



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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MONTHLY MESSAGE OF JUNE 25, 2020

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.



Having celebrated the 39th anniversary of the apparitions in June, we are now officially in the 40th year of the apparitions. In the very first public message of this year, Our Lady said, "I am also with you, because my Son desires for my love, as a ray of light, to bring your souls to life; for me to help you in the search for peace and eternal happiness." (1/2/20) During this year we hope to inspire you and help you in practical ways to live the "5 stones" of Our Lady so to "be carriers of light in the darkness" (5/25/20) as Our Lady requests.

"Dear children! I am listening to your cries and prayers, and am interceding for you before my Son Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Return, little children, to prayer and open your hearts in this time of grace and set out on the way of conversion. Your life is passing and, without God, does not have meaning. This is why I am with you to lead you towards holiness of life, so that each of you may discover the joy of living. I love you all, little children, and am blessing you with my motherly blessing. Thank you for having responded to my call."

Time to Let Go

By Fr. Ray Donohue



What a wild roller-coaster ride this year has been for all of us! Who would have thought at the beginning of the year that this would have happened? How could all this happen?

These words could have been spoken 2000 years ago when Jesus was arrested, scourged, stripped and crucified. (With the exception of the roller-coaster ride analogy.) ☺

Things happen. Where is God?

God is with you, every step of the way. He never leaves you, not for a second. It is hard to see Him at times, because we see and focus on the troubles, the difficulties, the inconveniences, the unknown. But ALL is known to God. He knows. He understands. God loves You.

Things are opening up. Churches are now having Holy Masses again, some at full capacity, some still at 25%, or 50% or so, but things are beginning to happen. I can actually get a haircut now, not that I have that much to cut, but what I do have grows and I look like a fuzzy peach gone wild!

And yet the riots and evil of looting, killing, hurting and destroying property have turned into tearing down statues, first of historical leaders and trailblazers, but now holy and religious statues attacking Saints, our dear Blessed Mother, and Jesus Himself on the Holy Cross of salvation! We need to ask the questions: "Why do people do what they do?" "Why do we lash out?" "Why do we hurt one another?" The answer is very clear: Because we have misplaced God in our lives and substituted the Almighty for "our" way, "our" justice. We forget the 10 Commandments, we forget we are all Sisters and Brothers, fellow travelers on this earth trying to make our way and are called by God to LOVE one another as He loves us. We forget to pray and ask for help, patience, and to do God's Will. Where God guides, He provides!

Bad things happen. But good things happen too. The good far, far exceeds the bad. If we look for trouble, darkness, arguments, we will find them quickly. If we look for the light, the joy, the peace, it is just a prayer away. Why open the door to darkness, when we can open that same door and find light and a peace that the world cannot give? We know that God is more than generous to give us Graces when we ask. So, ASK! God is so pleased when we ask Him.

Last year in Medjugorje, Sister Briege McKenna, OSC was there at the same time we were there. I have been on retreats with Sister Briege and have met her there many times, and we have spoken and prayed many times together. When I first met her back in the 1990s, I was on retreat with her with many priests in central New York state. She and Father

Kevin Scallon gave a retreat for us priests. We certainly miss Father Kevin, God rest his holy soul. She had just recently given a retreat to Pope Saint John Paul II. Can you imagine giving a retreat to the Pope, who was a living Saint and is now a canonized Saint in Heaven? (If anyone could do it, Sister Briege certainly could!) There were about 20 or so of us priests from all over, and Sister wanted to just pray with us individually for a few moments before the retreat began. When it was my turn to go into the little room where Sister was sitting, there were two chairs. Sister was in one, and the other was near Sister for the priest to sit in. When I went in, I greeted Sister and she asked me to please sit down. What happened next changed my life.

