

THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE
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www.spiritofmedjugorje.org

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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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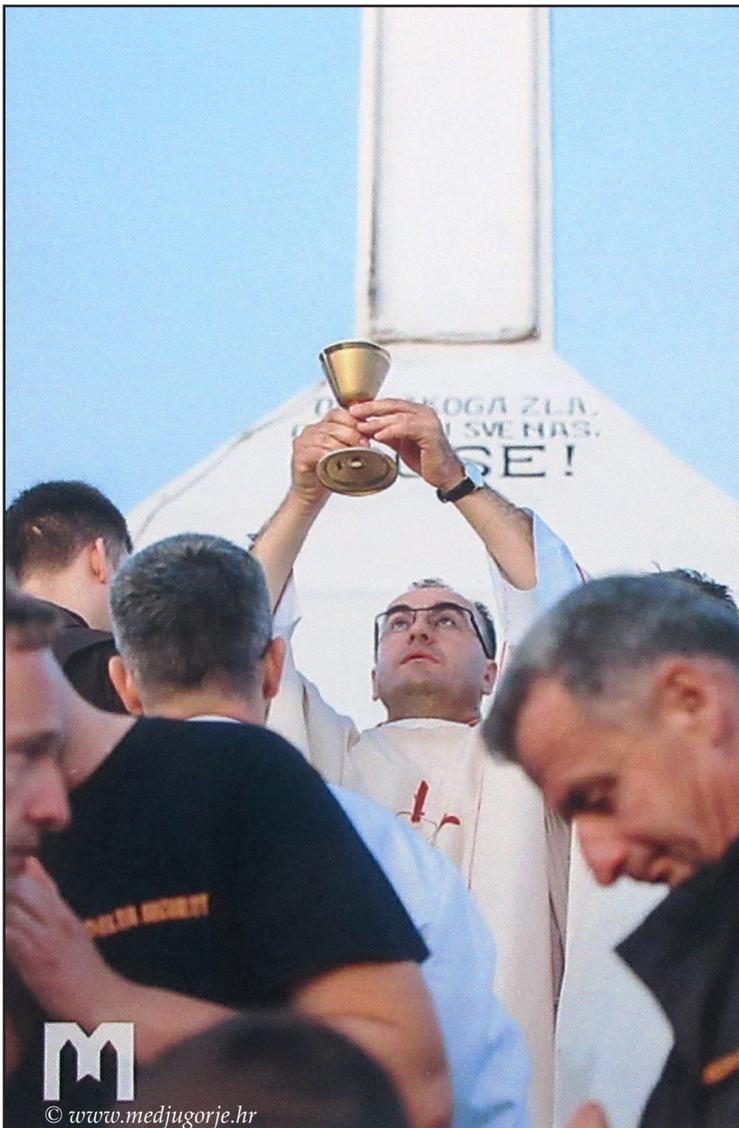
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MONTHLY MESSAGE OF AUGUST 25, 2019

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.



“Dear children! Pray, work and witness with love for the Kingdom of Heaven that it may be good for you here on earth. Little children, God will bless your effort a hundred fold; you will be witnesses among peoples, souls of unbelievers will feel the grace of conversion and Heaven will be grateful for your efforts and sacrifices. Little children, witness with the Rosary in hand that you are mine and decide for holiness. Thank you for having responded to my call.”

September 14 is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The picture above was taken on Mt. Krizevac, better known as Cross Mountain. Cross Mountain is one of the most visited pilgrims' destinations in Medjugorje. Every Friday, parishioners and pilgrims pray the Way of the Cross on this mountain. Traditionally, Holy Mass is celebrated on Cross Mountain on the first Sunday after the Feast of the Nativity of Mary and for the closing of the Youth Festival. The picture above was taken at the closing of the 2019 Youth Festival. You can read about the Youth Festival in this issue.

Our spiritual advisor, Fr. Bill Kiel, is unable to write for us at this time, so several "guest writers" have agreed to "pinch hit" for Fr. Bill in his absence. Please continue to pray for Fr. Bill. He is very appreciative of the prayers.

