

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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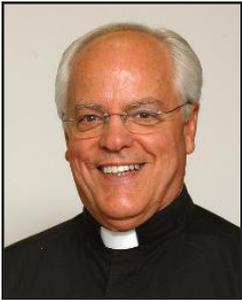
CURRENT MONTHLY MESSAGE OF FEBRUARY 25, 2017

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.



The picture above was taken on Apparition Hill, in June, 2016. The cross marks the spot where Our Lady appeared to Marija in tears and near a cross with rainbow colors on June 26, 1981 and said, "Peace, peace, peace! Be reconciled! Only peace. Make your peace with God and among yourselves. For that, it is necessary to believe, to pray, to fast, and to go to Confession." (See our website for a color picture in the pdf of this newsletter, in which a rainbow can be seen in the rays of the sun.)

"Dear children! Today I am calling you to profoundly live your faith and to implore the Most High to strengthen it, so that winds and storms cannot break it. May the roots of your faith be prayer and hope in eternal life. Already now, little children, work on yourselves in this time of grace, wherein God is giving you the grace - through renunciation and the call to conversion - to be people of clear and persevering faith and hope. Thank you for having responded to my call."



Fr. Bill Kiel

Reflecting on Suffering

By Fr. Bill Kiel

The Lenten season can bring us to a greater awareness of God's love, as we reflect on the suffering and death of Jesus — remembering it was done for us out of God's love for us.

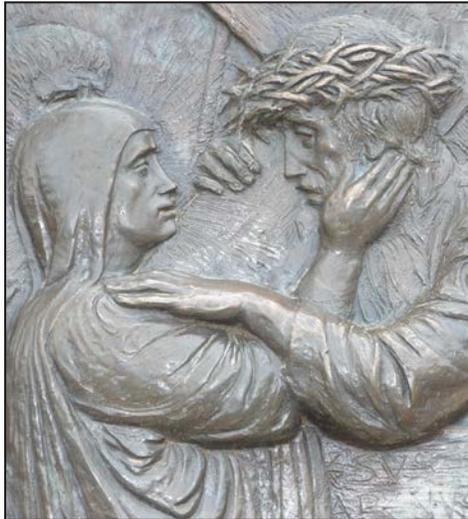
Each of us goes through life with suffering being present in many ways and many degrees. Our suffering may be spiritual, emotional/mental or physical, and at times, a combination of all three. In our lives, we do not usually reflect on our own suffering as we do with the suffering of Jesus. Most people will complain and question, "Why do I have to suffer? Why me?" Don't we sometimes think that life would be much more enjoyable if we did not have to suffer?

We do not like to make ourselves aware of the suffering of others. We often ignore the suffering of people in distant lands and even those near us. During this Lenten season, try to become more aware of others' sufferings and reach out to help them. We have read the words, "...I come to you with a motherly desire that you give me your hearts. ... do so with complete confidence and without fear. I will put in your hearts my Son and His mercy. Then you, my children, with different eyes see the world around you. You will see your neighbor. You will feel his pain and suffering. You will not turn your head from those who suffer, because my Son is turning their heads." (5/2/07)

Have you offered your suffering to Jesus, suffering with Him? When we offer our suffering to Jesus, it reduces the harshness and makes the suffering easier to endure. "I have, and always will have, love for you; for you who suffer and who offer your pains and sufferings to my Son and to me." (12/2/15)

"...do not have hearts that are hard, closed and filled with fear. Permit my motherly love to illuminate them and fill them with love and hope; so that, as a mother I may soothe your pains because I know them, I experienced them. Pain elevates and is the greatest prayer. My Son, in a special way, loves those who suffer pains. He sent me to soothe them for you and bring hope. Trust in Him." (4/2/16)

As we reflect on the suffering of Jesus, we come to realize the degree of love our Father and Jesus had for us. Many have watched the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, and were given a beautiful but horrifying account of Christ's suffering and death. There were times during the movie I could not keep my eyes open to watch the brutal beatings! This movie brought out the reality of what we have read in the accounts of the passion of Jesus. Our sufferings are minimal in comparison.



