



# THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE

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*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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VOL. 32, NO. 2

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

FEBRUARY 2019

## MONTHLY MESSAGE OF JANUARY 25, 2019

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 day of Our Lady of Lourdes. (See page 3 for a Medjugorje-related healing through Our Lady of Lourdes.) February 11 is also the World Day of the Sick. On February 9, 1982, Our Lady said, "Pray for all the sick. Believe firmly. I will come to help, according to that which is in my power I will ask my Son, Jesus, to help them. The most important thing, in the meantime, is a strong faith." This picture of Our Lady of Lourdes was taken in Germany by Johannes Dittrich on his way home from a pilgrimage to Medjugorje. (See the story about this on page 5.)

"Dear children! Today, as a mother, I am calling you to conversion. This time is for you, little children, a time of silence and prayer. Therefore, in the warmth of your heart, may a grain of hope and faith grow and you, little children, will from day to day feel the need to pray more. Your life will become orderly and responsible. You will comprehend, little children, that you are passing here on earth and you will feel the need to be closer to God, and with love you will witness the experience of your encounter with God, which you will share with others. I am with you and am praying for you but I cannot without your 'yes'. Thank you for having responded to my call."

 Please continue to pray for our spiritual advisor, Fr. Bill Kiel, who has cancer. Thank you.

## Archbishop to Medjugorje Henryk Hoser Reveals Expansion of Shrine

*Adapted from a Sarajevo Times article published January 6, 2019*

Henryk Hoser, Archbishop whom Pope Francis has named as the Apostolic Visitor to Medjugorje, has announced the expansion and construction of a shrine in this town located in Herzegovina.

"An important argument in favor of Medjugorje is the statistics of Medjugorje itself," Archbishop Hoser said in an interview for Vecernji.hr. "We see the number of pilgrims increasing, and not only that pilgrims come from all over the world, but, after their return home, they do everything to keep on living in the spirit they have discovered here in Medjugorje. It seems to me that there are more people in the

world who know where Medjugorje is located than for the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina."

Speaking on the expansion of the shrine, he said that a group of architects is already preparing the project.

"The plan is to extend the space for liturgical celebrations, which will meet all the climatic conditions; it will be cold during summer, and warm in the winter. The open square, the outer altar space, does not protect the people who participate in the liturgical celebrations. We are still thinking we should build a chapel," Hoser said.

*Queen of Peace Productions, qopproductions.org*

## Fr. Marinko Recalls His Visits to Pope Francis!

"Be obedient to Bishop Hoser!" Pope Francis said to me when I told him, "I am the parish priest of Medjugorje and I bring you greetings from Bishop Hoser." It was an unforgettable meeting at the end of the Congress. The Pope emphasized the importance of an open heart and warm welcome for all the pilgrims. Then His Holiness expressed his desire to greet each one of us individually. We were thrilled! When it was my turn to get closer to him, I gave him a rosary made of our Herzegovian thorns and looking at his smiling face I said in one breath: "Parish priest of Medjugorje! Mgr. Hoser



*Fr. Marinko*

sends his greetings!" When Pope Francis heard my words, he kept his hands in mine, he stopped for a moment and said: "Be obedient to Mgr. Hoser!" I guess the Pope felt my

immense joy, so he repeated: "Be obedient to Mgr. Hoser". Then looking at the rosary, he asked: "Is this for me?" I said: "Yes, it's for you!"

When I exited the hall, I almost couldn't believe what had just happened. I was thinking about his message. I had the impression that he wanted to give to me, to all the friars in the parish of Medjugorje, in fact, to all the parishioners and pilgrims, a message that came straight from his heart. It is as if he was saying – by obeying Mgr. Hoser, you are being obedient to me and the Church. In the few words he said, I felt that Medjugorje is in his heart, that he cares for Medjugorje and he wants us all to respond seriously to the mission that was trusted to us. In his words I felt encouragement, but also the great responsibility we all have for Medjugorje."

(Excerpts from Fr. Marinko's report on the Congress of collaborators of the world sanctuaries, about the role of the sanctuaries for the New Evangelization. Rome, Nov. 29, 2018).

