

THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE
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www.spiritofmedjugorje.org

SUBSCRIPTION RATE - FREE WILL OFFERING - PLEASE SEE PAGE 8

If this is the first time you have received this newsletter, and you would like a "Beginner's Guide," please contact us for one.



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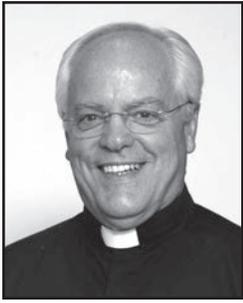
CURRENT MONTHLY MESSAGE OF JANUARY 25, 2017

ON THE 25TH DAY OF EACH MONTH, THE BLESSED VIRGIN GIVES A MESSAGE TO THE VISIONARY, MARIJA, THAT IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE WORLD.



February 11 is the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Pictured above is a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, purchased on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje. In this issue, you can read about the connection between Lourdes, Fatima, and Medjugorje.

Dear children! Today I am calling you to pray for peace: peace in human hearts, peace in the families and peace in the world. Satan is strong and wants to turn all of you against God, and to return you to everything that is human, and to destroy in the heart all feelings towards God and the things of God. You, little children, pray and fight against materialism, modernism and egoism, which the world offers to you. Little children, you decide for holiness and I, with my Son Jesus, intercede for you. Thank you for having responded to my call."



Fr. Bill Kiel

February + True Love

By Fr. Bill Kiel

When the month of February is mentioned, most people think first of Valentine’s Day, love, hearts, cards and gifts for a loved one. ‘Love’ is used often and in many ways in our thoughts and conversations. What is true love? Do I know true love? How do I express true love?

How many of us remember that **God** is true love and is the source of ALL love? Sometimes, we think God does not know we exist, or God does not love us. And yet, God has shown His love for us by having His Son take on human flesh, and by giving us Our Blessed Mother to help us develop a more intimate relationship with Him and His Son, Jesus.

When we accept God’s love and His will in our lives, we come to know true love. As our desire to know the Father and Son continues to deepen, our desire to love others increases, as well. Ponder again the words, “...love my Son above everything. In order to love Him with all your heart, you need to come to know Him. You will come to know Him through prayer. Pray with the heart and with your feelings. To pray means to think of His love and sacrifice. To pray means to love, to give, to suffer and to offer.” (11/2/16)

Prayer should be an integral part of our lives, each and

every day. Without prayer, we cannot have a relationship with God. It is through our prayers we come to know and love the Father and Son. Saint Pio and our Blessed Mother encourage us — pray, pray, pray.

Jesus lived a life of love in service to others, being the ultimate example for each of us. If you think that love is just an emotional feeling for another person that ‘comes and goes’, then you are really not experiencing true love. True

love is an ever present feeling of getting to know the person more fully and trying to do all that is humanly possible for that person. Remember, “...in love, may your life be a gift for others and God will bless you...” (11/25/16)

Let us not think of Valentine’s Day as only **one** day of expressing in a special way love to another; let it be a reminder of living **each** day in love for others. This Valentine’s Day and everyday thereafter, pray with the person you love. Remind

yourself that to be able to love others in our everyday relationships, it is necessary to first love God the Father and Son. Ask yourself, “Do I really love God, and do I spend time expressing love for God?” May these words remain in our hearts: “...always love one another and above all, love my Son. This is the only way to salvation, to eternal life.” (1/2/17)

Editor’s note: Fr. Kiel will be the spiritual director of a pilgrimage to Medjugorje June 11-June 20, 2017. For more information call Dennis Todaro at 724-837-7434.



“Don’t Lay Me Off”

The first time I ever talked to Pat Weller was in October of 2015, when I put a request in that issue for help in folding the newsletters. Pat was housebound for the most part, but wanted to help Our Lady. She told me that Our Lady was relentless and would not let her rest until she called me to volunteer.