The Fourth Station of the Cross on Cross Mountain

Our Blessed Mother was present for the suffering and death of Her Son. We can only imagine the thoughts and emotions that She endured during that time. I'd like to recommend two meditations from Mary's eyes following Jesus to Calvary: *Mary takes us through the Stations of the Cross* (Creighton University online) and *Mary's Way of the Cross* (Twenty-third Publications). These meditations will be invaluable as you journey through Lent reflecting on the suffering of Jesus, Mary and yourself.

Most of us would not choose to have suffering in our lives, but it seems no one escapes it. During Lent, try to spend time reflecting on the suffering of Jesus along with your personal suffering and the ways suffering affects you spiritually, emotionally and physically. Hopefully, your spiritual life is greatly enriched.

Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted, Pray for us.

Message to Mirjana on February 2, 2017

"Dear children, you who are striving to offer every day of your life to my Son, you who are trying to live with Him, you who are praying and sacrificing – you are hope in this peaceless world. You are rays of the light of my Son, a living gospel, and you are my beloved apostles of love. My Son is with you. He is with those who think of Him – those who pray. But in the same way, He is patiently waiting for those who do not know Him. Therefore, you, apostles of my love, pray with the heart and with your works show the love of my Son. This is the only hope for you, and this is also the only way to eternal life. I, as a mother, I am here with you. Your prayers directed to me are the most beautiful roses of love for me. I cannot but be where I sense the scent of roses. There is hope. Thank you."

Prayer Intentions of Pope Francis for March:

Support for Persecuted Christians: That persecuted Christians may be supported by the prayers and material help of the whole Church.



Our thanks to Joanne Warren, Sue Taccone, Diane Niebauer, Chris Falk, Emily Arduini, Barb Cesare, Diana Englund, Cindy Bielanin, Georgia Chludzinski, Dianne Yochim, Peggy Chludzinski, Kathy Wayman, Barb Sirianni, Louise Lotze, and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the February mailing. We thank Susannah Klins, Johannes Dittrich, Louise Lotze, and Fr. Milton Process for their photos, Dorothy Cavanaugh and Mary Stumpp for making prayer cloths, and Anita Cugini for making sacrifice beads. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, and our webmaster, Jason Klins.



Vicka

“Suffering is a Great Privilege”

The following is an excerpt from an interview with Vicka in fall of 1988.

Question: You are familiar with suffering because you live it. It is your vocation. Many people are rebellious against suffering and say: What kind of a father is God since He permits so much suffering?

Vicka: When suffering comes, we thank God and sing with joy [which is what Vicka actually does during great sufferings, notably in the taxi which drove her to the hospital on April 26, 1988 to attend to her burns.*] When He sends them to us, God shows His love for us. Suffering is really a great privilege. Also, when God sends us suffering, some crosses, we should not complain and say, “Why me and not others?” That would be to adopt a disgruntled attitude toward God, and our crosses would only be heavier and would become sterile. On the contrary, when God sends suffering and a cross, we should open our hearts to Him and say: “Yes, my God, I accept suffering, this cross in my life.” When we say it, the suffering becomes rich

and makes us a new person. Thus, our suffering will become less heavy... Besides, in this way, suffering becomes more and more a joy. It is thus that one comes to the point where one says: “Thank you, Lord, for giving me this cross.”

Question: And you, Vicka, what do you think of the finality of your own sufferings?

Vicka: I don't know. God knows. I do not look for the reason for my suffering. God knows that and that is sufficient.

Question. Can we offer our sufferings for sinners, atheists, or others, for all our brothers and sisters in difficulty?

Vicka: Certainly. Often the Gospa asks me for sacrifices for the conversion of sinners.

Question: How does one distinguish between the will of God and our own?

Vicka: The good test is that we experience a profound peace in the intimacy of our hearts, and also of joy when we do the will of God. We experience that we grow day-by-day and progress on our spiritual journey. On the other hand, when our desires are egotistical, we feel upset and miserable with ourselves for not making progress.