*Children of Medjugorje, www.childrenofmedjugorje.com, December 2018 report*

## Message to Mirjana on January 2, 2019

"Dear children! Sadly, among you, my children, there is so much battle, hatred, personal interests and selfishness. My children, so easily you forget my Son, His words, His love. Faith is being extinguished in many souls, and hearts are being grasped by material things of the world. But my motherly heart knows that there are still those who believe and love, who are seeking how to draw all the closer to my Son, who are tirelessly seeking my Son – then, in this way, they are also seeking me. These are the humble and the meek with their pain and suffering which they carry in silence with their hopes and, above all, with their faith. These are the apostles of my love. My children, apostles of my love, I am

teaching you that my Son is not only asking for continuous prayers, but also for works and feelings – that you believe, that you pray, that with your personal prayers you grow in faith, that you grow in love. To love each other is what He asks for – that is the way to eternal life. My children, do not forget that my Son brought the light to this world, and He brought it to those who wanted to see it and receive it. You be those, because this is the light of truth, peace and love. I am leading you in a motherly way to adore my Son; that you love my Son with me; that your thoughts, words and actions may be directed to My Son – that they may be in His name. Then my heart will be fulfilled. Thank you."

Our thanks to Sue Taccone, Diane Niebauer, Joanne and Tom McIntire, Joanne Warren, Charlotte Newcamp, Dianne Yochim, Joan Peterson, Chris Falk, Chris Opron, Omega Cooper, Peggy Chludzinski, Cindy Bielanin, Kathy Luschini, Peggy Smith, Kathy Wayman, Pat Berrier, Barb Sirianni, Estrella Igras, Irene and Dan Zuba, Louise Lotze, Georgia Chludzinski and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the January mailing. We thank Mike Golovich for his photo in this issue. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, our webmaster, Jason Klins, and our prayer group administrator, Patti Millar.

### Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for February

#### Human Trafficking:

For a generous welcome of the victims of human trafficking, of enforced prostitution, and of violence.





## Questions and Answers with Mirjana

*The following was taken from a question and answer session with Mirjana on November 11, 2018.*

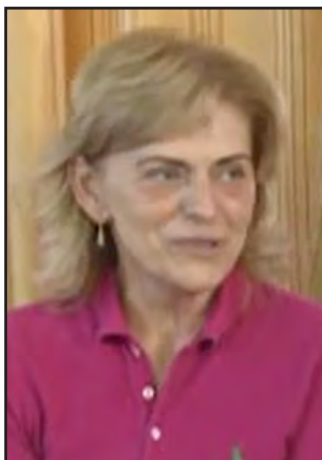
**Q:** What kind of prayer do you pray before and after the apparition?

**M:** I read a prayer book, Bible, and I pray Rosaries, and I talk with dear God, but much more, of course, with Jesus. Our Lady says bring back the Bible into your families.

I forgot to tell you, for example, when Our Lady gives a message to me, She doesn't interpret or explain that message to me. She gives it to me the same way as I give it to you. Same like you, I also have to pray while reading the message to try to comprehend. Those of you who have followed these messages every second of each month, you could notice they are very long, and I can remember the messages exactly word by word, the way Our Lady said it, only for a few minutes immediately after an apparition. That is the reason why immediately – as soon as Our Lady leaves us – I always have Miki with notebook and pen with me. I immediately dictate the message to him in order to write it down. And I personally think that it is not me who is dictating the message, because the message is long, and if I say two sentences to Miki, while he is writing, I am talking with the priest or someone else. And then I turn towards him again. I don't have to be concentrated on it. The words simply come out. Later when I come back into my room to pray, I cannot repeat the message. I can tell you what She spoke about, but I cannot repeat it word by word. That is why I also need the message in a written form after this, and then I pray, I read and I try to comprehend what God desires for me.

I always give advice: do not allow anyone to interpret or explain the message to you personally. That is my opinion. I think that God is talking to every single one of us, and we are not all the same person. We have different lives, different crosses. Many years before, when Our Lady gave a message one second day of the month, one friend of mine said his interpretation, or the way he understood the message, and what I just wanted to tell him, "That's not what Our Lady

intended to say." I stopped because I comprehended She said that to *him*, and She said to me the way I understood it. That is why I always recommend – pray, read the message, and try to comprehend what God is telling you personally, because you as a person are important to God.