The Messages of Our Lady

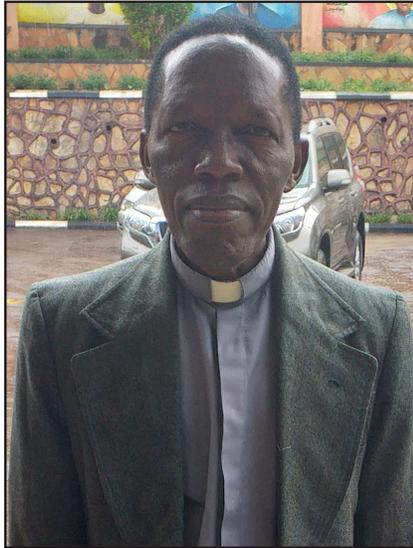
By Fr. Frederick Kazibwe

Dear friends and members of Medjugorje prayer groups, I wish to express my deep affection to the messages of Mother Mary that unite us. Although I have never been to Medjugorje, I read about many Christians (bishops, priests, religious and laity) from the internet, who have testified to the spiritual fruits of these messages, in which Mother Mary calls us to pray and love each other.

Peace – everyone longs for peace today. This is a gift received in Medjugorje through our Mother Mary. It is about our inner peace, and also knowing that we are all brothers, that conflict and violence are not a solution, that we should share this peace with others.

Conversion and Confession – "Repent and believe in the Gospel!" (Mk 1:15) These are the first words that the Messiah addressed to humanity – a call to conversion and repentance. Also, at the beginning of the 20th century, at Fatima, the same message was addressed particularly to this present century. It was given with special insight into the "signs of our time."

She always comes back to the theme of **Prayer**, telling us not to get tired. Her call to **Repentance** is a Motherly one; at the same time, it is strong and decisive. The love that "rejoices in the truth" (1 Cor. 13) is capable of being clear-cut and firm. The call to repentance is linked with a call to prayer. For many centuries, Our Lady's messages indicate the Rosary, which can rightly be defined as "Mary's prayer," the prayer in which She feels particularly united with us. She prays with us. The Rosary prayer embraces the problems of the Church and the problems of the whole world. In it, we also remember sinners, that they may be converted and saved, and the souls in Purgatory.



Fr. Frederick

I used to only read the messages to myself, but when I started teaching the Novices at the Missionary of the Poor in Uganda, I took them to class. I do not miss any messages (nowadays, they are easy to get from the internet). Each time I go to class, I take the messages and I read them at the end of my class. The youth love them. They are very helpful.

The first time I wrote an article in *The Spirit of Medjugorje*, it was about Divine Mercy and the acts of Mercy. I have been blessed by the Christians who give me things to give the disabled in the Missionary of the Poor pastoral home. Some of the youth in our parishes come from broken families. Some messages from the media are contrary to what our faith is teaching us. They also have a problem of unemployment, poverty and hunger. But I always tell them that although times are hard, we have to listen to the voice of Mother Mary, respect our parents and the elders in the community, and to pray for them.

I've had so many blessings, ever since I started reading the messages. For example, I met a Christian from Mexico who had come to tour the country, and he had been to Medjugorje. My work of evangelization has improved. I want to do Agritourism – a project that will provide employment opportunities to the youth and also give economic benefits to the local community.

When I read messages to people with problems, they may not take me seriously, because they think I do not know what they are going through in real life. However, from the message of May 25, 1996, Mother Mary tells us that She will intercede for us and help us become the light in helping others, and our souls will also find salvation.

Editor's note: Fr. Frederick is assigned to the Busega Parish in the Kampala Archdiocese in Uganda.

Message to Mirjana on August 2, 2019

Dear children, great is the love of my Son. If you were to come to know the greatness of His love, you would never cease to adore and thank Him. He is always alive with you in the Eucharist, because the Eucharist is His Heart. The Eucharist is the heart of faith. He has never left you. Even when you tried to go away from Him, He has not [left] you. That is why my motherly heart is happy when I watch how you – filled with love – return to Him, when I see that you are coming to Him by the way of reconciliation, love, and hope. My motherly heart knows that when you set out on the way of faith, you are shoots – buds. But along with prayer and fasting you will be fruits, my flowers, apostles of my love; you will be carriers of light and will illuminate all those around you with love and wisdom. My children, as a mother I am imploring you: pray, think, and contemplate. Everything beautiful, painful and joyful that happens to you – all of this makes you grow spiritually, so that my Son may grow in you. My children, surrender yourselves to Him, believe Him, trust in His love, let Him lead you. Let the Eucharist be the place where you will feed your souls, and afterward, will spread love and truth – will bear witness to my Son. Thank you.

Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for September

The Protection of the Oceans:
That politicians, scientists and economists work together to protect the world's seas and oceans.



As of August 25, 2019, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 28,084.