Medjugorje Messenger, Oct.-Dec., 1988

**A fire in Vicka's home: a pot of oil was left in the oven of the kitchen stove. Toward 1:00 P.M., her mother entered, saw the smoke, opened the oven and threw some water, and the flames shot up. Vicka, who was receiving some pilgrims, ran to help her mother and her nephews with the flames and smoke. She received burns on her face and hands. She and her mother had to go to the hospital. En route, Vicka sang a canticle to the Blessed Virgin. “She must be crazy to sing,” witnesses said to themselves. But she remained happy and smiling. Happily, her burns did not leave any scars.*

Editors note: Although never having heard this story until recently, two days after taking the newsletter plans to the printer, I spoke to a subscriber who was in Medjugorje in April of 1988. She was dropping off gifts for the visionaries but was unable to see Vicka because she was recuperating from the fire. Hopefully she will share her story with us soon.



Congratulations to our webmaster and his wife on the birth of their first child. She was born on February 25, 2017.

To Do Small Things with Great Love...Jesus Asked This of Me

By Anita Cugini

As a child, St. Therese, the Little Flower, carried a string of 10 beads in the pocket of her dress. She used them to keep track of the small sacrifices she would make while going about her daily routine. As each sacrifice was made, she would move a bead from one side of the string to the other.

Many years later, another “Teresa” adopted the “little ways” she practiced, and ultimately became St. Teresa of Calcutta. As she practiced the “little ways” of her saintly predecessor, she performed a never-ending cycle of charity and compassion to the poorest of the poor on the streets of Calcutta, which were often repugnant to those around her. In her own words, St. Mother Teresa would say, “Many of us cannot do great things, but we can all do small things with great love.”

Wouldn't it be great if each of us would commit to doing 10 acts of kindness, or small sacrifices on each of the days

left in Lent, as an act of reparation to our Blessed Savior for the agonies He so willingly suffered for us? Imagine – at the end of Lent, each of us would have hundreds of sacrifices to offer. Multiply that number by 100, or 1,000, or 10,000 [the estimated number of people who read the newsletter online and on paper] and suddenly, what seemed to be an insignificant sacrifice by one solitary individual, now could number in the millions! What a tremendous gift to offer to our Risen Lord!

So when you read this, begin to walk in the footsteps of the two humble women named Therese and Teresa, and strive to do small things with great love.

Editor's note: We still have free sacrifice beads available. Please contact us by mail, email, or phone to receive one. Also, if you would like the sample list of small sacrifices, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to us at Box 6346, Erie, PA 16512.

“She Will Not Disappoint”

By June Klins

On January 24, 2017, MaryTV (www.marytv.tv) aired the testimony of Rick Hess on its “Fruit of Medjugorje” program (#249). My summary of Rick’s story will not do justice to his heartfelt witness, so if you get a chance, please watch it.

Rick introduced himself as a 45 year-old former computer programmer from Madison, Wisconsin. He was raised Catholic, but over time had fallen away from the Church, and had become very materialistic. He said that he had also become very self-centered as a result of reading self-help books.

At one point, Rick was dating a girl who had no faith, and although he had fallen away from the Church, something made him start praying the Rosary for this girl. When he got transferred two hours away, he began praying the Rosary all the way up and all the way back, for her conversion. “Well, it got me thinking about Mary quite a bit,” Rick said. “The Rosary – it’s scriptural – it’s the New Testament on string.” Rick ended up ending the relationship with this girl, but Mary was always on his mind.

Soon Rick heard about Medjugorje from his mother, and felt a tug in his heart to go there. Rick felt it was through the Rosary that he kept getting this call. “I didn’t know why, and I didn’t know for what. I didn’t think I needed anything ... I thought I knew all there was to know about the Church.” He felt called to go in November of 2009, and chuckled that he originally thought he would go in February, because being materialistic, February is cheaper.

Rick found the week before he left to be very difficult. So many reasons not to go kept coming up, and he would have cancelled had it not been for that “tug from Mary.”

The first couple of days of his pilgrimage, Rick questioned, “Why am I here? What can I possibly learn here?” Then on his third day, he went to Adoration. He was so impressed with the thousands of people praying before Our Lord. “They were praying with such profound love, and it was cold outside. It was cold; it was raining.” And he saw how the people did not care. He started praying for God’s love. He prayed so hard that he shook. “And all of a sudden, I had this vision, and it was of my soul. And He showed me a vision of what He created my soul to be, and it was this ball of light, and it was so beautiful, and so pure with love and light. And it was just this brilliance, radiance coming through Him. And I was led to believe that this is His grace coming through us (motioning). And He showed me what happens as we sin. And as we sin, it’s like splashes get splattered on its soul, where light can no longer go through. And then He showed me a picture of my soul. It was pitch black. There’s no love, no light coming through it.” Rick sighed, “And I thought I was doing fine.” “And he showed me what happens in Confession. In Confession, all that gets polished off and cleaned, and it’s a brilliant ball of light again.”