Mirjana

**Q:** Is there a reason for the apparitions, why She is appearing?

**M:** There is a *great* reason. In a few of Her messages, Our Lady said, "The fact that I am with you for such a long time shows you how much God loves you, because everything that has been happening here is God's will. Our Lady only does God's will.

**Q:** What is the meaning of the Triumph?

**M:** For me, it means a *lot*, because if Our Heavenly Mother's heart will triumph, it means that we will all be happy. Every mother understands what I'm trying to say, because as mothers we cannot be happy, our heart cannot triumph, if our children are not happy. It means that we will triumph with Our Heavenly Mother.

**Q:** How can we discern our mission in life so that we don't waste our time in life?

**M:** Knowing Our Lady's messages, I think that is my mission, but your mission as well – to spread love, to spread hope, because if we will not spread love and hope, we who claim to know the love of God, then who will? For me, that's the most important thing, because Jesus is love. And if we spread love, we spread Him. When I said that Our Lady didn't want us to talk, but that we talk with our own life, I didn't mean that we just have to keep quiet. But the way I understand Our Lady, we should always pray before that, because when we pray, Jesus is talking through us. But if we do not pray, and we just preach to others, then our words are empty, and we do the opposite. That is why for me personally, prayer is answer to everything, because that is when my God is leading me.

## Fr. Jozo's Eyes Were Healed with Lourdes Water

On July 14, 1962, Fr. Jozo Zovko received his Franciscan Habit. A couple of months later in the autumn, he was conscripted into the army and his novitiate had to be interrupted. He started his military service in Kosovo, but could not complete the full term as he was having difficulty with his eyes. He was sent for some eye examinations to Prestina where he was temporarily discharged from the army. Sometime later he was declared 'unfit for service'.

Fr. Jozo's eyesight began to deteriorate, and one of his teachers sent him to Sarajevo to a famous doctor who said that his cornea should be replaced, but it would be a very difficult,

complicated operation. The procedure did not take place.

One of Fr. Jozo's professors was very concerned about him. He went to Lourdes and prayed for him there, that he would not lose his sight. He brought back some Lourdes water to him and told him how to bathe his face with it and to turn especially to God and Our Lady with faith. Doing exactly as he was told, and placing all his trust in God and Our Lady, his eyes were healed, he could see properly again.

*The Medjugorje Council of Ireland*

*Editor's note: Fr. Jozo was the parish priest at St. James in Medjugorje when the apparitions began in 1981.*



Fr. Jozo in 2004

# Rose Petal Gift from Our Lady

By Louise Lotze

Last summer, I visited my daughter and three grandchildren in Germany where I also combined a pilgrimage to Medjugorje while in Europe. While there, I read a story about a rose petal healing of a child who couldn't walk. It was included with Sr. Emmanuel's August report and had a short video attached. It intrigued me since I would soon be in Medjugorje in October. I decided after watching the video that I would buy roses in Medjugorje to bring petals home.

The healing occurred in August, 2018, very recent, and very dramatic. An Israeli Catholic woman had been to Medjugorje and brought rose petals back home. Our Lady gives Her Motherly blessing to all religious articles as well as rose petals during an apparition in Medjugorje. This friend visited the Hohouad family in Abilene, Galilee. They had a 3 year-old daughter who was born with a disability and couldn't walk. The doctors had stated that this child was condemned never to walk. She brought rose petals to their house and explained where the petals were obtained and sat and prayed with the family. Then she left the blessed petals with them.

In the evening, the grandmother said to the child's mother: "Have you placed the petals on your daughter's legs?" "No," the mother answered. "What are you waiting for?" was the response. The mother then laid the petals on her daughter's inert legs and prayed many Hail Marys and afterwards went to bed, crying all night long. The following morning the father asked his wife: "Why don't you go and see if Our Lady did something for Eleanor?" The mother went and tried to put her on her feet, but – surprise – the little girl stood up on her own and started to walk in front of everyone! She went out in the yard and walked around it several times, amazed at being able to finally walk. Since then Eleanor walks better and the whole family blesses God for the miracle. They made a short video of her first walk. It brings tears of joy to one's eyes to witness this video. The doctors checked Eleanor and confirmed it had to be a miracle since there was no medical cure for her inability to walk. Medical documents attest to an explicable healing for science.