Pat did a great job folding the newsletters and found this to be a profoundly spiritual experience. She actually begged me not to “lay her off” when we got our folding machine repaired, and again when she moved to a nursing facility last July. In late November, she called to say she would not be able to help with the December mailing because she was sick. Shortly after that, she was hospitalized and never fully recovered. Although I was not the one to “lay her off,” Someone else did. Pat died on January 14, 2017. It seemed appropriate that Pat would die on a Saturday, the day set aside to honor Our Lady (see page 3). Pat had been to Medjugorje and was very devoted to Our Lady. She was a very sweet lady, and I will really miss visiting with her every month. Please pray for the repose of her soul. May she rest in peace.

Prayer Intentions of Pope Francis for February:

Comfort for the Afflicted: That all those who are afflicted, especially the poor, refugees, and marginalized, may find welcome and comfort in our communities.



Our thanks to Susannah and Oliver Klins, Joanne Warren, Sue Taccone, Diane Niebauer, Kathleen and Tom Seyler, Chris Falk, Marge Spase, Sue Kirby, Vickie DeCoursey, Cindy Bielanin, Georgia Chludzinski, Dianne Yochim, Peggy Chludzinski, Kathy Wayman, Louise Lotze, Stephanie Koshinskie, and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the January mailing. We thank Susannah Klins and Louise Lotze for their photos. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, and our webmaster, Jason Klins.

As of 1/25/17, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady’s intentions is 17,115. Don’t forget our offer this year – if you have a Mass said for Our Lady’s intentions and report it to us, your subscription will be renewed for a year. There is no need to send us a donation. PLEASE accept this little deal as our gift to you for our 30th anniversary, and as a gift for Our Lady. She requests that we pray for Her intentions. “The Mass is the greatest prayer of God. You will never be able to understand its greatness,” Our Lady told the visionaries in 1983. **Our Lady needs Masses more than we need money.** Thank you for having responded to the call.

January 2, 2017 Message to Mirjana

"Dear children, My Son was the source of love and light when he spoke on earth to the people of all peoples. My apostles, follow His light. This is not easy. You must be little. You must make yourselves smaller than others; with the help of faith to be filled with His love. Not a single person on earth can experience a miraculous experience without faith. I am with you. I am making myself known to you by these comings, by these words; I desire to witness to you my love and motherly care. My children, do not waste time posing questions to which you never receive an answer. At the end of your journey on earth, the Heavenly Father will give them to you. Always know that God knows everything; God sees, God loves. My most beloved Son illuminates lives, dispels



Roses blooming in June in Medjugorje

darkness; and my motherly love which carries me to you is inexpressible, mysterious but real. I am expressing my feelings to you: love, understanding and motherly benevolence. Of you, my apostles, I am asking for your roses of prayer which need to be acts of love. To my motherly heart these are the dearest prayers. I offer these to my Son who was born for your sake. He looks at you and hears you. We are always close to you. This is the love which calls, unites, converts, encourages and fulfills. Therefore, my apostles, always love one another and above all, love my Son. This is the only way to salvation, to eternal life. This is my dearest prayer which fills my heart with the most beautiful scent of roses. Pray, always pray for your shepherds that they may have the strength to be the light of my Son. Thank you."

Why Saturday?

Honoring Our Lady on Saturdays was first "officially" promoted by Saint Alcuin (735-804). The custom of dedicating Saturday Masses to Mary quickly spread throughout the whole Church.

The Pontifical document, "Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy," states that Saturday is designated as a memorial of the Blessed Virgin as "a remembrance of the maternal example and discipleship of the Blessed Virgin Mary who, strengthened by faith and hope, on that great Saturday on which Our Lord lay in the tomb, was the only one of the disciples to hold vigil in expectation of the Lord's

resurrection; it is a prelude and introduction to the celebration of Sunday, the weekly memorial of the Resurrection of Christ; it is a sign that the 'Virgin Mary is continuously present and operative in the life of the Church.'"

Fr. Leon Pereira O.P. put it in laymen's terms before Mass in Medjugorje on September 24, 2016: "It's the day after Good Friday, after the Passion of Our Lord, and the day before the Resurrection. It's the day when only Our Lady kept faith. When all the disciples had run away, the Church was alive because of Our Lady."