Sister Briege, at that time, had never met me or seen me. She took my hand and began praying, "Oh Heavenly Father, Loving Jesus and Most Holy Spirit, I pray for this priest who was called by You to serve You and the needs of others..." Suddenly she stopped. Sister held my hand very tightly and in a totally different tone of voice, with her eyes closed, and now my eyes were closed, Sister continued: "I see that you are in a boat, Father, and a terrible storm is all around you. You are rowing as hard as you can, but the storm is too great! Water is coming over the boat and you are so tired but you keep rowing and the storm is getting greater. As you are rowing, I see the Lord Jesus! He is calling to you: 'Raymond, give Me the oars!' You continue to row, and the boat is taking on more water, the storm is overwhelming, and the Lord once again is calling to you: 'Raymond, give Me the oars.' You are so exhausted and now I see that Jesus is in the boat with you! He is there behind you and calls to you: 'Raymond,' and He gently calls to you slowly and lovingly: 'Give Me the oars.'" Sister paused and her eyes were closed tightly, but her grip on my hands was even tighter. Her voice got quieter, gentler, and she said to me: "Jesus is holding on to you tightly behind you, and He says quietly and gently: 'Raymond, let go. Give Me the oars.'" Sister said: "I see that you let go of the

oars, and that you fall back into the Arms of Jesus, Who is holding you, as you are exhausted, and you rest in His arms as He hugs you tightly."

There was complete silence now. Sister Briege then said to me, in a quiet voice, "Father, you are in a very difficult situation in your ministry, and evil is besetting you from all sides! The devil is there trying to trip you up at every corner, and Jesus is here and is telling you to let go, and allow Him now to direct the ship, as you have done all that you can and you have stayed the course."

I never have had an experience like that before. Sister Briege, as I said, had never seen me before, we never talked and she did NOT know my name, and yet in her "vision" she called me by my name "Raymond". That was God speaking through her. I won't go into the rest of the retreat, just to say



Fr. Ray with Sr. Briege in Medjugorje

it was amazing and I heard God speak to my heart, and both Father Kevin and Sister Briege were strong instruments of God's Hand and Heart! I felt totally energized and on fire with love for God and my priesthood!

You see, I was Director of a Newman Center at a prominent college. The students were amazing and wonderful. Sunday evenings, I would celebrate Holy Mass for them at 10:00 pm. I had a Vigil Mass on Saturday, mostly adults who came to the Newman Center, and I had a morning Mass, again, mostly adults who came to the Center. The students were typical young adults and NOT morning people. At the 10:00 pm Mass, we would have well over 200 students and more! I had to start an RCIA for those wanting to become Catholic! I ate all my meals at the college with them, and got to know so many by name. They all knew me and called out all over campus, "Hi, Father Ray!" I had my 3-legged dog "Lucky", who was super loved by everyone, and who loved everyone! They came to me day and night for counseling, or just to talk, to ask questions about the Catholic faith and their Church, and to bring troubled friends to help them find their way. They once brought, in the middle of the night, a young man who tried to commit suicide, and we stayed up all night talking on my kitchen floor until dawn, and I drove him and his friends to a mental health facility, and thank God, he worked it all out. His father, I found out when I called him, worked at the College as a policeman, and until he passed away many years later, he sent me a Christmas card each year thanking us for "saving his son's life". We know that God did that! I had the honor to do his son's wedding 5 years later and baptize his first child!

Most of the adults were fantastic and associated with the college in one way or another, but a small group of the adults were those who left their parishes, or were asked to leave their parishes, and they came there to make it "their own" parish. By this I mean, not in any good way, and certainly not Catholic in any way at all! The priest who was there before me begged me NOT to take the position as director, as they were terrible to him. Again, this was a small group of maybe 15 or 20. But they were powerful and very intimidating. I can get along with anyone, or so I thought! They used their own "Scriptures", where every reference of God was neutered. No longer was God called the "Father", because they said that was sexist. They took away the most beautiful image of God as a personal loving "Father" and referred to Him in a generic role of "Creator". They got rid of all the holy water and the fonts, took away the Crucifix, and at times, against their own "rules", they referred to God in a feminine gender, even to call Him a "goddess". The first thing I did was burn that book, and get the Holy Scriptures back! They hated me for that.

I worried leaving on my day off to visit my mother and take her shopping and mow her lawn, etc., because when I would come back to the Newman Center, ALL the holy water would be gone, the fonts hidden, the Crucifix I put up was missing, my vestments were missing, and worst of all, the Blessed Sacrament was missing from the Tabernacle! They would take the Most Blessed Sacrament when I was gone and, I agonize when I remember all this, they would throw the Blessed Sacrament out for the birds to eat! They said that Christ Jesus was only Present when the people were there,

and when the people left, Jesus was not present and it was just bread. I had to hide the Blessed Sacrament from them! They would come up to Holy Communion with one hand out for the Blessed Sacrament, while the other hand held a cup of coffee!!!! This was at Holy Mass! I told them I would refuse them and they need to fast at least 1 hour before the reception of Communion. This is all true, and I faced this every week! I told them they were NOT to have any coffee at Holy Mass. They hated me for this. Can you even imagine this? I had to deal with this for 3 years, and got no support from my diocese. They didn't believe all that was going on.

