

Dear Msgr. Wald,

I would appreciate very much you could somehow pass this message on to Mr. and Mrs. Didier.

Best Regards,

Jacob Blauer

February 21, 2008

Mr. & Mrs. Didier

Dear Mr. Didier:

We have met before but I doubt you will remember. My name is Jacob Blauer. My father, wife and I were visiting the Grotto in Emmitsburg, MD one day this fall (late October/November). My wife was visiting Maryland for the first time from Colombia and I had never been to the Grotto so we went on a whim. It was a beautiful place and we were the only ones there until we ran into you and your wife on our way out.

You had just come into town and told us the story of your son, Father Darin. Immediately I felt a strong bond with your son - mainly because we were born the same year - 1972, and my best friend here in Colombia is also named Didier. You kindly gave us cards made for your son, one with him running, and another from his First Annual Memorial Mass. We shook hands, said goodbye and parted ways.

Something I did not mention then was the very next day I was going to Johns Hopkins University Hospital to prepare for a corneal transplant surgery. I have a debilitating eye disease and had returned from Colombia to have the surgery.

I arrived the very next morning at the hospital and was seen by a new doctor who was an expert in my condition - and he told me to cancel the transplant surgery because he knew of new procedure that would help me, but I would have to wait for a couple of months to have it. He sent me to the surgeon's office immediately to begin the process, and when I arrived - miraculously - the surgeon had a cancellation and was able to perform my procedure the very same day. The change in direction of my plight in just 24 hours was unbelievable. It is now four months later and I am healed and able to see well, and back home in South America.

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I am not sure why I needed to write and tell you this - but I just know I did. I have kept Father Darrin's cards close to me at all times (now safely laminated) - because I know with absolute certainty that during this painful and terrifying time for me - I drew enormous strength from his spirit. I just wanted to thank you for stopping us that day and telling us about Father Darin - I believe it changed my life.

Best Regards,

Jacob Blauer

P.S. - I am Jewish and have never had anything like this happen to me.