Medjugorje and the Connection with Fatima

by Louise Lotze

In the book, *Medjugorje – The School of Gospa*, by Mario Vasilj, 2012 English edition, one can read testimonies of the six visionaries as well as testimonies by several priests. The question that was presented to Fr. Petar Ljubicic, the priest that Mirjana has chosen to reveal the secrets, concerns Fatima's connection: Is Medjugorje a continuation of Fatima? If you think so, can you explain how?

This was Fr. Petar's response: "A good answer to this question was given by an Italian priest, Fr. Primo Martinuzzi. As a physician, he participated in the examinations of the visionaries. It had such an impact on him that he started thinking about changing his calling, even though he had been engaged and was getting ready for marriage at the time. In agreement with his fiancée, in 1985, he left his vocation as a doctor and went on to study theology. He was ordained in 1991. This is what he said, 'Medjugorje entered my life as soon as I heard of the apparitions. I believed in it, accepted it and started conveying the messages to priests and bishops I would meet. I cannot imagine my life and work as a priest if I had not learned of Medjugorje. I share the opinion of some theologians and Maryologists who view Medjugorje as a fulfillment of Lourdes and Fatima. After years of temptation and suffering, I am positive that the time for the return of

many prodigal sons will come. They will especially seek our priests and say that they wish to meet Jesus and that they need Mary.' He says that Medjugorje prepared this time for the great return to God. I agree with him."

Fr. Petar went on to say that Gospa appeared to innocent shepherds Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco, who were the children of destitute but religious parents from Fatima in Portugal. A woman in white appeared to the children and, in a motherly manner, called them and said, "Sin is a great evil, it is the cause of all other evils. People need to change and pray for the forgiveness of their sins. They must not insult Our Lord who has already been insulted enough!" The Blessed Virgin said to the children, as well as to us, "Pray, pray a lot and sacrifice yourselves for sinners. Many souls are going to hell, for there is no one to sacrifice themselves and pray for them." Fr. Petar said that according to those who see and talk with Her, Gospa of Medjugorje – the Queen of Peace – says something very similar. "I feel we need to ask ourselves, 'Are we doing our part in helping Our Lady by praying and fasting for Her intentions?' If not, then we need to give serious effort to this request from the Queen of Peace, not later, but now."

Editor's note: Louise is from Ashtabula, OH.

“The Heart is the Center of it All”

By June Klins

On May 19, 2014, the testimony of Marie Murphy aired on MaryTV’s “Fruit of Medjugorje” program. I made a note for myself at the time to transcribe her story for our readers, but have not felt prompted to do so until now. Perhaps there is someone new on our mailing list who needs to read her story.

Marie began her testimony by telling a little bit about herself. She lives in East Sussex in England, and is a former actress, having worked in the theater in London. She was also an actress on a soap opera for a few months in the 1990s.

After she got married and began raising a family, her acting career went “out the window.”

Marie recalled how, at age 12, she had written to the Carmelites to declare her interest in joining them; but within a few years, began going in the opposite direction spiritually.

“One thing led to another. I won’t give you the gory details, but basically went into a materialistic, selfish, rather a dark phase, actually – a lot of heartache and a lot of causing of other people heartache.” She had stopped going to church, but after she had her children, she came back. As she looks back now, she said it was a superficial way. She was happy for a while, but when her marriage ended, she said, “The divorce catapulted me to another dark place. And if I’m honest, I was pretty bitter and angry and resentful – the usual thing. Why me? Why me, God? The God I’ve come back to – why is this happening?”

After Marie got over the anger from her failed marriage, she began searching. “I’ve always been searching, but you could say, in the wrong places.” At around age 18 or 19, she began searching for answers through astrology. She said she was involved in astrology for over 30 years, and towards the end, even had clients. Marie got deeper and deeper, through her interest in esoteric things, because of her curious mind. She said it was not called “New Age” when she started into this in her teens, but later realized that is what it was. She got involved in reiki and later, Shamanism. She got deeply involved in Eastern meditation techniques and relaxation techniques, including yoga. She also admitted to having a passing interest in crystals. “I really generally thought I could help people with this kind of stuff. That was my impulse.”