But, who would?? I had a hard time believing any of this was going on. It was evil and un-Godly.

Now you can see what I was facing and how it was revealed to Sister Briege that after 3 years there, trying to make it Catholic and doing the same things, I could do no more, and I did all that I could. By the will of God, I was offered two beautiful parishes that I just loved—very holy and Catholic people—and we all thanked God, for He put a Religious Order priest in at the Newman Center. When the adults called to complain and get the priest in trouble, as they did weekly with me, he would tell them to call his Order's Provincial, and as he was in another state, the Provincial would

tell them if they didn't like it, to leave. God knows what to do and when to do it. Give Him the oars!

We have to want God's way and not our way! We have to pray and ask for guidance from God. Pray to your Guardian Angel. I said before that all we have been going through is a Test from God, and an opportunity! Jesus did things His Father's way. "Not my will, but Your Will be done," Jesus prayed. Can we pray like Jesus did? Will we pray like Jesus did?

Christians are called such because they are "Christ-Like". To be Christ-Like we have to bear crosses in this life, but they are not punishments, they are pillars to strengthen us. They show us what we really and truly are made of, and what is truly in our hearts. They show us God is with us, and we can undergo every sort of trial in this life, and come out stronger, happier and holier!

I couldn't even begin to tell you all the students who asked me to perform their weddings, baptize their children, from near and far. I keep in touch with so many of them. They are all regular church-goers and live good Catholic lives. The students saw, as the disciples saw in Jesus, the beauty of God and His ways!

We all go through dark times. But God is there to lead us into His light of holiness and goodness and peace. **Don't walk in anyone else's darkness, but let them walk in your light!** God calls you to be a light for others, and others to be a light for you! Remember, when bad times come, sometimes God calms the storm, and sometimes God lets the storm rage and calms His child in the storm. Let go of the oars. Give God the oars. I love you all and pray for you each day in all my Holy Prayers and in all my daily Holy Masses. I surround you and all you love in Holy Prayer.

In Jesus and Mary, our Mother,

~Father Ray ☺



Fr. Ray when he was younger

Hit Over the Head with a Baseball Bat

By Kathleen Krayewsky

I was brought up Catholic, went 12 years to Catholic school, and married in the Church. When my second son was a baby, I would take my older son to church and my husband would stay home with the baby. I can remember at church one time – and if I knew then what I know now, it was no big deal – but my son wouldn't stop swinging his foot and I was afraid he would kick the lady next to us. I was so upset with him. I came out thinking this was just ridiculous, that I didn't need to be going to Mass and coming out so upset with my son. That's not what it's all about. So, I decided to stay home until the kids got older and were better behaved. Of course that doesn't happen.

Eventually, I started getting into New Age stuff. We moved and were living with my parents. My father had a type of dementia. My husband was going to school and my mother was taking care of my father. She could now go back to work and I could stay home with the kids and my father. I just got into New Age more and more, and I met a friend through my son's school who was into all this. I would pick up books at the library when we would take the kids there... channeling, numerology, astrology, etc. There was one on channeling that scared the wits out of me, so I took it right back. But a year or so later, I picked it up again and it didn't frighten me. That should have set off all kinds of warning signals, but it didn't.

I was completely convinced that the Church was a fraud. I had it all figured out. I remember reading Shirley MacLaine's book *Out on a Limb*, and everything she wrote just made sense to me. But at the same time, if you've grown up believing in saints and angels and God and spiritual things, you can easily transfer that. It makes sense.

My father died and we ended up moving in 1992 to the other side of the state. In 1993, my mother had been to an Alzheimer's meeting where she was involved with the board there, and she met a woman who had been to Medjugorje. By chance, she had a book with her about Medjugorje and she gave it to my mother to read. My mother read it and gave it to me, and I agreed to read it. I still believed there's a God and everything, but it was on *my* terms. I did read the book.

