

# The Catholic Moment

Serving the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana



## Spiritual encounter leads an ordinary man to share his story and God's message

*Excerpted from The Catholic Moment (Volume 79, Number 14) article by Mary Ann McAtee.*

If you met Ed Jozsa on May 29, 2017, and inquired about his eternal destiny or his spiritual life, he would have told you he was “good” and that he would likely go to heaven one day. And, by the world’s standards, he was doing well.

Ed Jozsa and his wife Amy had been happily married for 23 years and were the parents of three children. Ed had a good job working for FedEx as a pilot, was known and well-liked by community members, and attended Mass on Sundays. His life was a success. But on May 30, 2017, his life changed dramatically when he was involved in a serious automobile accident near his home. The trauma he experienced in that crash was so severe that doctors are still unable to explain how anyone could survive.

Ed believes his life is a miracle, but the biggest miracle is how his spiritual life has grown due to immense suffering and the gift of a mystical union with God that he experienced during his recovery. Six years later, he realizes he was not on the right path to God and now passionately desires to share his story of God’s transforming love with others.

Ed grew up Catholic and moved his family from Pennsylvania to Cicero, Indiana, in 1994 due to a job relocation. On the day of the fateful crash, he was driving two of his children and a neighbor child to practice (fortunately, no one else was seriously injured) when his car was hit at high impact.

For over two and a half hours, Ed was trapped in the car while EMTs worked

hard to extract him. He had two collapsed lungs, which he said caused him to feel like he was suffocating. His spleen had ruptured, and he had multiple fractures, including both legs, his hip, right arm, a dislocated elbow, ten vertebra fractures, eight rib fractures, and six herniated discs.

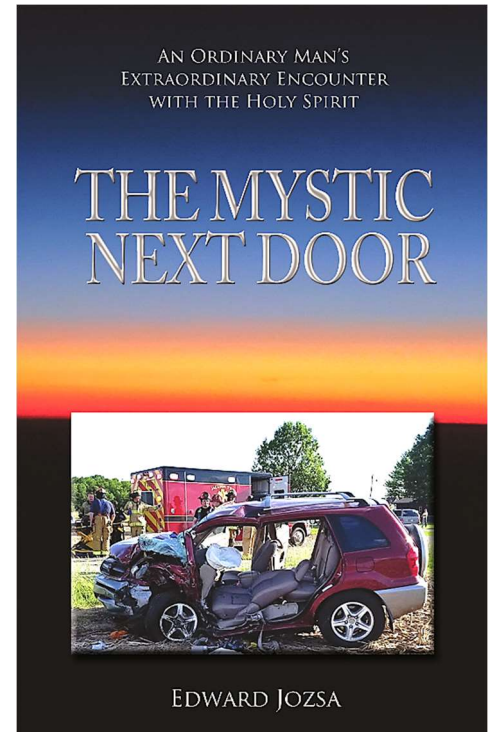
“The intercostal muscles ruptured out on my left side, which was challenging for the surgeons to repair because there is no record of anyone surviving that injury; they had only seen it on cadavers,” Ed explained. “I was told later that I should have bled out in 20 minutes due to the severe damage to my spleen.”

His hospitalization, rehabilitation, and recovery were scheduled to take months, but miraculously, Ed was home in just 18 days.

On the eighth day of his hospitalization, Ed was moved to a step-down unit from the ICU, where he said he suffered incredible pain as he tried to focus on a “bright spot on the wall,” which transported him to a unique encounter with reality.

“I was in what I can only describe as a ‘red room.’ I have no idea how long I was there, but during this time, I was given all the knowledge of the world,” he said. “I knew all the works of Shakespeare, recited poetry I had never heard and understood complicated math equations. I did not exist in time as we know it. I was in a state I can only describe as ‘forever.’”

By worldly time, Ed said it was as if decades had passed.



“At the beginning of this encounter, I had a glimpse of hell and saw hideous creatures. There was an awfulness to it because I was without God,” he shared. “I couldn’t pray. I had knowledge of this world that night that I cannot explain, but I was without God.”

The following night, Ed was unable to take pain medication due to a medication error earlier in the day and was in excruciating pain. As he suffered in agony, he asked the Holy Spirit to come, which began his second experience into what he described as ‘forever.’

In this second vision, instead of knowledge of the world, Ed had knowledge of God and the universe.

“At the beginning of this encounter, I asked Christ to take my pain, and then I prayed, ‘No, you’ve already done that for me. I’ll carry it for the salvation of

souls,” he shared. “Truthfully, I was poorly catechized and lukewarm at this point, and the idea of offering my suffering for the salvation of souls was completely foreign to me.”

