

### WHAT ABOUT GHOSTS

According to library sources there are two separate and distinct attitudes held in this matter of ghosts: one is that of the secular scientists and the other is the attitude of Catholic teachers.

It should be made clear first, that authors in this field make little or no distinction between the terms ghost, apparition and vision. And ghost is defined in the dictionary as a disembodied spirit; the spectre of a deceased person.

In dealing with ghosts the secular scientists at the outset make it clear that a real ghost is never in any sense physical. This point immediately leads to the problem of whether or not ghosts are actually seen, because in order to perceive an object with our eyes it is necessary that there be light reflected from the object seen. Consequently if a ghost is not physical, it must be spiritual but possessing at least some properties of physical matter. This problem is yet to be solved. A few of the general characteristics usually attributed to ghosts include: opaqueness—ghosts are sometimes wholly opaque but more often they are only partially so; apparel—ghosts are usually quite well dressed, their habits being simple but neat and well suited; setting—in many reports of ghost appearances it is very interesting to note that a ghost is often accompanied by appropriate scenery; communicating—occasionally a ghost will speak a few words to its percipient, but never has a ghost been recorded which carried on a conversation; signs of its presence—in general a ghost never leaves any trace of its presence after it disappears.

Regarding the origin of ghosts, nearly all secular authorities agree that they are of telepathic origin; (telepathy—the supposed communication of one mind with another at a distance, without the use of any means known to physical or psychological science). These authorities explain that once a percipient finds himself in the appropriate setting, the thought of another person, who had seen this same scene complete with the third person, is transported to the percipient's mind, thus completing the ghost scene. In order to support this theory there are a number of problems which must be explained by these authorities. Why, for example, since very many associations must be formed with almost every house, not to speak of innumerable other objects, are



not apparitions very much commoner than they are? Their reply to this is that there are many appropriate settings for a ghost scene present in a prospect's mind at the same time, and consequently they cancel one another out. A second problem is the question of why some people see them, while others, under apparently the same conditions, do not. The authorities, in answer to this, proposes that individuals possess different degrees of "eidetic imagery" and that the "rapport" or "like-mindedness" between the percipient and whoever originally associated the relevant images with a certain scene is prominent. Eidetic imagery simply means a person's ability to employ his imagination in completing a scene with the form of a person. Rapport is the similarity of minds with regard to their adaptability to interchange thoughts. Still a greater problem to explain is the fact that many ghosts, when they return to houses that they once owned, act as though they still owned them. Again they answer this by saying that the expected actions are provided by the imagination of the percipient.

Now, turning to the views of Catholic teachers regarding ghosts, we find that first of all they divide ghosts into three classes or divisions: (1) corporeal (2) intellectual (3) and imaginative. The first, or corporeal, is a ghost which seemingly possesses a body and all its properties in the same form as it had while on Earth, i.e. as far as the sense of sight is concerned. According to Catholic theologians the persons of these ghosts are limited to God Himself and His Saints. They teach that it is not within the nature of the soul to return to Earth and present itself visibly to living man, after it has been parted from the body through death. Consequently when a living person has the singular privilege of seeing a Saint in a vision, we believe that this soul has returned to Earth only with God's special permission and for a specific reason.

The second division is the intellectual ghosts. Generally speaking when we think of ghosts, we do not include this type. This is a vision which is experienced solely in the intellect, that is, it is seen neither through the sense of sight nor in the imagination. It is an infusion of knowledge or an experience directly into the intellect by God. Needless to say it is usually Saints who enjoy this experience. As an example of this type of vision we have St. Teresa's testimony, "On the feast of glorious St. Peter, being at prayer, I saw, or rather (for I saw nothing, either with the eyes of the



body or with those of the soul) I felt my Saviour near me and I saw that it was He who spoke to me."

Included in the third division or imaginative ghosts are all the ghostly heroes of our popular ghost stories, as well as many of the mysterious noises heard in so-called haunted houses. It can be readily seen that this is the only class of ghosts that the secular authorities have considered.

Thus we may conclude that, of the three types of ghosts, only two are real; intellectual and corporeal. And it would seem that those who experience or see these ghosts are persons who are themselves greatly pleasing to God, if not already Saints, and those who claim to see any other type of ghosts must necessarily possess a very vivid imagination.

—ARTHUR SEAMAN '56

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### THE VICTORY

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It was half time. The locker room was silent save for the clackety clack of cleats and the occasional slam of the steel door of a locker. The dank smell of sweat filled the room. Bill Donelli sat in a corner staring at the laces of his cleats. Usually he enjoyed the noise and the smell and the players' banter about the game. Today there was none of this. The atmosphere only served to drive home the fact that he was not one of them. Not that he had ever thought so really. You see Bill Donelli was a specialist, a passer with a .627 average the previous season, the highest in pro football. Bill was a star, a player who could thread the eye of a needle with a football, behind air tight blocking. He was also the highest paid player in the league; but he earned this only with his right arm, "Running the ball a guy can get hurt."

It had not always been this way, however. Donelli had been an All-American from little San Jose State, and he didn't become that with just his right arm. But that was when he loved to play football. Now Donelli was playing for money and it was a different story. The money would come just as big without carrying the ball, and besides, he'd last longer this way.