Archbishop Henryk Hoser – Press Conference in Medjugorje – August 1, 2019

Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening! We are gathered in this very important moment to speak of the event that has a wide and important meaning. Throughout the year in the life of Medjugorje, the Youth Festival has the most important place. Why is it important? Because it gathers the biggest number of pilgrims. And it is important because these pilgrims are young. And they are our future, the future of our world, of a better world. The young people are our hope. This year we celebrate the 30th Youth Festival.

This encounter is important because this encounter is putting into service the abilities of all who work here. And this role of the media is important because it will pass on the message of Medjugorje.

What is Medjugorje? Medjugorje is one simple parish. There is no other title for Medjugorje. It is not a shrine or a basilica. It is a parish that is open to all the parishioners who live here, and it affects all the other parishes here and around the world. During the whole year, pilgrims are coming from the whole world, and today they are coming from at least 80 countries.

From the material point of view, Medjugorje is nothing special. Medjugorje is offering a completely natural landscape. And what happens is that pilgrims are gathering from all over the world. They carry all different situations. But here they find communion. Here we discover that we are all sons and daughters of one Father. We discover that we are all sons and daughters of one Mother. We are all here under the influence of the Holy Spirit. And this phenomenon we will see during this Youth Festival.

People who come here, especially young people, discover one dimension of life that was hidden. It is the spiritual dimension of life. This is the most important dimension of human life. It is the dimension that creates – the spiritual dimension we call the vertical dimension. And this is what the two hills show, Apparition Hill and Cross Mountain. For you to feel these mountains, you must climb. And all those who are at the base of the mountain get up and climb.

For Medjugorje, two things are necessary. *Time* – it takes time, at least one week to be here. It also takes *place* – here in Medjugorje we have three places. The first place is the church. Second is Cross Mountain, Cross Mountain which was consecrated to Christ the Redeemer. The third is Apparition Hill. It is the place of Our Lady.

The first sign is the church. A few days ago, we celebrated the feast day of St. James, the patron of Medjugorje. The parish, established in 1892, was consecrated to the patron St. James, the patron saint of pilgrims. Just like pilgrims go to St. James of Compostela, pilgrims now come to St. James of Medjugorje. The second sign here is Cross Mountain. No one knew its future meaning. The Cross was erected in 1933, the Jubilee Year of the Death of Christ. And the third sign is Apparition Hill, where Our Lady came. This is the “Holy Triangle” of Medjugorje.

Also, another sign is the new church which was consecrated in 1969. At that time, it was too big – too big for the population that lived here at that time, because it was a small village. Now this has become the world’s parish, and

that church is too small for everyone.

The phenomenon of Medjugorje has held for over 38 years. In these 38 years what has been created is something offered to pilgrims, something most precious. What was created were the

paths where we climb Apparition Hill and we meditate on the Mysteries of the Rosary. And on Cross Mountain, we pray the Way of the Cross. And during these 38 years, we worked on the Canon of Medjugorje, the Liturgy and Paraliturgie that happens around the church. Medjugorje has a weekly program. We need to spend at least one week here, because what is offered is very different.

Catechesis is offered and Holy Mass in many languages. Pilgrims have the possibility to participate in spiritual retreats and conferences. And what is so special in Medjugorje are the seminars on fasting and prayer in silence. And so, for one week the pilgrims participate in prayer, are fed on the Word of God and in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, as they live on bread and water. Seminars on fasting and prayer are offered to saturate us with all that is offered here. We spend too much in this society and produce loads of garbage because of consumerism. And this experience of fasting offers us physical freedom in order to open up space for the spiritual.

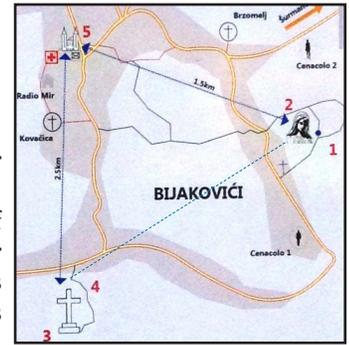
We also have the prayer program in the evening. To keep us centered on God, we pray the Rosary and then Holy Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament each day. The phenomenon of Medjugorje is also that we have confession. You could say that Medjugorje has become “the confessional of the world”. Here we confess in all languages. You know that in some of the countries personal confession has vanished. It doesn’t exist anymore. People here discover the Sacrament of God’s Mercy. What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation? What is the Sacrament that gives us peace in our hearts? There are so many confessions – confessions of pure conversion that take place here. They are numerous.