After that, Rick could not wait to go to Confession. It had been over 20 years since his last Confession. “I didn’t think

I needed it. I always figured – I knew in the back of my mind I should go – but I had rationalized my sin. I thought that Jesus would forgive me, but He made it clear that evening...” The next day Rick headed to the confessionals. “I’ve never seen so many people in line for Confession. Everywhere I looked there were just hundreds of people in line for Confession.” When he walked into the confessional the first thing the priest said was, “Welcome home!” When the priest gave him absolution, “it was like the first day of my new life. It was like there was so much freedom in that feeling. It’s like I couldn’t love Jesus enough. I wanted to get out on the rooftop and just tell everybody about this place and about how much love there is.”

When Rick got back home, after a few weeks he felt the grace “had worn off,” and he got into a bit of a rut. But



Rick Hess

the following November, he got called to Medjugorje once again. At first, he again began questioning why he was there. Then on the third day, he went to Adoration. This time he was praying for a woman in the group who had recently lost her father. He prayed so hard for her that he shook. He wanted to know if her father had made it to Heaven or Purgatory. So he asked, “Is her father OK?” He prayed, “I will suffer whatever I need to suffer for that soul to get her father into Heaven.” Then he heard a subtle voice say, “Nothing further is required.” He thought it was his imagination, but he heard the same voice say, “No.” He asked this three times and got the same answer each

time. After the third time, “it was like this big entire infusion of grace overcame my entire body, and I felt love like I never felt love before.” Rick said he saw things from God’s perspective. “It was like we are all connected through His Mystical Body of love, and if another soul is hurting, we’re hurting, too. And that’s why we need to pray for each other, and that’s why we need to suffer for each other.”

Rick thinks his experience lasted just seconds, and then he felt a bolt of heat go into his back. “It ripped (gesturing) into my soul and it felt like ...fingernails on my skin. It ripped so hard.” “I was on my knees, shaking, praying, begging for His forgiveness – for all my sins, for everything that I’ve ever done to Him, all of the stuff I had forgotten about, for all the things, times, He wished me to do something and I ignored Him, for all the times I knew better, all the times I rationalized my own sins. It’s like I couldn’t beg for his forgiveness enough.” Rick continued, “And the only thing he showed me was love. It was the most incredible love I’ve ever experienced in my life. Words cannot describe it.” Rick knew at that moment that he needed to change his life.

When Rick got back to Wisconsin, he began praying the Rosary every day and going to daily Mass. He said that cleansing the “gunk” out of his soul was not easy. “It’s like surgery, when you have to face the reality of your own sins.” “But,” he added, “Jesus does it with gentle love.”

Rick got called back to Medjugorje the following October (2011). "That trip was special. Mary – She taught me how to love Her Son. She taught me how *love is sacrifice*." He attested, "If you ever want to know how to love someone, who better than a mother, because there's nothing like a mother's love. And She's so gentle and She's so meek and so humble. And She won't go where She's not invited." He added, "We must always invite Her into our hearts, and She will *not* disappoint."

Every morning in Medjugorje, Rick would get up and ask, "What would You like me to do?" The last day he was there, he was up on Cross Mountain early in the morning. "I was just like a little kid five years old – I was just so full of love for Him. 'What do you want me to do next, Father? What do You want me to do next?' And all I heard was 'priest.' I looked around. I kind of freaked out a little bit. I said, without even thinking, 'I know that already, but what do You want me to do next?' Three times – 'priest.'"

"It took the grace here to get rid of my bullheadedness, my stubbornness, for Jesus to get through to me... He'd been calling me my whole life, but I never listened. There's something special here. It's so filled with grace."

When Rick returned, he called the vocation director of his diocese. He studied in the seminary for two years until they asked him to take two years off because he was "too private in prayer."

