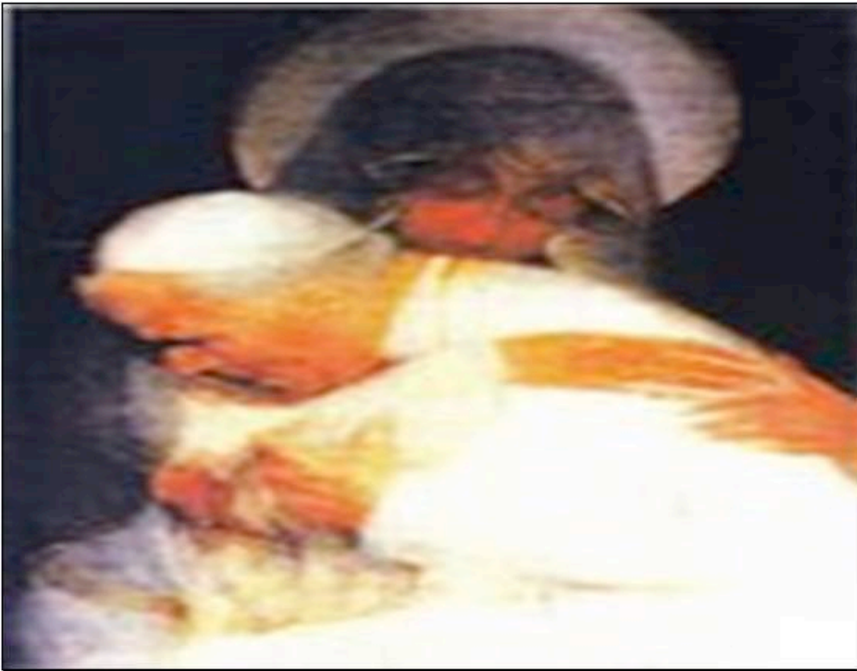


El Papa y la Virgen HOAX EXPLAINED

it seems everyone is insisting upon filling mailboxes with manipulative and false "religious" chain letters that spread lies, and even worse, manipulate peoples' fears by saying the emails must be forwarded in order for the recipient to avoid bad luck. i do not believe in bad luck. but even if i did, would my own selfish fear of bad luck really justify my possibly bringing you bad luck by forwarding you these kinds of emails? the answer is NO! if i love you, i will NOT forward you something that could hurt you. (in fact, when you get such emails you should feel offended! i know many of you do!) think of all the wasted worries, time, energy, electricity (email servers do not run on magic, they run on electricity!), and stress caused by the brazilian fortune teller's bogus 8.1 earthquake scare, or other such messages... is this really something you want to support?

let's look at one of these recent emails - the "El Papa y la Virgen" photo. if you look at it closely, the message easily proves to be a total FAKE!

here is the original photo attached in the email (the original spam is copied in it's entirety at the bottom of this message):



it is not a very convincing photo. it is oddly stretched and distorted, the madonna's hands clearly look like drawings, as does her face and halo (why would a heavenly energy halo appear in a photograph like a solid dirty dish plate?! the pope's hat is glowing more than her halo!!!).

the original spam email said:

We don't know why John Paul II wanted to hide this picture for years. The Vatican published this picture recently, for first time. This picture was taken by one of his security guards just when the Pope was attacked and was falling down in his Papamobil. You can see the pain in his face.

where was it published by the vatican? is there a footnote to justify this claim? of course not, because it is a lie! it also mentions the papamobil - but the papamobil DID NOT EXIST before the shooting! the papamobil was a bullet-proof carriage which would have STOPPED THE BULLET!

as for the claim that a security guard took this photo, do you really think the guards had time to pull out their cameras and snap a few shots?

in the hoax photo the pope looks alone and falling forward - let's look at the real scene that day:



clearly the pope was not falling down, nor falling forward, nor alone, nor in a dark area, and his HAT HAS FALLEN OFF!!!!... there is nothing in the hoax photo that matches the circumstances of the pope's attempted assassination.

let's look at the original spam again:

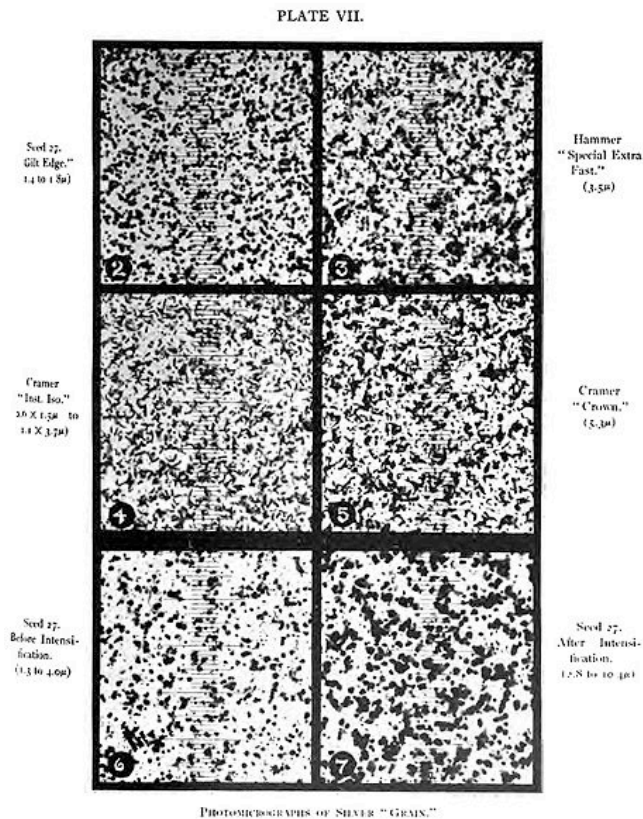
Joaquin Navarro Valls, who is the one spokesman from The Vatican, said that they made a lot of studies for years of this incredible picture and of course about the quality of the developing of the picture because when it was developed nobody could see very well because the image was not clear. Finally, and after so many controls and being looking and checking by all the experts in photography (around the world), they

decided that there were no tricks in it and today they give us this beautiful gift from our Mother of God. You can see the Mother of God holding John Paul II in her arms. Beautiful right?

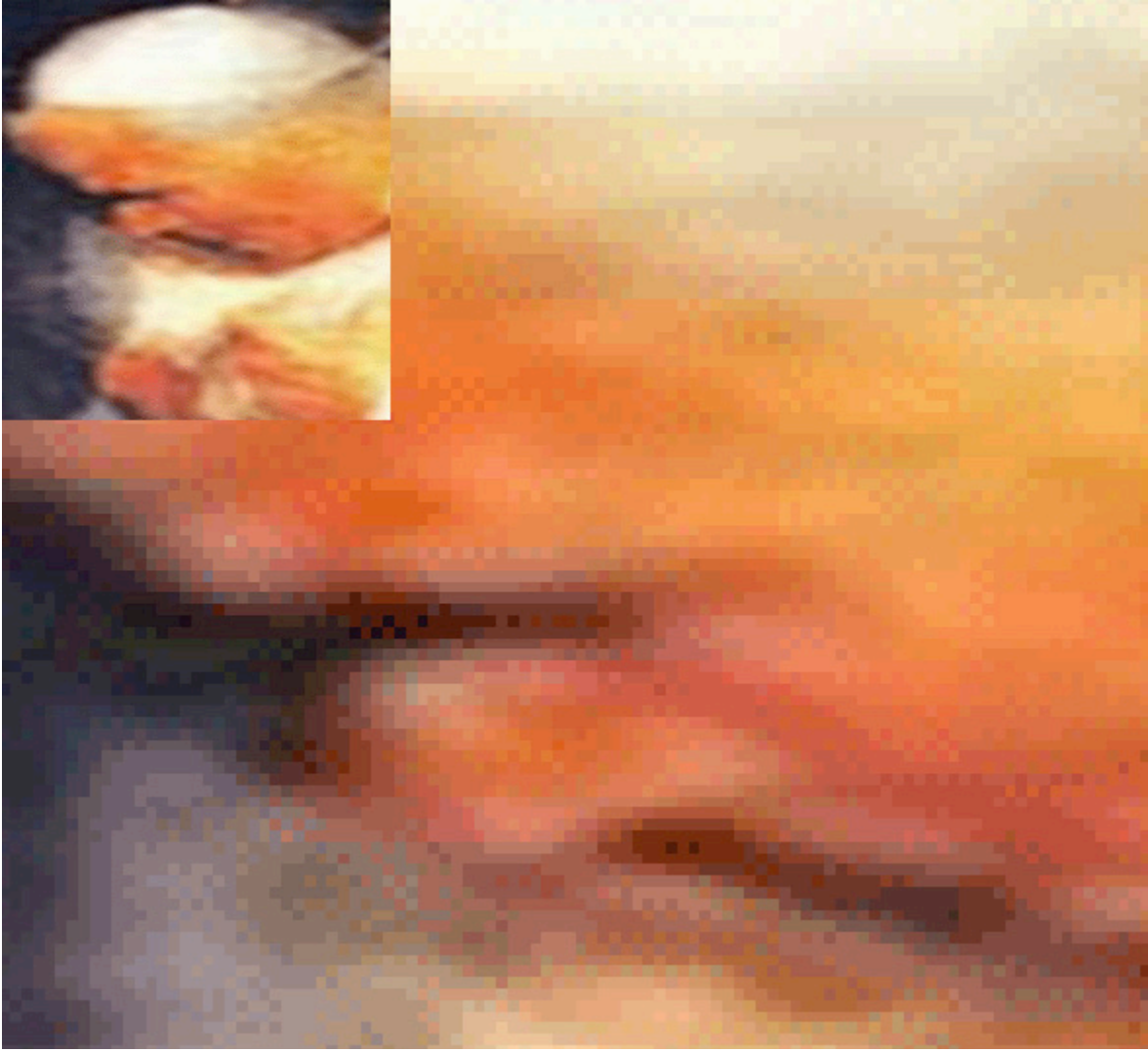
there is absolutely no documented reference from dr. valls with regard to this photo! this is only using his name to make the email sound credible (anyone can get his name on wikipedia or any other website to make their story sound more believable). the idea that any expert would say the photo is real is UNBELIEVABLE! and of course, they do not list a single "expert" name... we can do our own proof it is a hoax, as follows:

first and foremost, this photo shows "digital noise" - that fuzzy quality of the image. today, in the age of digital cameras, this is commonplace. IN 1981, WHEN THE POPE WAS SHOT, DIGITAL CAMERAS WERE NOT IN USE!!! INSTANT HOAX!!!

traditional film uses small grains to create the various tones and shades. perhaps you've noticed your old photos have a random dot-like quality. that is the grain. magnified, it looks something like this:



if we magnify a section of the hoax photo, we can see there are no signs of photo grain - only digital pixels:



now, let's correct the stretching effect of the original photo... we can do this using "Photoshop" or any other graphics application. the image before distortion would look something like this:



the original spam mail said:

You can see the pain in his face.

actually, you can see the pope does not look like he is in pain - in fact, from that angle, nobody could really describe his expression at all. the person behind the original hoax is using the POWER OF SUGGESTION to put the idea of PAIN into your head, so you are more likely to interpret his expression as pain. the original photo could have been of him genuflecting before the altar, or even bending to greet a child... who knows? below is a generic photo of the pope waving to an audience - he looks more in pain in this photo than the one above!

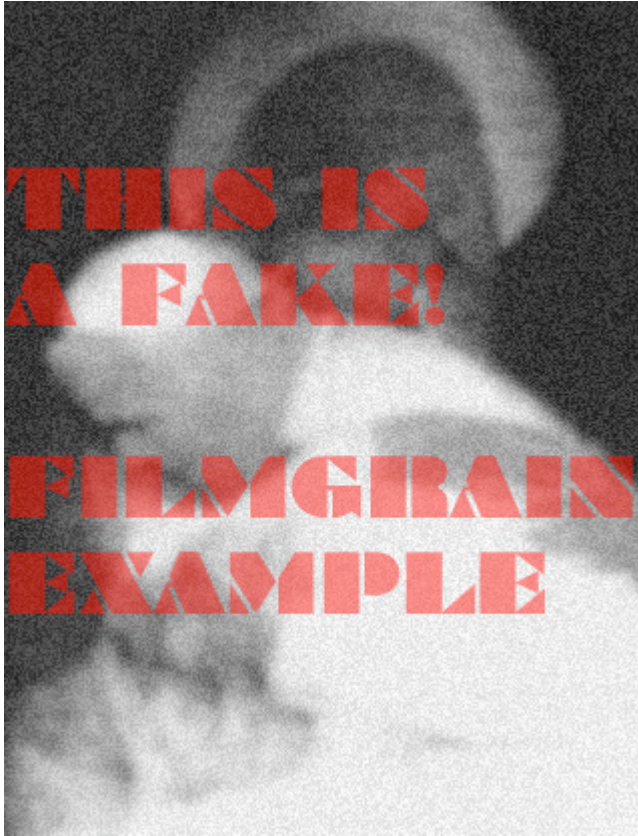


next, if you look at the original hoax photo you can see the madonna has lines running over her image - the pope does not have those lines. single lines run over her halo and face, without regard for 3D form. those lines occur in the printing process, such as printing a book or greeting card. when book images get scanned into a computer, those lines and grids become more obvious. the fact that those same lines do not go over the body and face of the pope means that THE TWO FIGURES ARE FROM DIFFERENT PHOTOGRAPHIC SOURCES. it is a COMBINED PHOTO. if we put the original photo in black-and-white and increased the contrast, you can see these lines more easily:



so the reason for stretching the image was to make his expression and the quality of the photo collaging seem less obvious.

in fact, if i were to make the image black-and-white, blur it a little, and add fake photo grain to the image, you can see it looks much more believable... the person who made that original hoax photo is not only a liar, they have no talent in digital photo editing!!! (i have clearly labeled this as FAKE so the hoaxers do not use it, since it looks more real than their original hoax!