One day, as Marie continued in her search, she picked up a book called *Spark from Heaven* by Mary Craig. The book cover said, “The Mystery of the Madonna in Medjugorje.” She said she “was absolutely blown away by this,” as she read about Our Lady’s messages. She got very excited and began looking for other books about Medjugorje. Eventually she felt a desire to go to Medjugorje. When she attended an apparition of Our Lady to one of the visionaries, she said, “This was an extraordinary experience for me. I felt like a child, very overwhelmed by it in a good way.” When she returned home, her rosary turned gold. She began to feel like a 12 year-old girl again, with her love of the Blessed Mother and other saints. She wanted to read saint books all the time. “I started to go to Mass every day, *wanting* to go to Mass every day, *wanting* to pray the Rosary and *wanting* to fast.” Family members could not believe how

different her life was. “People thought I was totally going mad, especially my children.”

Marie said she came on a pilgrimage a year and half after these events. At this point, she was reading Scripture, praying the Rosary, and fasting. On this pilgrimage, she went to a talk given by Fr. Danko in the yellow building behind the church. She had no idea what the topic of his talk would be. “Then this big friar gets on stage and starts talking, with a rather stern face, I thought. I had my pen and pad all poised, all ready.” But Marie was not prepared for the words she would hear Fr. Danko say: “Astrology – wrong! New Age stuff, reiki – no! Eastern meditation practices, tarot cards...”

Marie said he mentioned basically everything she was involved in and caught her by surprise. Although she was living most of Our Lady’s messages, she had not given up

her New Age practices, and was “quite happily, in a way still straddling the two worlds.” “I suppose even though I felt I was more in the light, I was still having this little, I guess, addiction – I think kind of an addiction for this other side of life. I got rid of other vices, addictions, but not this particular one.”

When Marie went back to her room in Medjugorje, she saw the astrology books she had brought with her, so she guiltily put them in a drawer, out of sight. Then she thought, “Could it really be that this is so bad, really so wrong? I’m not a bad person.” She kept having this conversation with

herself for weeks after she returned from her pilgrimage. She continued to cling to her New Age practices because she thought it gave her a sense of security.

Marie eventually consulted with a “wise priest who pointed out a few things to me that needed pointing out to me.” He pointed out that power is often the impulse behind New Age interests and that there is a “dark glamour” to it. Marie wasn’t aware of the darkness at the time, but admitted there was definitely glamour to it. She began to realize that the New Age term “light worker” was actually a “dark light, a fake light, an illusory light, a misleading light.” “If I’m consulting an astrology book to find out if it’s a good day for this or that, or is the moon in that place ... that is a ridiculous way to live. I wasn’t trusting, truly trusting in the Lord. I wasn’t truly surrendering myself.”

After consulting with the priest, Marie decided to change her ways. “I decided for the first time in my life that I wanted to be obedient. I realized I’d been disobedient for decades and it hadn’t made me happy at all – far from it.” She found great joy in getting rid of all her New Age books. People asked her why she was destroying the books and not selling them, but she said, “It just felt wrong to do that. I just felt that God is – Jesus is – the Way, the Truth and the Life – not this stuff.”

Marie said that this is the most joyful time of her life. If you watch her testimony, she is smiling the whole time, and I don’t think that is the “actress” in her. She said that she



Marie Murphy

now helps to promote Adoration by visiting parishes and doing presentations. "I can't imagine how I lived without it, this great beauty. Again, I was always looking for beauty and searching for beauty in all the wrong places."

Marie concluded her testimony: "Through Our Lady's messages and through what I've read and experienced here in Medjugorje, the heart is the center of it all. Love is the center of it all. Love is the key to it all. Without the heart, we can do nothing. We are nothing. Without God, without Jesus, we are nothing. It's taken me all this time to realize that. And I'm so grateful. I feel so blessed, and I'm so thankful to the Blessed Mother for all that I've been graced with. And

I'm very excited! It feels like I'm on a great adventure – the beginning of a great adventure. So I love Medjugorje! I'd live here, except we have to go back home and spread the message..."