I was convinced that the petals would be a welcome gift to friends back home. Therefore, when I was in Medjugorje in October, I visited the local florist daily, looking for roses to purchase. In all, during the week, I bought two white roses, two red roses and two small pink roses. Since I was staying at the visionary Ivan's pilgrim house, I was able to take the roses to his private chapel where we prayed the Rosary each evening. He had his apparitions around 6:40 p.m. I had placed the roses in a vase there and rotated the different colored roses on successive days. During the apparition, I would ask Our Lady to bless the roses with Her Motherly blessing, and I included another request: "Please dear Mother, kiss each petal, as well." I truly feel confident that She would not refuse my request, being the loving and kind Mother She is.

Usually I return to the U.S after my pilgrimage. However, this year was different. I flew back to Germany to spend three more weeks with my daughter and grandchildren. I

wanted to be there for the twins' 7<sup>th</sup> birthday on Nov. 9. Also, by chance, a Dominican priest told me that he could arrange for my grandson to make his First Confession on Nov. 10, and his First Holy Communion on Nov. 11, before I returned home on Nov. 12. This was such an unexpected blessing for me to be present for this occasion. I was most grateful for Fr. Paul's help to arrange this at his convent church, Holy Cross, where the Eucharistic Miracle of Augsburg is housed and adored after weekday Masses as well as having a statue of Our Lady of Fatima. This statue was given to Germany during post-WWII time to travel to the cities which were destroyed by bombs to offer spiritual support to heal the Germans. I can't help but think that Our Lady was helping to orchestrate this blessed event for my grandson.

Upon my return to Germany, I had my granddaughters help me pull the roses off the long stems and place them on paper towels to dry. I chose the kitchen since it was the warmest room. We layered the petals on the towels and placed them under the microwave cart to dry and prevent mold from growing on the petals. Before I left Germany, I asked my twin granddaughters which petal they wanted. One chose a red one and the other chose a pink one. Fortunately I had a few zip lock baggies in my suitcase. I was able on their birthdays to use a magic marker and write "Happy Birthday from Our Lady. This petal was blessed and kissed by Our Lady in Medjugorje, Oct. 2018." Can you imagine a more wonderful gift than this?



Some of Louise's rose petals

When it was time to pack to leave I placed the petals and paper towels between pages of a Medjugorje magazine from Ireland which I had bought in Medjugorje. I put the magazine in my carry-on bag and managed to get them all home to Ohio with no damage. This was remarkable since there were over 100 petals. I bought snack bags and placed one petal in each bag. When I went to Erie, PA, to help with the mailings of *The Spirit of Medjugorje* newsletters, I was then able to offer a petal to each helper who was present that day.

Since then I have offered petals to people at daily Mass as well as those attending the Adoration Chapel where we meet for a group Rosary every Thursday morning. I also took some to Office Max and had them laminated to preserve them from damage. I have sent these to friends in other states in Christmas cards. Local priests have received them from me also. The petals should not be considered like a rabbit's foot or good luck charm. I make a point to tell everyone the petals are a gift from Our Lady and not a superstitious item to have in their possession. Our Lady in turn asks Her Son for special requests. It may be a physical or a spiritual healing or comfort for someone who prays with the petal. Actually, the spiritual healing is more important than a physical one.

Our Lady is truly a wonderful Mother to all of us. I am hoping this story will plant a seed for someone who goes on pilgrimage to Medjugorje to buy roses there and return home with a blessed gift to share with others. It surely will make Our Lady smile from Heaven. We thank you, dearest Mother.



Stephen at Station XIII in Fulda

## A Medjugorje Blessing in Germany

In 2008, Johannes Dittrich, from Germany, and Stephen Sematiko, from Uganda, traveled to Medjugorje. (The story was in our February 2009 issue.) On the way back to Germany, they were invited to a monastery in Fulda, Germany, where they learned about a hill close by where there is a Way of the Cross similar to the one on Mt. Krizevac. Years before, they were told, visionary Marija Pavlovic-Lunetti and Fr. Slavko Barbaric visited, and Fr. Slavko blessed the Way of the Cross there. The statue of Our Lady of Lourdes on our cover was in a nearby grotto.