At this time, my older son was playing Little League, and the poor kid couldn't hit the ball worth beans. It was absolutely terrible. So, I was sitting at one of his last games – it was May of 1993 – and I had the Medjugorje book with me. I was sitting on a blanket on the ground and the two younger kids were playing on the swings, and I finished reading the book. I thought, "If the Blessed Mother is really appearing in Medjugorje and this is all true, what am I going to do with this?" And right then, my son got up again, swung and struck out. I thought, "Oh no, poor kid." I just felt so bad for him. So I just said to God, "If this is true, if the Blessed Mother is really appearing there, You let Richard get a hit the next time he's up, and I will take all my New Age books, all my New Age stuff and get rid of them, and I'll come back to the Church."

So the next time Richard got up, the first pitch, first swing – and this is the kid who could not hit the ball for beans – he hit a line drive out into right field. Well, I tell you, I cannot explain the feeling that came over me, but later on I wanted to jump up and down. "God did that! It's true! It's true!"

It was so amazing. He's never hit the ball like that at all. I wanted to run to first base. It wasn't an over-the-fence or anything, but it was a solid hit. Later on, I heard somebody describing an experience they had and they "felt God". And that's what it was – I felt God!

I went home that night and took all my New Age books in my house, got them all in bags and put them down in the basement. I thought I would take them to a "medium store" where I had picked up some books. Then after a couple of days, I thought, "I can't do that. This is all lies and if someone else picks it up and they believe these lies... I can't do that. I can't be a part of it." So they all went out in the trash. If you could see my basement, I have books from when I was little. I don't throw away books. It's just not something I would do. So, it was just the most amazing thing!

I got myself to Confession, went right back to the Church. I got all the kids enrolled in Religious Ed. They needed Religious Ed teachers and so I signed up for that. I had done that years before on Saturday mornings. So I was familiar with it.

I could never explain to you, now, why I thought the Church was wrong. It just left. I heard on EWTN one of the Protestant ministers who, after he came back into the Church, could never explain again why he thought the Church was wrong. It just left him. It was the same with me. It was just amazing!

In 2003, they asked me to be the Religious Ed coordinator at the church. I have polymyositis, an auto-immune disease that attacks your muscles, so I always put them off, saying, "You can't count on me. I don't want to jump into anything." But they just couldn't get anybody to come forward to do it, so I agreed to do it until they found somebody else. I said, "If you want me to do it, Lord, you've got to keep me going." And He did, until they eventually got somebody else, two years ago!

When I read an article on *The Spirit of Medjugorje* website about a woman who was involved with New Age, what struck me was that it took her longer to get out of New Age stuff. She was doing New Age and

"Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek them out to be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God" (Lev 19:31)

also attending church at the same time. Then she got rid of her books, too. It was just an *immediate* thing with me that I would read the book and ask God for a sign. I think that was one of the

things in the book that kind of crossed my mind when I was reading it – people were asking for signs if it was really the Blessed Mother. Vicka threw holy water on Her. So I thought, "This is OK to ask." Apparently it was. I thought I got hit over the head with a baseball bat! It was so incredible!

Editor's note: Kathleen lives in Vergennes, VT. She did not remember the name of the book she read, but you can see how a good book can change lives. We still have free copies of Mirjana's book for those who cannot afford it.



The End of the Second of the Month Apparitions

The following is from a question and answer session by Fr. Leon Pereira OP, the chaplain for the English-speaking pilgrims in Medjugorje, given near the end of March 2020.

Mirjana has her special annual apparition on her birthday, March 18. This year she was told no longer to expect an apparition on the second of the month, which she had been having since 1987. I have received many emails filled with dismay, expecting the apocalyptic worst. Remember, Mirjana always said these 2nd of the month apparitions were extraordinary graces and that she never knew when they would cease. She had no idea how long they would continue. And she half expected each one to be the final one. And now they have stopped. So I think there's been a lot of speculation and that's rather pointless. Probably a complete waste of time.

I've been told that I said the monthly apparitions stopping was a "gift". I don't recall this, and it doesn't sound like me. Why else did I attend these monthly apparitions so assiduously? I'm more likely to have said, the monthly apparitions were a gift, *and* have now stopped. For the village, the cessation of these apparitions restores our focus on living Our Lady's messages and takes attention away from the crowds, and from a voyeuristic attitude towards apparitions in general. The difference is simple: are we tourists or pilgrims?