Rick continued to work on his philosophy degree and continued to return to Medjugorje. "I kept coming back here because there's so much love and peace here and you keep learning. Every time I come here, I learn something more. It is so peaceful here, and every time I come with a group of people, I see the same thing – I see them come with loads of luggage on their arms. I see them leave on fire with the Holy Spirit."

While he was on Cross Mountain that last trip, Rick found out why the diocesan route was not working out. As he was praying for other people, he heard a voice say, "Franciscan. That is the question you wish to ask me." Rick said that in his heart he did want to ask that, but had not, because he was busy praying for other people. "He knows what's in your heart. That the best I can put it – before you even ask."

"There's a peace here that I don't experience anywhere else... You know, I feel the Holy Spirit very powerful here." I do know it's that the messages of prayer, fasting, Scripture reading daily, Confession and Holy Mass – this is Catholicism. I see the thousands of people in Adoration praying... I see the thousands of people in Confession. I read all of Her messages and Her messages are all about love and fasting. And I learned about love from Her. Love is sacrifice."

Rick explained that if you want to learn about someone, it would be incomplete unless you experience what that person experiences. "That is why we fast. That is how we love. Jesus is all love. He sacrificed for us. When we deny ourselves, when we fast, we sacrifice. We are teaching ourselves that our soul is in charge of our body and not the other way around. (And believe me – five, six years ago I thought the other way around.)" He continued, "When we fast, when we deny ourselves, that's exactly what Jesus did. He gave

Himself completely on His way to the Cross. If Jesus is love, and we want to understand Him more completely, we do that by experiencing His sacrifice of denial of self. When we do that, when we fast and deny ourselves, and suffer for other people, we're learning about Jesus more completely. Jesus is all love. So we're growing in love deeper. That is what Mary taught me here. That is what She taught me about loving Her Son, about how to love Her Son – with your whole body, and your whole being."

"That's what Medjugorje is about. Whatever the Vatican says about the apparitions, I'll believe. You know it is what the Holy Spirit wishes for. I don't even think about



Adoration in Medjugorje

that stuff. You know, I'm thinking, if I'm going to be a priest and I come here and I see those thousands of people praying in Adoration, see those thousands of people going to Confession, I'm going to ask how they're doing it. I mean honestly, how are you doing it? I go back to the United States and I see the Adoration chapels empty. Here they're by the thousands, and not just once in a while. It's three, four times a week. You can't get in there enough. You can't get room."

"You know, I feel so at peace here, that nothing else matters. Nothing else matters. I come here as much as I can to get 'juiced up' on the Holy Spirit. And you just want to share it with the whole world. You want to hug Mary and you want to thank Her for everything. And you want to just thank Jesus for everything – because you can never thank Them enough, because you don't deserve any of it."

Rick said that every trip is different, and that on this one, "I learned how to accept my faults better, that Jesus can still work through me with all my faults. And sometimes it's hard to believe it, because Satan does a wonderful job of pointing out all our faults. And now I just say, 'Thank you, Jesus. Thank you for the lesson in humility.' And you just want to love everybody. You want everybody to experience His love in the way that I have here (and everybody else and thousands of pilgrims here). You wish you could just inject it in people. But you have to surrender. You have to surrender and be open to it, because Jesus will not interfere with your free will. It is a gift. So when you come here, you have to just open your heart and say, 'Teach me, Father. Help me, Father. Help me understand where I need to change. Help me, Mary, understand how to love Your Son.' And She will not disappoint."

As of February 25, 2017, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 17,301. Thank you to all who have accepted our "anniversary gift" to you this year and have renewed your subscriptions by having a Mass said for Our Lady's intentions.

If Mary Calls You, Do Not Fear – Trust

By Dave Wayman

It must have been frightening to be the very young Jewish girl, Mary, at the time She was confronted with the choice presented by the Angel Gabriel. She wanted to please God with Her life, but She had to be aware and terrified of what might happen to Her if She became pregnant without a husband. Abandonment by Joseph? Shunning by family members? Village gossip? Stoning? Death?

But She trusted in God, and since that time, all generations have called Her blessed.

During the season of Lent 2016, I felt Mary's call to go on a mission trip to Africa. I had been fasting and abstaining from sweets as a Lenten penance, but I thought that somehow I should be doing more. I remembered reading in *The Spirit of Medjugorje* newsletter about a school that was being built by Stephen Sematiko in the Masaka district of Uganda.