When it comes to conversions, we calculate that during the duration of the phenomenon of Medjugorje, there have been about 800 priestly and religious vocations.

All of this I present to you is attracting many. All parishioners who live here feel responsible to accept all the pilgrims in a normal brotherly love. Everyone here feels well.

So, I greet all the journalists who came for the festival so you will hear, see and witness the miracles that take place here. I hope you will see it. There is a great preparation, also the music, which will be like a symphony, with an international choir. Beautiful singers!!

To organize this event, and to accept all pilgrims is possible only through all the lay people who work here in this parish. Also, we have young people from the parish. They have T-shirts, blue. Have a good time during your stay in Medjugorje.



Map showing the “Holy Triangle in Medjugorje”

Transcribed by Cathy Nolan, www.marytv.tv

“Yes, I Will Carry This Cross”

By June Klins

Although most testimonies about Medjugorje touch my heart, some do more than others. Fionnuala Prunty’s heartfelt witness on “Fruit of Medjugorje” (Episode #367) on www.marytv.tv was one I knew I wanted to share with our readers. I will not do it justice in this short space, so I hope you will go to Mary TV and watch it in its entirety.

Fionnuala, who is from Ireland, began praying the Rosary around the age of three. By about age six or seven, she was praying at least five Rosaries a day! “Our Lady always protected me. She went everywhere with me,” she attested.

When Fionnuala was 16 years old, she and her 15 year-old sister and 10 year-old brother were hit by a drunk driver two days before Christmas. Her leg was all twisted and in two halves. A priest anointed all of them before the ambulance came. Her sister died on Christmas Day. Her brother had a fractured skull, but went home after a week. Fionnuala spent the following year in and out of hospitals. At one point, they put a pin in her leg and it kept coming out, so they had to remove it and, when they did, her leg bone telescoped and she ended up with one leg 1 1/4 inch longer than the other. So she had to wear a corrective shoe on the shorter leg for balance.

Fionnuala always wanted to be a nurse, but after completing her schooling and passing the state exams, she was disappointed to find that no hospital in Ireland would hire her because of her leg. So she took a civil service job, but did not like it. She was depressed and missing her sister. One night, her cousin, a priest, took her to a prayer meeting, and she thought, “I’ve come home.” She continued to pray the Rosary every day. “Our Lady was my special friend,” she said.

Eventually, Fionnuala got married and had a baby. She realized right away that something was wrong with him because he screamed all the time, turned blue, and wouldn’t feed. She took him to three doctors who all told her she was an over-anxious mother. When the baby was three months old, she finally found a doctor who listened to her, and told her to take him immediately to the Children’s Hospital. The doctor there told her the baby had congenital heart disease and that he was going to die, but that they could give him some medication to stabilize him and possibly do surgery.

Fionnuala said that after the baby was on the medication, for the first time in his little life, he was able to smile. Sadly, he did not survive the operation though. “I remember holding him in my arms when he was dead and just thanking God that I was the mother of such a beautiful baby boy. I knew that Our Lady, the Blessed Mother, knew how I felt because She had Her dead Son in Her arms as well.”

The doctors told Fionnuala that she could have another baby, that it was not genetic. So, a year later she had her second son, and he was born exactly the same way. They baptized him and then rushed him to the Children’s Hospital. They told her to take him home and they would do open heart surgery in a few months to a year. At three months,

he had heart failure, so they rushed him to the hospital. He was to have the operation on Spy (Holy) Wednesday. Every prayer meeting in Ireland was praying for him. Fionnuala got a call from a lady in Queensland who told her that every prayer meeting in Queensland was praying for him as well. Afterwards, the doctors told her that this was the best result they had ever gotten in that hospital for that type of surgery! The baby went home 10 days later. He is now 34 years old!

Someone had asked Fionnuala if these trials didn’t cause her to drink or take drugs. She replied, “The Rosary is my valium; the Rosary is my alcohol... The Rosary always calms me.”

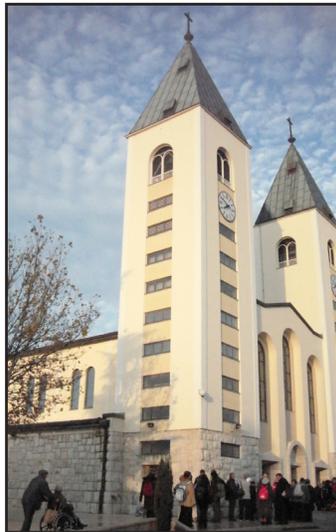
After this, the doctors told Fionnuala not to have any more children, that all her children would be born like this. She continued to pray three or four Rosaries a day, and a year later she had her third son, and he was born healthy. The doctors again warned her not to have any more children, but she continued to pray. Two years later, she had a daughter, who was also born healthy.

