that moment, he was ready to have a heart attack himself. LeClair recalls hearing Belmonte’s voice praying the rosary before he opened his eyes, although he has no memory of the hospital before that. By the time Belmonte finished the rosary, Mr. LeClair was sitting up in bed. His family came in the room and he recognized each person. He was able to return home soon after that and has since been in good health. Mr. LeClair says, “My doctor says he is always surprised to see me.”

Carl LeClair is reticent to name the event a miracle. However, his friends insist there is no other explanation. After the hospital crisis, LeClair visited his eye doctor and learned of bruising behind his eye sockets, a sign of oxygen deprivation in the brain. However, Mr. LeClair’s memory and mental state are perfect. The doctors who treated him at the hospital have pictures of him on the CAT Lab bulletin board for four years, as well as a picture at the ambulance company who took his call. Deacon Belmonte notes the significance of the mystery when LeClair woke up: The Third Glorious mystery, Flora’s mystery (Little Rose and her siblings were dedicated to each mystery of the Rosary at birth) and the sister who gave LeClair his first *Jacob’s Ladder* rosary. Now 75, Mr. LeClair continues his life of service at St. Anthony’s, his role as husband, father, and grandfather, and his devotion to Little Rose and her cause.



Mr. Carl LeClair of Revere, MA suffered cardiac arrest on March 6, 2012, at the age of 70 and was resuscitated 6 times by a medical team before falling into a coma. The doctors did not think he would recover and the funeral home was notified. During this time, LeClair’s home parish of St. Anthony of Padua began to pray to Little Rose for him. A witness and fellow parishioner James D. Gustavson claims that he was deathly pale and showed no signs of recognition when he came to visit him. LeClair’s parish priest, Fr. George Butera prayed over him with a Little Rose *theca* with memento of Little Rose attached. After 3 or 4 days, Mr. Joe Belmonte, the parish deacon visited LeClair in the hospital and began to pray the rosary over LeClair, using a rosary favored by Little Rose and her family. On the third glorious mystery LeClair woke up and eventually sat up. His family members entered the room after being notified and he recognized each person in the room with him. Mr. LeClair was able to return home on March 15 and continues today to actively serve his local parish at the age of 75.

Mr. LeClair notes as an afterthought: “The MGH (Massachusetts General Hospital) ran a party for me and another person - both of ours were strange cases. I got to meet the doctors, nurses and ambulance driver that handled my case.”



- Stephanie Concannon

About the author: Stephanie Concannon is a free-lance writer, wife and mother of four children. While studying to be a teacher, she enjoys reading good books, cooking, and painting. This is her first submission as a volunteer writer as she explores and deepens her interest in “Little Rose.” Mrs. Concannon is an active member of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation, a Catholic Lay and Religious Movement founded by Msgr. Luigi Guissani, Milan, Italy with groups active in about 90 countries.