A fruit of Medjugorje, Stephen went on to found St. Philomena Primary School, which recently gained national attention in Uganda by ranking a 98% good performance. If you would like to sponsor a poor child to go to this excellent school (\$25/month), visit [greenvillagechildrencenter.org/](http://greenvillagechildrencenter.org/).

## Mysteries of Hope

By Deacon Jerry Peterson

Why I wrote these mysteries [for private devotion]: I love praying the Rosary. I know that in Jesus there is always hope. There is no better way to send our prayers of hope to Jesus than through our mother Mary. These mysteries were given to me by the Spirit as my wife, Joan, and I were praying the Rosary after morning Mass.

### 1. Jesus feeds 5,000.

[Jesus] said to them "There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves." But they said to him, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have here." Then he said, "Bring them here to me," and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied... (Matthew 14:16-21)

### 2. Jesus calls Peter to walk on the water.

Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how [strong] the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him. (Matthew 14: 28-31)

### 3. Jesus restores Bartimaeus' sight.

[Jesus said to him] "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way: your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way. (Mark 10: 51-52)

### 4. Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. [But] even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11: 21-23, 25-26)

### 5. Jesus welcomes the Good Thief into His kingdom.

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23: 42-43)

*Editor's note: Deacon Jerry is the nephew of our late spiritual advisor, Msgr. James Peterson (Fr. Pete, as he preferred to be called). I suspect maybe he got a little help from him while composing these mysteries, especially with the fifth mystery, since Fr. Pete often spoke about St. Dismas, the Good Thief.*

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*"Scripture is better learned through prayer than through study." ~ St. Philip Neri, our patron saint this year*

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## Healing of Memories

Last month, there was a mention of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) in our newsletter. After having read the newsletter, one of our subscribers named Jean called me from North Carolina to tell me about an exercise she had recently heard a priest speak about regarding the healing of memories. She said that the priest asserted this exercise works very well and many people have been healed of memories they have had even since childhood.

Two days after Jean's call, while praying in church, I felt the Lord was telling me that this information should be shared with our readers. So I asked Jean to write it up. The following is what she sent to me.

*Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal memories that He would like to heal. Some are even memories from childhood that may retain the trauma of a child's perspective. While the event does not exist anymore, one's memory of it does.*

*Step 1: Go back to that memory in your mind. It is OK now.*

*Step 2: Then, go back to that memory again and **picture Jesus there**, silent. It may be hard, but Jesus was there!*

*Step 3: Go back to that memory again, and this time **let Jesus speak**.*

*Step 4: Finally, go back to that memory again, and **let Jesus act**.*

*Repeat these steps until all anxiety from the memory is healed.*

*We must allow God's healing presence so that we walk in hope. Disappointments and wounded memories are coupled with fear, which blocks hope. When we invite God to remove all blockages, the river of His Love flows to us and through us! We walk in joy, and that is contagious!*

*As of December January 25, 2019, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 26,811. Thank you*



## Fr. Leon Answers Commonly-asked Questions

*The following is a transcription of a teaching before Mass at St. James Church in Medjugorje on October 24, 2018 by Fr. Leon Pereira, O.P. You can listen to it in the "Sanctuary Snippets" on [www.Marytv.tv](http://www.Marytv.tv).*

Today I want to talk about certain things that people commonly say, or you yourself might have said at one stage—things like: "Why should I go to Confession?" "Why should I go to Mass?" "Why should I go to church?" Now, when it comes to questions like these, we could sit around all day and think about that expression that a lot of Americans use, "What would Jesus do? (WWJD)" The people who say, "WWJD" almost always come up with an answer which is exactly what *they* would do. They come up with mad ideas like, "Of course Jesus would go to gay marriages." That's blasphemous. It's not true at all.

Now, the Catholic Church is the answer what Jesus *did* do rather than what *would* Jesus do. We are the answer of what Jesus *did* do and is still doing through us. So, when it comes to all these questions, that's what we have to ask—"What did Jesus do?"