When Fionnuala’s daughter was a year old, an acquaintance of her husband’s offered her a free ticket to Medjugorje. Since Fionnuala couldn’t afford to go there, she was happy to accept the ticket. She knew it was going to be hot there, so she bought a pair of sandals; but since the trip was only a week or so away, she did not have time to get the lift put on the one for the shorter leg. She did not care, though, because no one knew her there.

This was in 1991, and the war had started. Fionnuala was very anxious about leaving her young children. When she got there, she thought to herself, “Is Our Lady really here? I’d feel something if She is.” But then she realized she wasn’t feeling anxious anymore! “I wasn’t worried and hadn’t even thought about the children. I had this peace I hadn’t been used to

come over me.” So, she decided to go to the church. It was very crowded because, at the time, they did not have the outside space, and all the parishioners went to the church every night. The Rosary was being prayed when she got there. She saw the visionaries go up into the choir loft for their apparition, and when the bell rang to announce the apparition, she just prayed, “Blessed Mother, I don’t want anything. I don’t want to see the sun spinning in the sky. I don’t want to see miracles. You don’t have to prove anything to me. I know you’re here, and I’m just so grateful to be standing here.” As she prayed that prayer, she got a burning in her leg – “really hot heat.” The heat was moving slowly down her leg from the hip area. “It wasn’t painful,” she explained, “just strong heat.” She began to be frightened, thinking something was wrong with her leg, so she rubbed it trying to make it go away. She said it felt like hot needles going into her leg.

When the apparition was over, and they let more people in for Mass, Fionnuala decided to go upstairs to get a seat, to see if it would help if she sat down. It didn’t help the burning, but she looked down and noticed that for the first



St. James Church

time in 18 years, her knees were together! Then she stretched out her legs and saw that her feet were together perfectly! She moved around trying to make her leg go back, and it wouldn't.

After Mass, Fionnuala's friend found her and asked her what was going on. She knew something was up. When they got back to the house, Fionnuala stretched out on the bed and asked her friend if her legs were the same length. When she said, "Yes", Fionnuala asked her again. This was her first day in Medjugorje. She had not even slept there yet!

The next day, Fionnuala ran into someone she knew from home. He said he had seen her but did not think it was her because she was walking perfectly. This was the confirmation she needed!

When Fionnuala went back to Ireland, she went to her doctor and told him what happened. He measured her leg and questioned her over and over. Eventually he said, "I'm a believer. It's Divine Providence. I cannot explain it any other way." That night, the doctor called Fionnuala at home and asked her again to tell him what happened. He was in awe.

Fionnuala began to give her testimony around Ireland and in the houses where she stayed when she went back to Medjugorje. She even met Fr. Slavko when he came to Ireland for a conference, and she gave her testimony there.

Believe it or not, this is not the end of the story though. When Fionnuala's daughter was about six, Fionnuala was in another accident and hurt her neck. She had been working with children with special needs at the time, but because of her neck injury, she had to give it up. So, she prayed to Our Lady and to Jesus. "I came to know Jesus. Mary always leads you to Jesus. Jesus has become my hero!" She received a grant and went to the university and got degrees in Theology and Psychology, and went on to get a Masters in Theology and Health Care Chaplaincy. She became a chaplain at the hospital. "I think God always has another plan," she beamed.

Then Fionnuala gave some updates on her children. Her middle son developed epilepsy at age 14, but is doing very well on medication. He is a scientist at the University of Massachusetts. Her daughter developed epilepsy at 17, and she is now a social worker. And her son who had the heart disease developed epilepsy at 19, and is on medication for the rest of his life. He may need a heart transplant in the future. (Please keep all of them in your prayers.)

Fionnuala ended her testimony by saying, "I just pray, and God takes care of everything. I feel that no matter what cross you have to carry, just say to Jesus, 'Yes, I will carry this cross.' I promise He will carry it for you."

"All of God's purposes are to the good. Although we may not always understand this, we can trust in it."
~St. Philip Neri, our patron saint this year

August 8, 2019 Update from Denis

By Denis Nolan

The Church has spoken! An August 6, 2019 Catholic News Service headline said it all: "Vatican confirms Medjugorje approval by joining youth festival".

