After 22 years of blindness suddenly she can see again

MRS JEAN PRITCHETT'S PERSONAL MIRACLE

PICTURES: JOHN DOIDGE

AFTER 22 years of blindness, Jean Pritchett can see again. She suddenly recovered her sight after visiting faith healer Danny Gallagher.

She joined in his bizarre rituals with muddy water, which were spotlighted by the News of the World three weeks ago.

Like all Danny's followers, she took soil from a grave, had it "blessed" by him, then mixed it with water and smeared herself with it.

"Afterwards I had such a strange feeling in my head, as if the bones were all grinding together," said Jean, 40.

"I thought I was going mad. Next day, things suddenly came into focus.

"I looked at my husband, Jim, and saw him for the first time. I told him, 'You've got crooked teeth.'

"I rushed to the window and looked out. I could see everything even in the far distance. I just broke down and wept.

"My family were amazed. They kept giving me things to read. I could see even small print.

"Before, I could only see Jim's shadow and tell how tall he was.

Perfect

"We went round to see my son and his wife and for the first time I saw my grandchildren. We all couldn't stop crying.

"My grandson looked up at me and asked, 'Do I look nice?' and I just cried with joy."

Jean has visited specialists all over Britain seeking a cure, without success.

But a consultant who, at our request, examined her eyes after Danny's healing, pronounced: "Your sight is perfect and there's no reason why you should lose it again."

Jean was registered as totally blind in 1964.

She was told she was suffering with a hereditary eye complaint which affects several other members of her family.

Date

When Jean and Jim wed two years ago, it was the second marriage for both of them.

"We met on a date and fell in love," said Jim at their home in West Way, High Field, Stafford.

"But Jean took a lot of persuading to marry me because she was aware of being blind.

"All the hospital reports were very depressing. No one ever suggested that Jean would regain her sight.

"I even had to go out and choose her wedding outfit. We've been very happy and now that Jean can see, it's just like a miracle.

"We can do all the things we always wanted."

Until her visit to Danny Gallagher, Jean went about with a white stick. She was unable to do household chores like ironing and cooking.

"I did have an electric cooker with the dials in Braille," she said. "But when I switched to gas, I kept burning myself.

"I had to be helped across the road and dress my clothes. Jim even had my make-up and hair."

Jean's recovery looks like presenting her husband with a few problems.

"I'd never seen the colour of our living room before," she said. "When I saw it, I immediately started at changing it."

Driving

She also realised for the first time that she has been shining the room with an enormous tropical fish.

"I knew he was there, but I nearly died when I saw him," she said. "I'd no idea he was so big. I can't bring myself to feed him."

To celebrate, Jim took Jean by car, Blackpool illuminations.

Her other ambitions are to have driving lessons and to see Harry Secombe.

"I love his voice, but I don't even know what he looks like," she said.

"The other day someone said to me 'Now you can see, is it worth it?' If it's worth seeing a world full of trouble and violence?

"But to me it's a very beautiful world."

Since his story was told in the News of the World, 28-year-old Danny Gallagher, from Cainscross, Londonderry, has been flooded with letters and phone calls.

HOW IT WORKED, BY A SPECIALIST

CAN Jean Pritchett's case be explained? The News of the World arranged for her to be examined by an eye specialist, who said:

"I know Jean and her family well as people who live in Stafford. As far as being healed by prayer, how I'm sure it will be welcomed by those who are suffering from that condition.

"I believe this condition—whether the case is medical, hysterical disorder, I wouldn't like to say—is curable.

"There is certainly no sign of any disease here. But unfortunately for the last 22 years Mrs Pritchett has been blind.

"Suddenly, for no medical reason, she can see. I have had no explanation for it.

"From a purely doctor point of view I can only say that I have never had a case like this before."

Jean with the grandchildren whom she saw for the first time after her amazing cure: "We couldn't stop crying."

Faith healer Danny

Jean and husband Jim: "It's a very beautiful world."