Stephen was familiar to me because there had been several stories published about him over the years in the newsletter. He believed in Our Lady's appearances in Medjugorje and had worked tirelessly to spread the word and messages of Medjugorje throughout Uganda. His efforts eventually led him to establish the Green Village Children Center to help children, many of whom were orphaned due to the epidemic of HIV/AIDS.

If these children were to have a better chance for a life different from their parents', they would need moral grounding with a good Catholic education and to learn English so that they would be prepared to flourish in Uganda's transitioning economy. Stephen was determined to establish a Catholic school as a practical step to getting these children on the right path.

Uganda is a very poor country, and the biggest challenge Stephen faced was getting donations to build the school and finding donors willing to sponsor children so that they could attend the school. The new school was called Saint Philomena Primary and Nursery School and it opened in February of 2016. I decided to sponsor a student, David Kiseka, who hopes to someday become a Catholic priest. My wife, Kathy, decided to sponsor his little brother, Augustine.

In setting up the sponsorships, Pam Kossan, the founder and director of the 501(c)3 nonprofit Mary Mission, Inc., encouraged me to come to Africa on the mission trip they had planned for July of 2016. I was reluctant to commit to something so radically different from anything in my experience and I became somewhat alarmed as I read the list of warnings that Pam provided: get inoculations for Yellow Fever, Typhoid, Tetanus and get Malaria pills; bring lots of sunscreen and mosquito repellent of at least 50% DEET. Mentally I was imagining that I would probably also need a machete, snake bite kit and a side arm, items that were requirements on the Tarzan movies I used to watch when I



Dave with sponsored children,
David and Augustine

was a kid in the 1950s.

I thought about it, and prayed about it for many days, trying to decide if it was worth the expense and risk. Before long, apprehension melted away and I got this feeling that I needed to do this. I think that was Mary's calling. Through Her intercessions, all fear left me and I just trusted that all would be well.

And was it ever!

What I was able to contribute was to bring four loaded suitcases of supplies for the mission. We brought the children 400 t-shirts and 400 dresses, along with dental supplies, shoes and some school supplies, all of which were appreciated by the children and people of the villages.

What I didn't expect to receive was the joy that came from touring the new school and feeling the excitement; distributing the clothing and supplies and seeing the gratitude; meeting

the children and realizing how beautiful, open and loving they are; and to learn about African culture first hand. We are all children of God the world over.

After several days of working at the school, on Sunday we celebrated. The first Mass to be held on the site was said by Father George William, who also blessed all of the new classrooms during the ribbon-cutting ceremony. We also participated in the ground-breaking ceremony for the new church to be built on the site: Our Lady Queen of Peace church.

All of the people of Lwabikere and surrounding villages turned out for the day and there was a great deal of excitement. The children entertained us with singing, dancing and plays. Then the event evolved into a dance party of unimaginable proportions. I will never forget the day.

The final three days were spent on a safari to Murchison Falls National Park and was a great way to unwind after all the excitement. Our Lady has encouraged us to spend time outdoors: "Find peace in nature and you will discover God the Creator, Whom you will be able to give thanks to for all creatures; then you will find joy in your heart." (7/25/01)

When I decided to go on the mission trip, I thought I would be doing something great for God; but I now realize that you cannot outdo God in anything. He gave me blessings a thousand times greater than anything I offered to Him.

I'm sure Our Lady could say the same thing. When challenged, She calmly and peacefully chose to serve our Lord, trusting that all would be well. If She invites you to do anything, do not fear. Trust. She loves Her children and so does Her Son.

Editor's note: If you are interested in the Mission trip to Uganda in July, 2017, you can call Pam at 1-701-530-9310. If you would like to sponsor a child or send a small one-time donation for their building fund, you can visit greenvillagechildrencenter.org. In the U.S., donations are tax-deductible to Mary Mission.

Pope Names Envoy to Medjugorje

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Without commenting on the authenticity of alleged Marian apparitions in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Pope Francis has appointed a Polish archbishop to study the pastoral needs of the townspeople

and the thousands of pilgrims who flock to the town each year. The pope chose Archbishop Henryk Hoser of Warsaw-Praga as his special envoy to Medjugorje the Vatican announced Feb. 11.