The Church has officially opened its doors to the grace heaven is pouring out through the presence of Our Lady in Medjugorje! More than 60,000 young people from 97 countries took part in the Medjugorje youth festival.

Cardinal Angelo De Donates, Vicar General for the Diocese of Rome, Cardinal Vinko Pulic, Archbishop of Sarajevo, Archbishop Luigi Pezzuto, Apostolic Nuncio to



Bosnia-Herzegovina, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, the President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization and Archbishop Henryk Hoser, the Permanent Papal Visitor in Medjugorje, each took turns presiding at the daily Mass during the six-day festival, with 700 priests and 14 archbishops and bishops concelebrating! The

youth festival can still be watched at MaryTV.tv.

The Church has officially opened its doors to the grace heaven is pouring out through Medjugorje! Praise God!!!

www.marytv.tv

A Medjugorje Moment

By Pat Mundy

I arrived in Medjugorje in June of 2003 and we stayed at Ivanka's house (visionary and her family). At one point, there was a 12-mile "March for Peace", and we were giving out water for those traveling past the house where we stayed. I saw a man on the further side of the road; he was looking straight ahead. I beckoned to him and he walked over. I gave him water. He wore a brown shirt, large glasses, a floppy hat, and he had a beard. He asked where I was from. I said, "America." He asked what state. I said, "Pennsylvania." He said, "A beautiful state." Then he mentioned the Franciscans. I leaned over and said, "The Capuchins and Padre Pio." My head went down and he made the sign of the cross on my forehead, turned from me and said, "I will remember you."

I ran over to Fr. Paul, who was busy with a problem with his video. All who were there had been standing around him in a circle. I said, "I met the most wonderful man!"

We boarded a bus to go hear a visionary speak. There was a statue of Padre Pio there. I thought, "The man!" I felt I could not tell anyone, but I told my roommate who said she saw him. He didn't come over to anyone, but she thought he looked like Padre Pio. Funny, I had been praying to Padre Pio for years, and prayers were answered.

Medjugorje is a very holy place. The peace I felt was amazing, and I cannot explain the joy I felt!

Editor's note: St. Padre Pio's feast day is September 23. St. Padre Pio, pray for us!

Medjugorje and the Supernatural

By Pat Berrier

I love the opening of the Introduction to *Medjugorje and the Supernatural* because it reminds me of the awe that filled me at the beginning of the apparitions in Medjugorje! How many of us are such firm believers now that we almost think of the apparitions as “ordinary”? Well, join me in letting Br. Daniel Maria Klimek’s book enthral us once again. He writes:

“It sounds like something out of C. S. Lewis or J. R. R. Tolkien, master storytelling at the grandest level. And yet it is not a fairy tale. It is not Narnia, nor Middle-earth, but an actual place: a mysterious, Slavic village hidden in between the mountains of Central Europe where miraculous and supernatural things are said to happen. A village where children experience the supernatural on a daily basis, not through their imaginations but – they claim – through direct divine intervention; a village where a heavenly visitor brings messages from another realm – messages from above, messages that answer some of life’s greatest questions: What is the meaning of life? What happens when a person dies? Does God exist? Is there an afterlife? What happens to people of different religions? Is salvation open to all?

“It is a village of visionaries, apparitions, weeping statues, dancing suns, rosaries mysteriously turned gold... where millions of pilgrims have traveled from all corners of the earth, hoping to encounter a touch of the divine in a place where, it is said, heaven meets earth....

“...The greatest claim connected to Medjugorje, one that is at the center of the events there and from which everything else stems, is that the Virgin Mary began visiting Medjugorje in 1981 and has, through her chosen visionaries, returned every day since for over thirty-five years now, communicating important messages for the world.”

For someone who has been captivated by Medjugorje since the beginning of the apparitions, I welcomed Br. Klimek’s way of looking at – and I mean *really* looking at – what’s happened there. Lending to the subtitle of his book – *Science, Mysticism, and Extraordinary Religious Experience* – he offers examples of prominent figures who believe in the supernatural and those who don’t. One such skeptic was Dr. Marco Margnelli, an Italian neurophysiologist and ardent atheist, who traveled to a number of locations to disprove claims of the supernatural, including to Medjugorje in 1988, to find “any evidence that would contradict it or expose it as a fake.”