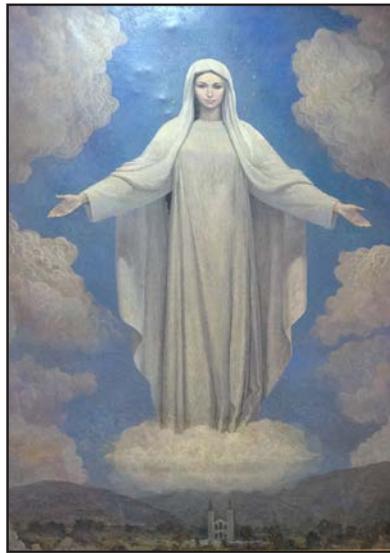
Editor's note: You can view Marie's testimony on Fruit of Medjugorje www.marytv.tv, episode #115. Note that Marie's conversion began by reading a book about Medjugorje. We are committed to spreading the messages, so if you would like a copy of our book, [I Have Come to Tell the World that God Exists](#), to read and share, and cannot afford it, please let us know and we will send you a free copy. We do not sell anything, so if you want to buy it, it can be ordered from any bookstore or online.

Dark Clouds

By Michael Douglas

When Tom arrived at Dublin Airport, he had the look of a man in great despair. This would be Tom's first pilgrimage to Medjugorje. Unknown to the rest of the pilgrims, Tom had just attended the first anniversary Mass for his wife after her death. Tom's daughter phoned me only a few days earlier, inquiring if I had any places left in my group for the pilgrimage to Medjugorje. As luck would have it (or Divine Providence), I had one place left. On the second evening of the pilgrimage, Tom joined the group for some refreshments and started to share with us how he was feeling. He told the group before coming to Medjugorje he missed his wife so much that he felt like taking his own life, but knew if he did so, he may never see her again. Why he had agreed to travel to Medjugorje, he had no idea, but travelled anyway.

With tears in his eyes, Tom told us that while listening to the talk in the yellow building, he was drawn to the painted image of Our Lady on the wall (one of Tom's hobbies is painting); and as he looked at the painting, he felt that the artist could have done a better job with the clouds. Tom said as he continued to look at the painting, the clouds started to move. Tom thought this was very strange. "Why would they have a rolling picture on the wall?" He had seen one



The painting of Our Lady in the yellow building

before, but he did not expect to see one in Medjugorje. Tom mentioned it to a few people who categorically told him that the painting was not a moving picture.

Tom continued to speak and told us that later on that day at the Third Station, while listening to one of the guides (Moysa), he looked at her and listened to her speak with sincerity. The fact she was doing this every day really touched Tom's heart. Tom said that in that moment, any doubts he had about Medjugorje all disappeared, and for the first time since his wife passed away, he felt a great peace – the dark clouds had lifted. Tom enjoyed the pilgrimage so much, he travelled to Medjugorje another two times that year.

On Tom's second pilgrimage to Medjugorje, a nun said to him, "Strange things happen in Medjugorje." It was then Tom told her his story about how he was feeling on his first pilgrimage, and about seeing the clouds moving in the painting of Our Lady. The nun said, "Tom, do you not understand what was happening? When you saw the clouds moving, they were the dark clouds covering your heart. This was Our Lady's way of letting you know she was taking away the dark clouds."

Editor's note: Michael is from Ireland.

"A Sign from God" – The Light Side

By Dave Sheehan

Around June 2001, Brother Gerard, CFR and I decided to climb Mt. Krizevac (Cross Mountain) in the early morning hours. We wanted to get to the top of Cross Mountain to see the sunrise, as we heard the view was incredible.

So, while it was still dark, we made the trek from our hotel to the base of Cross Mountain and began our climb. As Brother Gerard had never climbed Mt. Krizevac before, I was the "guide."