Archbishop Hoser: “I Believe in Mary, in All of Her Manifestations”

Following his appointment as the Holy Father’s “special envoy” to Medjugorje, Archbishop Henryk Hoser has given a short interview to the Italian website *La Fede Quotidiana*.

He was asked if he had expected his commission and replied that he didn’t know the reason why Pope Francis assigned him the post. “Of course, I am grateful,” he continued “I will give it all my commitment. The mission does not alarm me.”

Questioned about being defined a ‘conservative’ bishop Msgr. Hoser said, “I do not define myself in that way. Rather, I am a man of the Church who seeks to be faithful to the Word, to doctrine and tradition, to all the documents. If this means ‘conservative’, then I’m conservative.”

The Polish prelate then agreed that the people of Poland generally nourish a positive feeling towards Medjugorje and added: “The Catholics of this nation, which is deeply Marian, have a positive view about Medjugorje and a lot of them go there, as from other nations, so this means something. But I will not deal with theological aspects or apparitions, only with the Pontifical commission. My task is pastoral.”

And the seers? “For me they are neither a problem or the problem. I repeat, they are not part of my commission.”

It was put to the archbishop that John Paul II harbored

good feelings towards Medjugorje. Msgr. Hoser responded: “He was devoted to the Virgin Mary in general, including that of Medjugorje. It’s not a bad thing.”

Archbishop Hoser is noted for his defense and promotion of family values and confirmed the Virgin’s role in this. “It’s true. It’s very important to invoke Mary for the protection of the family, formed by a man and a woman united by the sacrament of marriage. At Medjugorje we find the Rosary, Eucharistic adoration, fasting and penance are present, and these encourage the development of faith.”

Asked about the ‘fruits’ of Medjugorje the “special envoy” reiterated that his role is confined to pastoral issues and not doctrine, “not to the issue of truthfulness”. He added, “With regard to the fruit in souls, I find positive. By fruits I mean the practice of the sacraments, conversions, change of life, participation in the Mass. This is what happens at Medjugorje – we cannot deny it or do without it pastorally.”

Asked about his recent recovery from malaria and the rumor that he had prayed to Our Lady of Medjugorje, Archbishop Hoser responded: “I contracted malaria in Africa. I have prayed to the Virgin. I believe in Mary, in all Her manifestations.”

www.themedjugorje.witness.org

Medjugorje’s parish priest Marinko Šakota responded to the the news of the appointment of a special envoy saying: “This is an answer to prayer, a moment of grace and joy, and also a time of great responsibility for the parish of Medjugorje.”

“Do Not Waste Time Posing Questions”

By June Klins

The beginning of February was particularly difficult for me personally. The 28 year-old son of friends died unexpectedly.

Although I knew better, I still questioned why God allowed this to happen. The parents of the young man are such good and holy people. Why do they have to endure this suffering? I struggled all day with this, and the next morning, I heard a gentle whisper in my heart from Our Lady. “Read the message of January 2 again.” And so I did. The following words jumped off the page: “*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.*” I printed these words and placed the paper in my purse so I could re-read them whenever I began to wrestle with this. Providentially at Mass that same day, I saw



Our Lady of Sorrows card

the parents of the young man. I have never seen them at that Mass before. They belong to a different parish. As I offered condolences after Mass, I felt prompted to share Our Lady’s

words. The mother asked for the paper, which I gladly gave her. I later printed out another copy for myself.

The day after the funeral, my friend and Adoration partner for many years also died unexpectedly. My Adoration partner was one of the most loving, caring, giving persons I had ever met. She worked as a caregiver and was such a gift to the people she cared for. I wondered why God would take her when she still had so much more to give. I took out the paper and read it: “*My children, do not waste time posing questions to which you never receive an answer...*”

After sharing how these words of Our Lady comforted me, someone suggested that I should make cards with these words to share with others. And so that is what I did. A picture of Our Lady of Sorrows, drawn by subscriber Jeff Tiner is on the front of the card. If you would like a card, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to us at P.O. Box 6346, Erie, PA 16512, and mark “Our Lady of Sorrows card” on the envelope.

The Spirit of Medjugorje
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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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