According to Br. Klimek, “Dr. Margnelli conducted an array of medical tests on the visionaries and gradually came to the conclusion that, during their apparitions, the visionaries do in fact enter into a ‘genuine state of ecstasy.’ While acknowledging that as a scientist he could not judge whether the apparitions are authentic or not, he did admit that ‘we were certainly in the presence of an extraordinary phenomenon.’” Something that not only stayed with

Dr. Margnelli but admittedly haunted him was the silence of the birds. During the early days, when the visionaries had their apparitions in the church rectory, hundreds of birds were very loud in their chirping and cooing outside in the trees, but they would ALL suddenly become completely silent at the exact second when the visionaries dropped to their knees – the moment the Virgin Mary is believed to appear. Perhaps this was a major influence on what Br. Klimek tells us next: “It was a few months after returning to Milan from Medjugorje that Dr. Margnelli became a practicing Catholic.”

Now before getting into the major emphasis of this scholarly book – some of the scientific tests done on the visionaries – I’d like to mention a few things that gave me pause...that have to do with “the secrets”.

Br. Klimek wrote: “As of today, three of the visionaries – Ivanka, Mirjana, and Jakov – claim to have received all ten secrets and (consequently) no longer experience daily apparitions. The other three visionaries – Vicka, Ivan, and Marija – claim to have received nine of ten secrets and reportedly continue to experience daily apparitions. It is believed that the *daily* apparitions of the visionaries will conclude once all receive their tenth secret, which is purported to happen when the events described in the secrets begin to unfold.”

I don’t often stop to consider that the Virgin Mary allowed the visionaries to reveal the third “secret” – it being that at the conclusion of the apparitions, a permanent sign will be left at the spot of the original apparition. I have stood in that spot! According to Mirjana, this “permanent, indestructible, and beautiful” sign will appear after the first two secrets happen, to prove to the world that God exists and that the apparitions were real. Although a large number of people may believe that the first two secrets have “a natural explanation”, per Mirjana, “No one on earth would be able, however, to doubt

the third secret, the promised sign, as constituting an act of God; its supernatural character would be undeniable.”

I was awestruck by Br. Klimek’s report that “there is some question regarding the number of secrets. While the visionaries have claimed that each is supposed to receive ten secrets, there remains ambiguity as to whether all the secrets are the same for each visionary or whether they are receiving distinct secrets that, therefore, add up to much more than ten, or whether certain secrets are the same while others are distinct. An early interview with Mirjana conducted in 1983 has hinted at the latter possibility of distinctive secrets. A Franciscan priest asking Mirjana about the secrets found out that none of her ten secrets pertains to her personal life while noting that another visionary, Ivan Dragicevic, did receive secrets that pertained to him personally. Mirjana clarified that the ‘six of us visionaries do not speak to each other about the secrets. The only part of the secrets that we know we share in common is the permanent sign.’”

At the beginning of the apparitions, in order to understand



Br. Daniel Maria Klimek

their experiences, the visionaries read a book on Marian apparitions in Lourdes. Initially, they presumed they'd experience the same number of apparitions as Bernadette had, so they expected the apparition of July 3, 1981 would be their "last". The next day, they didn't even gather together; so, without expecting it, each had individual apparitions wherever they were (Vicka while picking flowers, Ivan while washing up after helping family with tobacco harvest, Marija in her bedroom at home in Bijakovici, Mirjana while being interrogated by police in Sarajevo). "It was after this experience," wrote Br. Klimek, "Marija recalled that, 'We realized then that this was not like Lourdes.'"

Medjugorje and the Supernatural offers in-depth technical coverage of scientific tests done on the visionaries. These include testings by a French team in 1984, an Italian team in 1985, Dr. Philippe Loron in 1989, an Austrian-Italian team in 1998 and, at the request of the Vatican in 2005, a French team led by Dr. Henri Joyeux (the same doctor from 1984, whose conclusions 20 years later were still the same). What follows is just a small summary of some points of interest referred to in Br. Klimek's work.

- EEG tests administered during apparitions showed the visionaries "to be in a state that's not simply awake, but *hyper-awake*."

- Hypnosis performed on Ivan and Marija demonstrated that "hypnosis (and thus self-suggestion), visualization, and imagination were not responsible for the apparitional experiences of the visionaries."

- A doctor (Magatti) used a film projector with a 1,000-watt bulb to blast the visionaries' pupils with light. None of the visionaries reacted. Although preliminary at the time, the doctor "was prepared to assert that the visionaries, during their apparitions, were demonstrating the most complete 'suspension of consciousness of their relationship with the exterior world' she had ever observed in a subject."