We did fine through the first two Stations of the Cross. Then, in the dark, I went "left of the anointing" and got us on the wrong trail. Strangely, this trail continued to rise up the side of the mountain as the true path would do, so I thought we should be okay as long as it brings us somehow to the top.

Then, as we stumbled forward, I saw the outline of a big sign in the darkness. I said to Brother Gerard, "It is a sign from God!" With flash lights in hand, we felt our way along the narrow trail and came up to this weathered sign: "Coca-Cola, the Real Thing!"

When we stopped laughing, behind the sign, we found the original trail that I was supposed to keep us on, and came up around the Fourth Station.

So, should you lose your way, let God get you back on the right path. He has His own way of doing things and might even use a bit of His singular humor.

Editor's note: Dave lives in Crowley, TX.

Ivan in Vienna

By June Klins

On September 27, 2016, MaryTV streamed an “Evening of Prayer” at St. Stephen’s Cathedral in Vienna, Austria. Visionary Ivan was invited to speak, and his talk was translated into several languages.

Ivan began by saying that he was very happy to be able to spend time praying together because “Our Lady in a special way is inviting us to prayer at this time, because today’s world, more than ever, is in the need of prayer.” Ivan then paraphrased Our Lady: “With prayer we can change today’s world. With prayer, we are going to change our hearts. And with prayer, we are going to change today’s families.” He emphasized that we have to put God in the first place, in our families and in our lives. “We have come here to the Mother, under Her mantle, to come to Her to find security and protection, to surrender to our Mother all of our needs, our families, to Her as a Mother. She is interceding for us before Her Son.”

Ivan continued, “We are here really as a big family, a true family, a prayer group, a living Church – a Church that prays, a Church that is answering the invitation and that is living the gospel... Our Lady is inviting all of us to found prayer groups; but in the first place, Our Lady is inviting us that our family becomes a prayer group.” Ivan said that there is no living Church without a living family.

Ivan then recounted the beginnings of his own prayer group. “I remember back in 1982, at the time of communism, the apparitions had started. Our village was full of police, and we as young [people] were sitting down on the road in the village, and we prayed. And we prayed on the terraces of our homes, our houses, because that was the weapon. We didn’t have any other weapons [but] to pray.” Ivan said he recalled very well that his friends that he was praying with spontaneously said, “Let us pray together; let us gather together.” That is how they started praying at the Blue Cross. They prayed three days a week – Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. They prayed all three parts of the Rosary. They read Holy Scripture and meditated on what they read. They prayed together for three or four hours. It was their desire to pray together with Our Lady in order to help Her in fulfillment of Her plan. In the beginning, they had about 40 members. The group continued to grow, but over time, many were not able to continue. Now the group, which has continued for 34 years, has about 30 members. They meet two days a week, on Mondays and Fridays, and

continue to grow in faith.

Ivan said that a priest once asked him, “What does it mean for you to be a member of the prayer group?” Ivan replied, “Father, I cannot imagine my life without the prayer group. With the prayer group, I pray and I’m getting more mature. I’m establishing a new relationship to God and that is a joy for me. I cannot imagine my life without the prayer group.”

Ivan said that all of us are invited by Our Lady to start praying within the family. He advised that if you want to found a prayer group outside of your family that Our Lady recommends asking advice from a priest who would be able to help. He said it would be best if a priest could lead the group because we are not always mature and do not sometimes know how to lead, to guide the prayer group. [Unfortunately, with the shortage of priests in some areas, that is not always possible.]

Ivan emphasized that today’s prayer groups are the strength for the living church. He said that Our Lady is inviting all priests to found prayer groups in their own parishes – youth groups, couples groups, “and in that way, the community, the parish will grow in a spiritual way, and they will lead together.” He said the number you start with does not matter because Jesus said, “Wherever there are two or three gathered in my name, I am there.”