If you have been in Medjugorje on the 2nd of any month, and you'd been attending the apparition, what were you going there for? We need to ask ourselves that. Were we going there because these particular apparitions on the 2nd of the month were for the conversion of those who have not yet come to know the love of God for them (which is Our Lady's preferred way of referring to "unbelievers")? Were we going there to pray for *that intention*, or just to see the visionary and gawp at her and contribute to a raucous circus and hullabaloo on the hill? Is that what we were there for?

The fact that these monthly apparitions have been discontinued, is it a tragedy? This was an extraordinary grace anyway, so the fact that it's stopped doesn't affect you or me. Are we still praying for the unbelievers, for those who have not yet come to know God's love for them? I hope we are, because that's important. That was the point of the apparitions after all!

Many people want to say, "Oh look, there's a strange coincidence, don't you think? These apparitions stop just when a pandemic breaks out. Maybe it's a sign of worse to come? And maybe the virus is a sign of one of the secrets?" No, no, and no.

I would say to you, if you are inclined to be apocalyptic-minded, if you're inclined to make a drama out of these

things, ask yourselves, "Do I live the Five Stones of Medjugorje? Am I praying the whole rosary every day? Am I following the Mass live-streamed every day devoutly and, when able, going to Mass and receiving Communion worthily? Am I receiving Holy Communion also in reparation for sins against the Sacred Heart and blasphemies against the Immaculate Heart of Mary? Am I reading the Bible every day, prayerfully? Am I fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays? Am I fasting on bread and water? And lastly, am I going to Confession at least once a month?" Maybe in these times you can't get to Confession, but certainly later on, when these restrictions are lifted, wherever you are, are you intending to go to Confession at least once a month or as often as you need to? These are the questions

we should be asking ourselves, and not, "Oh I think that something is coming up," and speculating, because whatever you come up with – well who knows? Are you right? Are you wrong? No one will know until later on. The cessation of the monthly apparitions does tell us this one thing though: *repent and be converted; live Our Lady's messages.*

The end of the world could be *today* for you or me. It can happen anytime. You might slip in your bathroom and fall on your head or something. Who knows? God forbid! But the end of the world *for us* could be any time, so why waste time speculating about things we know nothing about? It is far more important – if you claim to be so devoted to Medjugorje – to be living

the messages of Medjugorje. And if you are, if you're *truly* living the Five Stones, I don't think you'd be asking these questions and worrying about anything. In a message given through Marija, we read: "**Little children, [the one] who prays is not afraid of the future and [the one] who fasts is not afraid of evil.**" (January 25, 2001)

Back in 2014, towards the end of the year, Bishop Oliver Dashe Doeme of Maiduguri (north-eastern Nigeria) was praying before the Blessed Sacrament in his chapel. The bishop's flock were among the 2.6 million affected by Boko Haram (terrorists allied to Islamic State): displaced, harassed, more than 20,000 murdered, terrorized, suffering malnutrition and possible starvation. The bishop had a vision of Jesus extending a sword to him. As soon as he received the sword, it turned into a rosary, and Jesus said to the bishop three times, "Boko Haram is gone. Boko Haram is gone. Boko Haram is gone." The bishop understood the rosary is the weapon offered by God to us! This is the way to defeat Islamist terror and every other evil. Why do we fear the future when we don't even know how much or how little of the future is left to us? All we have is today, to be converted and to glorify God! Amen.



Mirjana at the April 2, 2008 apparition

As of June 25, 2020, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 28,931. Thank you.

Ivanka

In July, we try to feature something on the visionary Ivanka when we publish her message from Our Lady on June 25. Since Ivanka lives the most private life of all the six visionaries, it is hard to find material on her that we have not already used. My friend and proofreader, Pat Berrier, volunteered to help me in my quest to find something about Ivanka.

Pat found a video of a talk Ivanka gave in September of 2011. I think few people are aware that Ivanka was given Our Lady's life story. Pat thought it was Vicka, and she was right. Vicka has Our Lady's life story, as well as Mirjana. Pat summarized a part of what Ivanka said in her 2011 talk.

Ivanka had daily apparitions from 1981-1985, and during those years, Our Lady was telling her about Her own life.