- A test recording the eyeballs of the visionaries as an apparition began showed their eye movements "ceasing simultaneously almost to the second." Such synchronism "was so far beyond the capacity of normal human functioning that no form of collusion or manipulation could account for it," according to Dr. Jacques Philippot. "For anyone who has seen the ecstasy or a photograph of it, it is evident that the visionaries look intently at the same object. On all levels...they relate in such a coherent manner to this same object that it seems impossible to explain... [W]hen an opaque screen was put in front of the visionaries' eyes to see whether it would interfere with, or disrupt, the apparition, it had no effect on them or their visionary experience."

- During an apparition, when Ivan was subjected to a

blast of a 90-decibel sound (like the noise of a combustion engine at high speed), he didn't show any reaction. After the apparition, he said that he heard nothing. Prior to his apparition, he had jumped when exposed to a (lesser) 70-decibel sound.

- A doctor used an instrument on the visionaries... to test for pain sensitivity during the apparition; they did not react at all. "The doctor who performed the experiment wrote that this proved without a doubt that the visionaries were not faking their experiences or trying to deceive. Dr. Luigi Frigerio...explained that these results combined with the EEG testing, which determined that the visionaries were not only awake but hyper-awake during their apparition, presented a contradiction that 'cannot be explained naturally, and thus can be only preternatural or supernatural.'"

- The voices of the visionaries become inaudible during apparitions, while their lips keep moving as if they're talking to someone. When the apparitions begin, "the visionaries fall to their knees and their voices immediately and simultaneously become silent without even a split second of distinction. Curiously, the 'visionaries themselves have admitted to hearing their own voices of verbal communication as normal during the apparitional experience and are surprised that others cannot hear them.'"

- Dr. Joyeux's French teams reported that "The visionaries have no symptoms of anxiety or obsessional neurosis, phobic or hysterical neurosis, hypochondriac/ or psychosomatic neurosis, and there is no indication of any psychosis. We can make these formal statements in the light of detailed clinical examinations."

As part of Br. Klimek's conclusion to this tremendous book, he referenced a quote from Newberg and D'Aquili's work, *Why God Won't Go Away*, which I share here in part: "When philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, in 1885, made his famous proclamation that God was

dead, he was saying, of course, that God had never really lived at all. Like other great rationalistic thinkers of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries – Marx, Freud, James Frazer, Ludwig Feuerback, and Bertrand Russell, to name a few – Nietzsche regarded God as just another vestige of an unscientific past that humanity would soon outgrow." Today, however, as Br. Klimek remarks, "This will be the first time that the scientific studies in Medjugorje will be placed into conversation with prominent thinkers who have written about extraordinary religious experiences."

For all my scientific friends, I suggest you read Br. Klimek's book, and you'll understand why I'm a believer.

Editor's note: Br. Klimek, T.O.R., Ph.D. is a Franciscan Friar and Assistant Professor in the Theology Department at the Franciscan University of Steubenville. He is a recognized authority on Medjugorje, the subject of his dissertation.



Picture of the visionaries in 1981

Our thanks to Diane Niebauer, Sue Taccone, Joan Peterson, Joann and Tom McIntire, Kathy Luschini, Rose Heintzel, Chris Falk, Darleen Wilkinson, Pat Berrier, Marge Spase, Peggy Chludzinski, Cindy Bielatin, Louise Lotze, Barb Cesare, Georgia Chludzinski, Dianne Yochim, Peggy Smith, Estrella Igras, Irene and Dan Zuba, and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the August mailing. We thank Dorothy Cavanaugh and Anita Cugini for making more prayer cloths. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, our webmaster, Jason Klins, and our prayer group administrator, Patti Millar.

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MARY IS CALLING YOU

On June 24, 1981 in Medjugorje, Our Lady began appearing to six children. She identified Herself as the Blessed Virgin, Queen of Peace. 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, the Blessed Mother still appears daily to three of the visionaries, and monthly or annually to the others. They are all now adults. 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. They declare to see the Blessed Virgin as they see other people — three dimensional. They pray and speak with Her.

The Blessed Mother granted to confide ten secrets to each visionary (some are chastisements for the world). Some of the visionaries have received all ten secrets. Our Lady promised to leave a visible sign at the original site of the apparitions in Medjugorje, for all humanity. In

the meantime, 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 five stones" of Our Lady (as in the story of Goliath). They are PRAYER with the heart, especially the Rosary; EUCHARIST; BIBLE; monthly CONFESSION; and FASTING.

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

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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