“It is important to start to pray, to start together in prayer to encounter God in prayer... I believe and I hope that we will respond to Our Lady’s invitation, and when we return home to our homes tonight, that we will start to pray in our families because today’s families, need to be spiritually healed as never before, because Our Lady says, ‘Today’s families are full of wounds.’” Ivan said that the family could be spiritually healed. “It is important to bring into the family Jesus and the gospel, and then to walk along with Jesus. With the spiritual healing of the family, today’s society will be healed... Open yourselves to Our Lady that She may guide us – guide us to Her Son because in Him is our peace, joy and love.”

Editor’s note: You can view Ivan’s talk and the rest of the evening of prayer in Vienna at http://marytv.tv/?page_id=624.

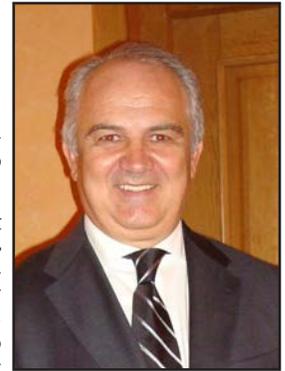
“Prayer Groups are Powerful” – Yes, They Are!

In our January issue, we shared the story about our little Medjugorje prayer group praying for a couple who could not afford a Thanksgiving dinner. *At the same exact time as we were praying*, the prayer was being answered through providential circumstances, and the couple received two big bags filled with the fixings for a Thanksgiving dinner.

One of the members of our prayer group was so touched by this story that she wanted to make sure the couple had a nice Christmas dinner as well. She sent them a gift card for a supermarket that was in their area. When the young man, Andrew, went to the store to redeem the gift card, he noticed a sign on the door that they were “hiring.” He

decided to apply for the job, because it paid more than what he was making at the fast-food restaurant, plus there was a possibility of medical benefits. An interview was set up for him. Our prayer group prayed for him to get the job. We recently found out that he did get the job!!! All of this was because of the original prayer intention on the day before Thanksgiving! In the meantime, his girlfriend, Rachel, has started a nursing program. They plan to marry in the near future!

“Prayer groups are powerful, and through them I can see, little children, that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world.” (Our Lady on June 25, 2004)



Ivan

And Speaking of Answered Prayers....

By June Klins

My father asked me to thank all of you for your prayers for him. On December 23, 2015, he was diagnosed with "a very aggressive" form of prostate cancer. His PSA number was 81, which people said was "off the charts." Because of all the prayers, and through hormone therapy alone (no chemo or radiation or surgery), his PSA number is down to 0.25. The doctor is very happy and said his cancer is in remission now. What is interesting to me is that both those numbers are "Medjugorje" numbers. Our Lady first appeared in '81, and She gives a message to the world on every 25th of the month.

Remember that you can post prayer requests on our website, and also become a member to pray for those intentions.

St. Vitalis of Gaza and Our Lady's Messages

By June Klins

Recently I read about a saint who lived in the 7th century, named St. Vitalis of Gaza, who went out of his "comfort zone" in an unusual way for the conversion of souls. St. Vitalis spent most of his life as a hermit in the desert. In prayer, he received an extraordinary call to minister to the "under-served population" – the young women who worked as prostitutes in Alexandria, Egypt. So at around the age of sixty, he took a job as a day laborer, and at night he would go to the house of a prostitute, where he offered his wages from the day to pay for her company at night. He then would teach her about her dignity and value as a woman and that she did not deserve to be used by men as an object of their lust. He sat beside her and recited psalms and prayers. This practice was condoned by the Church, and many prostitutes in the city abandoned their profession and became good wives and mothers.

But people began to talk about the old hermit, and one morning as he was leaving a brothel, an enraged man attacked Vitalis, hit him on the head, and Vitalis later died. His funeral was attended by many ex-prostitutes.

When I read this story, a couple of Our Lady's messages came to my mind. The first one was, "Do not judge, because you will all be judged." (January 2, 2012) Of course Our Lady is echoing the words of Her Son: "Stop judging, that you may not be judged (Mt 7:1). St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa) said that she never judged anyone. I am guessing, from the reading I have done about him, that our patron saint this year, St. Martin de Porres, never judged anyone either. How many of us can make that claim? Probably very few. I pray a little prayer from St. Faustina's Diary every day for the grace to conquer this vice: "Help me,

O Lord, that my eyes may be merciful, so that I may never suspect or judge from appearances, but look for what is beautiful in my neighbors' souls and come to their rescue."