She gave Ivanka her biography, and told her about the future of the Church and the world. All of this is written down. When She tells Ivanka to publish it, she will do so.

Ivanka's ministry is to pray for families. Our Lady said that Satan is so strong. He wants to destroy our families. If

we destroy the family, we destroy the whole world. If the family is a holy family, if the stability is strong, we don't have problems. Everything comes out of the family. Out of the family, we get good priests, good family members.

Our Lady invites us to accept the Sacrament of Matrimony. Matrimony should be Holy Matrimony. We should resume family prayer, go to Holy Mass on Sunday and have monthly Confession because we have a problem with being reconciled with ourselves. We need to have Confession in order to be reconciled. And then we will be able to go to Holy Mass, which is the center of our lives. And the Bible should be the center of our family life. In the Bible, you find the meditation, divine meditation for all our wounds and pains, for all our crosses. So it is prayer.

Ivanka prays every day for all families in the world.



Ivanka in 2011

Message to Ivanka on June 25, 2020

The annual apparition to Ivanka took place at her home with only her family present. The apparition lasted 5 minutes. Ivanka said that Our Lady gave the following message: "Pray, pray, pray."

Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for July

Our Families: We pray that today's families may be accompanied with love, respect and guidance.



Speak, Lord

By June Klins

Our Lady asks us to read the Bible every day. The Bible has been described as "God's love letters" to us. Reading the Bible daily is one of the "5 stones" of Medjugorje. Before I read the Bible, I pray the following prayer, which I think I obtained from a Bible Study years ago.

Prayer Before Reading the Bible

Merciful God, anoint me with Your Holy Spirit. As I read Your Word, let me hear Your voice speaking to me from within. Give me wisdom to understand Your message to me. Let Your Word be the joy of my heart and the light of my feet. Give me strength to build my life on Your Word. Let it be done according to Your Word. May I rejoice in the blessedness of hearing Your Word and keeping it. Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening. Thank you, Jesus. Praise you, Jesus.

In Her message of November 2, 2019, Our Lady said, "My children, read the book of the Gospel. It is always something new..." At that time, I was not in the practice of reading the Gospels because I hear and learn about the Gospels every day when attending daily Mass, so I feel like I know the Gospels fairly well. Instead, I was reading other books such as the letters of Paul, the Psalms and other books of the Old Testament, etc. But Our Lady said to read the Gospel, and I like to please my Mother, so I obliged. I felt prompted to read the Gospel of Mark first. I started going through it very slowly and began to understand what Our Lady meant when She said, "It is always something new." I began making notes on words

I never paid much attention to before, such as "at once" or "many" or "all" – knowing that every word is important. It took me months to get through this short Gospel, reading through the footnotes and the references to other related scripture passages. Then I began to read the Gospel of Luke.

At the end of May, I was feeling overwhelmed at the prospect of another mailing on the horizon and not yet being able to meet with our helpers because of the pandemic. I began to doubt that this newsletter was making any difference at all. I thought about all the wonderful letters we get, saying people "enjoy" the newsletter, but does it really help people spiritually? Even though I love it, is it really worth all the time and effort I spend on it? I sat at Adoration and I prayed for the Lord to give me some words of wisdom. After praying the "Prayer before Reading the Bible", instead of reading the Gospel this time, I just opened the Bible at random, and pointed my finger.

A tear or two welled up in my eyes, when I read the words underneath my finger: "Then the Lord, your God, will increase in more than goodly measure the returns from all your labors..." (Dt 30:9)

Your servant is listening.

"All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2Tim 3:16)

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Success with Fasting

By Mary Momot, OFS

Every day, for weeks, Sr. Emmanuel's post on "The power of fasting" came up on my Facebook newsfeed. For two weeks, I pushed it aside, but it kept popping up. I finally watched the video, which was about 20 minutes long. Her words made sense.

I have followed Medjugorje since 1985. I have tried fasting so many times and have failed miserably. I had a dream that night that stressed to me how important that fasting was and so necessary and would I help... of course I would!!! I looked up Sister's fasting bread recipe. I have never made

bread in my life. I decided to give it a try and the bread came out pretty good. I have custody of my 12-year-old granddaughter, and she jumped on the bandwagon with me. Needless to say, my 5th batch of fasting bread is in the oven as I write this! It is unbelievable that it has taken me 35 years to get it right!!! It is a wonderful feeling and really is so simple! You can add fruit or nuts, but I do not. It is delicious the way it is and very filling. This bread is very hearty and really sustains one who chooses to fast on bread and water. No headaches! No anxiety!