of course, fanatics can always find ways to explain the things i have pointed out, such as "the lines over the madonna are because she does not exist in 3D space" or "the pope appears alone and in darkness because the photo reveals the spiritual circumstances of the moment" or some other far-reaching excuses - the power of imagination could be used to justify anything, and strengthen peoples' faith in the midst of facts pointing to the contrary... but that does not make the hoax photo any more real. we know how sleazy preachers manipulate people in this way, building our hopes to steal our money... and of course, many people do not understand photographic technology, so if they cannot explain the hoax photo for themselves they find it easier to believe in it... if you did believe in the hoax photo, you cannot be blamed for your ignorance of photo technology. however, these are always things that can be explained simply and honestly. **IT IS BETTER TO BE SKEPTICAL THAN TO FOLLOW IN BLINDLY IN IGNORANCE!!!**

QUESTION EVERY CON-MAN ATTEMPT TO MANIPULATE YOU WITH "FAITH"!!!

and...

**QUESTION YOUR OWN TENDENCIES TO FORWARD THESE LIES SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU DON'T WISH TO BRING YOURSELF BAD LUCK!!!
THAT IS PURE SELFISHNESS!!!**

this message brought to you without prayers, without wishes of good luck nor bad... just plain old fashioned honesty from ONE HUMAN TO ANOTHER...

THINK BEFORE YOU SPAM!!!

AND THINK OF ALL WE COULD ACCOMPLISH IF WE WERE AS WILLING TO BELIEVE IN PEOPLE AS WE ARE WILLING TO BELIEVE IN LIES, HALF-TRUTHS AND MYSTICISM!!!

most problems are not caused by "moral issues," but by real social issues, poverty, unemployment, lack of education, and lack of opportunities... why do we insist on giving more attention to flights of fantasy than to REAL THINGS WE CAN CHANGE??!! belief in all of these spam emails is just making it harder for us to see what is really before our eyes!!!

it's a shame.

now, if you do not forward this to 1,000,000 people in the next 30 seconds, including the person who originally forwarded you the "El Papa y la Virgen" email, your head will implode under the pressure of it's own ignorance and gullibility.

original hoax (unaltered):

El_Papa_y_la_Virgen



We don't know why John Paul II wanted to hide this picture for years. The Vatican published this picture recently, for first time. This picture was taken by one of his security guards just when the Pope was attacked and was falling down in his Papamobil. You can see the pain in his face.

Joaquin Navarro Valls, who is the one spokesman from The Vatican, said that they made a lot of studies for years of this incredible picture and of course about the quality of the developing of the picture because when it was developed nobody could see very well because the image was

not clear. Finally, and after so many controls and being looking and checking by all the experts in photography (around the world), they decided that there were no tricks in it and today they give us this beautiful gift from our Mother of God. You can see the Mother of God holding John Paul II in her arms. Beautiful right?

PLEASE READ WITH FAITH.

This is an awesome prayer.

Believe it and you shall be blessed.

The problem with many of us is that we don't believe that God will open a window and pour out blessings that we won't have room to receive them. I dare anyone to try God. He is true to His word. God cannot lie and His promises are sure.

Three things will happen to you this coming week:

(1) You will find favor with someone you don't expect;

(2) You will be too relevant to be ignored;

(3) You will encounter God and you will never remain the same again.

My prayer for you today:

The eyes beholding this message shall not behold evil, the hands that will send this message to others shall not labor in vain, the mouth saying Amen to this prayer shall laugh forever. Remain in God's love as you send this prayer to everybody on your list. Have a lovely journey of life! Trust in the Lord with all your heart and He will never fail you because He is AWESOME !

If you truly need a blessing, continue reading this email:

Heavenly Father, most Gracious and Loving God, I pray to you that you abundantly bless my family and me. I know that you recognize, that a family is more than just a mother, father, sister, brother, husband and wife, but all who believe and trust in you. Father, I send up a prayer request for blessings for not only the person who sent this to me, but for me and all that I

have forwarded this message on to. And that the power of joined prayer by those who believe and trust in you is more powerful than anything. I thank you in advance for your blessings.

Father God, deliver the person reading this right now from debt and debt's burdens. Release Your Godly wisdom that I may be a good steward over all that You have given me Father, for I know how wonderful and mighty You are and how if we just obey You and walk In Your word and have the faith of a mustard seed that You will pour out blessings. I thank You now Lord for the recent blessings I have received and for the blessings yet to come because I know You are not done with me yet. In Jesus' name, I pray.

Amen.

TAKE 60 SECONDS and send this on quickly and within hours, you will have caused a multitude of people to pray to God for each other.

Then sit back and watch the power of God work in your life
for doing the thing that you know He loves. Remain Blessed!!!

end original hoax (unaltered)