So, Confession—you might say, "Why should I go to Confession?" "Why should I confess to a priest, especially with the news these days?" (This is what people say: "All these priests are evil and wicked. Why should I go to them?") OK, what is Jesus doing now and what *did* He do? When Jesus rises from the dead, what is the first thing He does to the apostles? He says, "Peace be with you." He breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; those whose sins you retain, they are retained." So Jesus gives Confession as His way of forgiving sins. So, when someone says, "Well no, I can confess my sins to God directly," it's not up to you. It's not up to you to decide how you have your sins forgiven. *It's up to Jesus* and He gives Confession as His way of forgiving sins—what Jesus *did* do.

Then people say, "Why should I go to Mass? I pray much better at home." And again the thing is—you might say, "I pray much better at home. I have lovely warm feelings." "I prefer walking through the forest communing with nature," and things like that. Then you have to tell them, "The warm fuzzy feelings inside are probably heartburn, so don't have chocolate or red wine after 6 PM and take some Gaviscon, all right?" Because it's not about your feelings. It's what *did* Jesus do. Jesus takes bread and wine and He says, "This is

My Body. This is My Blood. Do this for My anamnesis (My memorial sacrifice)." He gives the Mass to us as the way *He* wants to be worshiped. So it's not up to us to decide how we want to worship Him. We do what Jesus *did*.

The third question is, then, they say, "Why should I go to church? The church is full of hypocrites."—things like that. And the short answer, first of all, you say to them, "There's always room for one more." And they should get to Mass, of course. Now if they think they're so perfect, there is very little you can do to help them. But our religion—the Catholic faith—is not individualistic. It's not "me and my personal Savior," "once saved, always saved," "I'm OK and I don't

have to worry about anyone else." No! God loves us as a *family* and chooses to save us as a family. We might, as individuals, be lost—God forbid—but He makes us as a family. That's why we have the Church. All of us are here together. We might not like everyone here, but we have to love them. Everyone here is our brother and sister, and not just here, but throughout the whole world. This is one of those mysteries. At the sign of peace (the sign of peace is not just running around and hugging and kissing the people that you like near to you) when we wish the sign of peace, we are wishing peace to every single Catholic in the whole world—every

single Catholic—and that includes murderers, rapists, pedophiles and all sorts of other people... But we are wishing them peace, that is, if they are repentant. But we're wishing them the peace of Christ. Remember that the sign of peace is much more important than it looks, and it's not just about the people that we like nearby. We must wish Christ's peace to *all* of them. That's why we have to gather as a Church to pray and to worship. Now, as I said, God saves us as a family. This is why we have angels and saints statues, stained glass windows to remind us that during the Mass we are surrounded by angels and saints, and we're joining in their heavenly worship of the Father through the Spirit and through Christ our Head, the Head of the Body of the Church. That is what's going on during Mass—*His* way of worshiping the Father, the Trinity.

So remember the three things. **Why go to Confession?** Because Jesus gives it to us as His way of forgiving sins. **Why go to Mass?** Because Jesus gives us the Mass as His way of worshiping the Father, the Trinity. **And why go to church?** Because Jesus established the Church and calls us together as one Body.



Fr. Leon

## Odette Caught in the Ice on Podbrdo

By Sister Emmanuel

A few days ago [in December 2017], the parish of Medjugorje was shaken by a terrible event – a French pilgrim was reported missing. Odette, an 84 year-old single woman, had come with a group from Nice to celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Odette was working as a nanny for a large family whose mother had died. She is a

simple person, full of common sense who has a deep faith in God's love. That Tuesday morning, on December 5th, the cold with its freezing temperatures fell upon the village. Odette climbed up the hill of Podbrdo and walked away from the normal path in order to explore the blessed place a little more.



Snow in Medjugorje, January 2019

However, because of her poor eye sight, she got lost. Instead of panicking, she prudently decided to stay where she was in order to avoid anything worse happening. She thought that, on one side there was a pit, and on the other very high rocks. But the day went by and no one came to her rescue.

The cold became more bitter. To prevent herself from freezing, she moved around on the spot, constantly praying, and did not get discouraged. She was convinced that the Blessed Mother would send someone who would eventually find her. She told herself, 'Jesus was found in the Temple!' When the dark of the night finally fell on the hill, the temperature dropped to 23 degrees Fahrenheit.