Fasting Bread Recipe

Taken from Sr. Emmanuel's book, *Healing and Liberation Through Fasting*.

3 cups white flour
4 cups wheat flour
1 pkg. dry yeast
1/2 cup of lukewarm water
2 cups of very hot water
1 beaten egg
1 Tablespoon salt
2 Tablespoons sugar or honey
2 Tablespoons of olive oil
1 teaspoon of butter
1 cup raisins (or fresh apple peeled and cut) (optional)
1 cup almonds or walnuts (optional)
1 cup plain oats



In a medium sized bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/2 cup lukewarm water. (You can add 1/2 tsp. sugar to the yeast to help activate it.) Cover with a plate and wait a few minutes until bubbly. In a large bowl, combine the flours. Make a well in the flour and add the yeast mixture. Mix a bit. Reusing the now empty medium bowl, combine salt, sugar, butter, oil, (raisins, nuts), the beaten egg, and the two cups of very hot water. Pour this over the yeast mixture. Mix/knead the dough, adding flour and or water as needed. Knead the dough until it comes clean from the bowl. Cover with a plate or towel and let it rise ten minutes. (I often skip this step and the bread still tastes fine.) Knead it again until it has spring to it. Place in well-greased bowl and cover, letting it rise until doubled in size, 45 minutes to 1 hour, depending on room temperature. Form into desired shapes. This will make two large or three medium loaves. Place in greased pan. Brush the top with remaining egg (if you did not use it in recipe) and sprinkle with sesame seeds, oats or poppy seeds, if desired. Bake at 375 degrees for 35 minutes, until done and golden brown.

Editor's note: Mary is from Depew, NY.

News from Medjugorje

- On June 9, 2020, we received a message from pilgrim leader, Mike Nolan, saying: "In Medjugorje, Columbo's Restaurant just opened a few days ago. Borders opened for people of the Balkans at the beginning of June. They are anticipating borders opening to all foreign nationals in a few weeks." Mike is planning a pilgrimage from September 29 to October 8. If you are interested, you can contact Mike at 574-335-9952.

- Rosie Zubac of "Tea with Rosie" reported on Marytv.tv (6/6/20) that in early June the façade of St. James Church was repainted and small repairs were made to the roof. It had not been done in at least 25 years. "It looks bright and new and ready for the 39th anniversary [on June 24-25]," Rosie said.

- According to Sr. Emmanuel, the Blue Cross area has been renovated by members of the Cenacolo Community to facilitate a better prayer space for the pilgrims.

- Rosie also mentioned that when Pope Francis prayed the Rosary on May 30 in the Vatican Gardens, connecting worldwide with other Marian shrines, Medjugorje was included in the video! It can be seen on the Vatican website on the video on May 30 between 24 and 25 minutes. It is exactly in the center of all the 25 shrines shown at that time. (As a retired math teacher, numbers fascinate me, so I found it interesting that this occurs between minutes 24 and 25, the same days of the month of June when the anniversary is celebrated, and that it is in the exact center of 25 shrines.)

A Story from the Early Days

When the communists arrested Fr. Jozo Zovko on August 17, 1981, they took Fr. Zrinko Cuvalo, the assistant parish priest, for questioning to the elementary school. They asked of Fr. Zrinko to unconditionally stop the celebration of evening Holy Mass, but Fr. Zrinko refused. So they started to convince him how it was not common to have evening Holy Mass, saying that it was even against

Christian tradition in the Church. Fr. Zrinko replied then to the President of the Municipal Committee for relations with religious communities and said: "Holy Mass is not the memory of Jesus' last breakfast, but of his last supper!" Confused, they just laughed and released Fr. Zrinko.

Editor's note: This story was excerpted from the book Salvation of Mankind, by Draga Vidovic.

Our condolences to the family of Helen Bell, who passed away on June 5, 2020. Helen was a faithful member of our mailing crew in the early years of the newsletter. She was a gifted photographer and gave us all of her photos from her Medjugorje pilgrimages for use in the newsletters. We are very grateful. Please pray for the repose of her soul and for consolation for her family. Thank you.



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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.

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.

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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