The second message of Our Lady that came to mind when I read about St. Vitalis was, "My children, great is the responsibility upon you. I desire that by your example you help sinners regain their sight, enrich their poor souls, and bring them back into my embrace." (June 2, 2012) On July 13, 1917, Our Lady asked at Fatima that we say the following prayer after each decade of the Rosary: "O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Your Mercy." Do we just rattle that prayer off, or do we really mean that from our hearts? Do we really desire the salvation of all souls?

Right after the U.S. presidential election, I received a message saying that we should all pray one Hail Mary for the president-elect every day. The intention was for him to be a good leader for our country (which is actually a prayer for ourselves). But when I posted this on my Facebook page, one man misunderstood and replied negatively, writing that he "could think of better people to pray for." I was saddened that this man felt that way. St. Paul wrote to St. Timothy: "First of all, then, I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone, for kings and for all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity. This is good and pleasing to God our savior, who wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth" (1Timothy 2:1-4). If God wants everyone to be saved, who are we to say that we do not want to pray for someone?

St. Vitalis of Gaza, pray for us.

Penance, Penance, Penance

On February 24, 1858, Our Lady said to St. Bernadette Soubirous at the Grotto of Massabielle near Lourdes, France:

"Penance! Penance! Penance! Pray to God for sinners. Kiss the ground as an act of penance for sinners!"

Similarly, in the Third Secret of Fatima, we read, "...the Angel cried out in a loud voice: 'Penance, Penance, Penance!'"

And in Medjugorje, Our Lady continues to ask us to do penance. For example, on August 29, 1982, Our Lady said, "Pray, fast, do penance, and help the weak."

We thank the people who have sent



Sacrifice beads

for the list of sacrifices, or have visited our website for the list. And we are again offering sacrifice beads **free of charge** to our subscribers who would like them as an aid to fasting and penance. The sacrifice beads consist of a string of 10 beads, with a Crucifix at one end, symbolizing your taking up your Cross. When you mentally offer up something to God, you slide one of the beads toward the Crucifix. But for each failing, you move a bead back. This is a good way of examining your conscience throughout the day. Act soon, as our supply is limited.

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MARY IS CALLING YOU

On June 24, 1981 in Medjugorje, Our Lady appeared to six children. She identified Herself as the Blessed Virgin, Queen of Peace, and has continued to appear daily. Her message is PEACE, peace with God and man. Her words to the visionaries, "I have come to tell the world that God exists. He is the fullness of life, and to enjoy this fullness and obtain peace, you must return to God."

Today, all but three of the visionaries have daily apparitions of the Blessed Mother. During the apparitions, the visionaries do not react to light, don't hear any sound or react to being touched. They feel that they are outside of time and space. All the visionaries declare to see the Blessed Virgin as they see other people - in three dimension. They pray and speak with Her.

The Blessed Mother is confiding ten secrets to each visionary (some are chastisements for the world) and promises to leave a visible sign at the place of the apparitions in Medjugorje for all humanity. This time, this period of grace, is for CONVERSION

and a DEEPENING OF FAITH. After the visible sign, those still living will have little time for conversion.

Father Jozo Zovko, who was the pastor of St. James when the apparitions began, has spoken about what he calls "the weapons" or the "the five stones" of Our Lady. They are: prayer with the heart, especially the Rosary; Eucharist; Holy Bible; monthly Confession; and fasting.

The publisher recognizes and accepts that the final authority regarding the apparitions at Medjugorje rest with the Holy See in Rome.

To borrow an original prayer cloth from Medjugorje for a week, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the address below. You must include your phone number. If you want a prayer cloth we made to keep, send a self-addressed stamped business size (4 1/8" x 9 1/2") envelope with \$.70 postage on it.



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