Afraid he might see the visions of the preceding night, Ed talked to Jesus about his Passion for about an hour. Before that time, Ed said he didn’t understand how his sins affected Jesus but understood that God is outside of time and has seen the whole world from beginning to end.

“Jesus did feel my sins during his Passion,” he said. “I hadn’t considered before how terrible it must have been for him to suffocate on the Cross. Now I understood the horror of suffocation.”

Ed’s skin had also been torn from his back in the crash, just as Jesus’ flesh was torn on his. He also had so much brokenness in his body.

“I hadn’t understood his suffering and realized that my whole life I had lived by the world’s standards and thought I was a ‘shoe-in’ for heaven,” Ed said. “Now, I realize the Lord calls us to live by his standards and his law. And I also learned that even if we do all that, we still need God’s mercy. Even very holy people and great saints need God’s mercy. My life changed that night.”

The knowledge Ed received of the world and the universe did not remain with him, although he still feels God’s presence in a powerful way.

“I felt God’s touch in a physical way, just like a person feels sunlight on their skin. God holds us; he holds our souls all the time,” he said. “God is so good, words fail to describe it. I still struggle to understand all this, but he touched me with his mercy. The Lord is living in us; he is part of us.”

Ed’s prayer life changed immensely that second night.

“God asks us to pray ceaselessly so we can talk to him just as you would talk to anyone who is with you,” he shared. “Prayer doesn’t come from us; it wells up in us from God.”

Many people supported Ed in his recovery and processing his physical, emotional, and spiritual healing. At first, he struggled, thinking he was crazy or had brain damage. For a year, he tried to debunk the encounter but couldn’t.

Ed then shared his experience with his wife, Amy, who believed him and suggested he talk to their parish priest, Father Dale Ehrman.

“I really thought Father Dale might slap me across the face when I shared this, but instead, he casually handed me a book off his shelf titled “Interior Castle” by St. Teresa of Avila and one about St. John of the Cross,” Ed said. “He seemed to know exactly what I was talking about.”

Since learning more about the faith, Ed has come to believe he was in a purgative state during his first vision. He knew he deserved to be there without God by his own choices.

“I saw myself as I truly was, and I felt the weight of my sins; I saw myself in truth,” he shared. “I believe the Lord does not condemn us to purgatory or hell; we chose that. The Lord wants us so much; he provides a way back to him if we choose.”

Before this encounter, Ed rarely went to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Now, he tries to go at least monthly.

“If we are going to be in a state of union with the Lord, we need to be cleansed,” he said. “Looking back and praying on all this, I believe I was given a choice at the moment of impact in the crash and that I later remembered those two nights in my hospital bed.”

Ed believes a ‘messenger’ guided him through the first night, and the Holy Spirit guided him the second night. While he did not see Jesus, he believes he conversed with Him about His Passion, and he experienced an understanding of the Blessed Trinity during the second vision, something he knows many people struggle with.

“I do not have the understanding now that was given to me that night, but

when I asked the Holy Spirit, and He came, I could feel His power,” he said. “I felt all of God through the Holy Spirit; I felt love through the Father and mercy through the Son. I know it is incomprehensible, but I did understand the Blessed Trinity while in the presence of the Holy Spirit on that second night.”

Since his accident and subsequent conversion of heart, Ed has a passionate desire to share the message of God’s love and mercy with the world.

“I want people to know that God is real, He is tangible, and that He touches us and holds us at every moment of our life,” he shared. “God wants desperately for us to make room for Him. I can feel Him holding my soul. I feel Him with me, always.”

Ed also wants people to understand that no matter who they are—they will suffer because it is part of being human.

“In that suffering, the Lord places tremendous gifts,” he said. “I use my ongoing suffering as a form of prayer to suffer for the Lord, which makes it so much easier. It is better than any drug or therapy to say, ‘OK, Lord, this is my cross; I want to pick it up for you.’ There are many lost souls in need of our suffering and our prayers.”

While our own ‘God’ story may not include excruciating suffering, a near-death experience, unexplainable knowledge, or even mysticism, Ed encourages everyone to know their own story of God’s love and mercy and be ready to share it.

“Everyone has a God story; it is the story of the marvelous things God has done and continues to do every day in your life,” he said. “Learn to tell your God story; the world needs to hear it.”

*If you want to learn more about Ed Jozsa and his ministry, you can order his book “The Mystic Next Door” on Amazon or by contacting him at his website,*

[www.presenceofGodencounters.com](http://www.presenceofGodencounters.com).