Odette did not want to lie down. She fought her tiredness and cold with all the little strength she had. She prayed and sang and thought of Jesus in His Passion. 'He too was thirsty on the cross, I can bear that too!' she thought. Then she lost her balance and fell on a stone. She was hurt and thought, 'Jesus was flogged, I can endure that too!' She could no longer move her legs, yet her confidence was still not shaken! To make a long story short, it wasn't until the following evening that Odette was found again. She was immediately taken to the hospital in Citluk, where she was warmed up gradually and fully checked out. There was nothing wrong with her, not even a cold!! She was able to come back to Medjugorje where she resumed her pilgrimage with her group from Nice on her own two feet!

On Tuesday, we were told about her disappearance and everyone started praying. When the village heard the news, a wonderful chain of support and supplication was formed. I think that our guardian angels had never been solicited as much as they were during those hours of suspense! We were asking them to warm her up, to give her drink and food in their own ways and keep her in good spirits. Because of the continuing sub-zero temperatures [Celsius], some people thought she had already died from the cold and were asking the Lord to take her soul into Heaven. The angels heard our prayers! By nature she should have felt the cold more than others since she was not dressed for such an ordeal, yet she

told us that she did not suffer from the cold!

After 36 hours, it was one of the 50 first-aid volunteers in Medjugorje, Joseph, a waiter at Viktor restaurant, who found her on Wednesday night at around 11p.m. Odette cannot stop thanking him and all those who ardently prayed for her!

As for me, listening to Odette, I saw an extraordinary witness to the power of faith. She had a childlike faith that allowed her to hold fast without even being afraid! "One must be confident," she said to me with disarming simplicity! "Our Lady would not abandon me!" Praise God, France still has true believers!

The extraordinary physical and moral protection Odette enjoyed reminds me of the experience of the great Russian writer, Alexander Ogorodnikov. He, too, had to live through the "ordeal of freezing". How could he survive his imprisonment in Moscow when in 1986 he was thrown naked into a cell where the walls were covered with ice? The answer is simple and he himself gave witness to it: thousands of people were praying for him, and many had sent him their guardian angels. His torturers wanted him to freeze right there and thus rid the country of this embarrassing Christian. But God had another plan for Alexander: while trapped in the walls of ice, he could feel a mysterious heat and he knew that it came from the prayer of his supporters. He was finally freed and returned to his activities as a witness of Christ.

I could not say how many angels were sent to Odette. God only knows, but we saw their efficiency firsthand! Who among us does not have some people dear to us who are in great physical or moral difficulty? Send them your guardian angel! That angel will be an excellent missionary if you talk to him with faith and affection. Why not do the good that is in our power to do? Why live below our spiritual means and not use these very powerful friends?

*Children of Medjugorje, [www.childrenofmedjugorje.com](http://www.childrenofmedjugorje.com),  
December 2017 report*

## A Medjugorje Moment

*By Pat Berrier*

On Apparition Hill, I saw what looked like the shape of a large shoe print in a rock formation. I fit my foot into the indentation and, for some reason, immediately thought of one of my young nephews—my godson, Jason—who had passed away suddenly. A wave of grief came over me. With a heavy heart, I approached the statue that marks the spot where Our Lady first appeared to the visionaries. I was dazed by the many, many photos, cards, and prayer requests left there by pilgrims.

While I was kneeling there, a butterfly kept flying around me. It was starting to annoy me. At one point, it zoomed toward me like a kamikaze, veered suddenly away and landed on a white envelope in this huge pile—an envelope that had... the name... 'Jason' on it. I froze. All I could do was cry. Though I had seen the sun spin during my pilgrimage and a fellow pilgrim's rosaries turn gold on the trek up Apparition Hill, THIS was the most incredible experience for me. I left with a very light heart.

When I was back home and handing out souvenirs to relatives, I told Jason's grieving parents about my experience

at the statue. His mother, trembling and with tears in her eyes, said that Jason loved butterflies and had, in fact, had her plant a butterfly bush by their front steps. She, who had not wanted any of my souvenirs, then asked if she could have a Medjugorje rosary. We knew that Jason had been with me there on Apparition Hill. I hope Jason's parents think of this often and feel the peace of Medjugorje every time. They deserve to share in my hope, because it was their Medjugorje moment as well as mine.

*Editor's note: Pat is our proofreader. When she shared this story with me, she added, "It really astounds me that my moment was at the same spot as Joe's (last month's) and involved a deceased person [like his story]!"*



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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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