

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 MAY 25, 2022

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.



June 25th is the 41st anniversary of the apparitions. On the third day, Our Lady appeared at the spot marked by the cross above and said the words, "Peace, peace, peace".

"Dear children! I am looking at you and thanking God for each of you, because He permits me to still be with you, to encourage you to holiness. Little children, peace is disturbed and Satan wants peacelessness. That is why, may your prayer be even stronger so that every unclean spirit of division and war may be stilled. Be builders of peace and carriers of joy of the Risen One in you and around you, for the good to win in every man. Thank you for having responded to my call."

Our Lady's Triangle

The following is an excerpt from the homily given by Fr. Mate Dragicevic in St. James Church in Medjugorje on June 25, 2000. It was first published in a supplement to *Mir-Peace Letter* and translated by Darlene Sarcevic-Milas.

In this time in which we live, Our Lady is here among us for 19 years already. Why? Today we have so much more to deal with. It is not only war that has caught us by surprise – there are even worse things: new world ideas, new world orders, new age, Masons, globalization – all these new ideologies try to melt away true Christian values, true God. They try to shake unity and faith in the Catholic Church and erase one's national heritage. Once that is accomplished, then they can manipulate people as they like.

We live in hard times and no wonder that our Mother Mary is with us for so long. She wants to warn Her children: do not follow other lights; the only true light is my Son Jesus. She says: "I am inviting you, dear children, to pray and fast, so that with your help, I can realize what I began in Fatima. I want to save all souls and present them to God..." As a Mother, She is repeating that the only way to a better future in the next millennium is in God and with God. Therefore, She is calling us to return to God – conversion. When we hear that word "conversion", we tend to close our ears. But there is no other way. The first words of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark were: "Convert yourselves, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." With Her whole heart, Our Lady repeats, "Dear children, today I am calling you to complete conversion. Place your life in God's hands..." Those hands are secure. We can fall, but not fall through. Further, She says, "Dear children, I am calling each one of you to a personal conversion. This is your time..." Without the conversion of one person, there is no conversion of mankind. If one man does not change for better, the society and the Church will not be changed either. Our Lady does not give only words to us, She also gives us signs to understand Her words better.

Our Lady is appearing here on the Hill of Apparitions, She is appearing on the Cross Mountain, and She is also appearing in the church. She is making a triangle. What does that mean? The walk to the Hill of Apparitions is a walk into silence. First step of conversion is to go into a silent place to collect yourself, meet with yourself, meet with the truth of your life. Do not run away from yourself, and do not point your finger at others. Listen in silence and in prayer. In prayer, the Spirit of God comes to you Who will enlighten you. Our Lady is calling us to pray for the Spirit of Truth. To the young people, Our Lady says, "In these days, be open to the Holy Spirit. God wants to bring you closer to yourself now when Satan is active..." Satan is also pushing us to be active with different things. In silence and in prayer we see ourselves as if in an x-ray. When water is disturbed, we do not see anything in it, but when it calms down, then we can see our face. To recognize yourself is this first point in Our Lady's triangle.

The second point is walk on Cross Mountain. Our Lady said in one message that the building of the Cross on the Cross Mountain was in God's plan. The Cross reminds us that Jesus gave Himself up for us to save us, to redeem us. Therefore, God lifted Him up above all names and gave Him dominion over heaven and earth. Our walk up the mountain is not an easy one, but the closer we come to the top, the wider our horizon is. Climbing the mountain, we want to take off our heavy burdens and then we become the light, we become new. At every Station, we leave a piece of our negative nature. Our Lady says, "Dear children, give everything to Jesus, all the negatives that have accumulated in you. I want you to be happy, but with sin, you cannot be happy..." Our Holy Father is also inviting us to cleanse our memory in this Jubilee year... We need to put aside hate, jealousy, tension, especially in our marriages and in our families, cursing and working on Sundays, stealing, gossip... All of these things are only torturing us. When we throw them away, then we die to sin and we cleanse ourselves.

The third point in Our Lady's triangle is the church. You come here to the God of mercy and love in the Holy Eucharist, to God in the Sacrament of Confession and Reconciliation. God will free you from all your negatives and give you spiritual peace. This is the basic message of Our Lady – spiritual peace. When we have peace in our soul, we can see everything clearly: ourselves, members of our family, our nation, and all situations seem to be less dark than before, because we have life within us.

Our Lady is offering Jesus to us because He is our peace. She is calling us to open the door of our hearts to Jesus as a flower opens itself to the sun. Jesus wants to fill your hearts with peace and joy. "...you cannot have peace, dear children, if you are not in peace with Jesus, therefore, I am inviting you to Confession so that Jesus can be your truth and your peace..." After Confession, we can truly unite with Jesus in the Eucharist. It is a beautiful feeling: God dwells within me! Our Lady is pleading, "Dear children, let the Holy Mass be your life and not only a habit. Live the Holy Mass and you will grow in holiness..." By accepting these three points of Our Lady's triangle, we become better persons and are able to build better surroundings, renew the church and the new millennium. As such, we can see the goodness in every person we meet wherever we are. God is our light and therefore we have a future.

Brothers and sisters, beautiful is the love of the Mother who is leading us in this way. Let us go with a promise to accept Our Lady's call... Let us ask our Mother to pray for us and for all of those dear to us. We need the mercy and strength from heaven. Dear Mother, strengthen our faith, firm up our hope, plant your love in our hearts, so that we can, with clear head and clean hearts, walk to the eternal city. Amen!



Map in Medjugorje showing Our Lady's triangle

“I Have Come Because There Are Many True Believers Here...”

By June Klins

A common question people ask is “Why did Our Lady choose Medjugorje? Why did Our Lady come to a small unknown village in the mountains of Yugoslavia?” Our Lady actually answered that question on the third day of the apparitions, when She said, “I have come because there are many true believers here...” (June 26, 1981)

Draga Vidović, who was a friend of the visionaries, included an interesting account of the prayer life in Medjugorje before the apparitions started in her excellent book, *Salvation of Mankind*. Draga wrote, “In my childhood, prior to the apparitions, people used to pray a lot in our parish. I am positive that all of the families were praying. Even if someone in a particular family was a member of the Communist Party, I am sure that other family members, such as mothers, wives and children still regularly prayed, even secretly.”

Draga explained that since they worked in the fields, they had to get up at about three or four o’clock in the morning, but even in those early hours, they never left home without praying. She added that sometimes they would be crying, rather than praying though – not that they did not want to pray, but because they were so sleep-deprived.

At noon, Draga wrote, when the church bells at St. James would start ringing, they would pray the Angelus as well as several Our Fathers for certain intentions, which her mother would usually lead. “Regardless of where we happened to be at that hour, we would still say those prayers.” Draga’s mother used to pray in honor of Saint James, Saint Anthony, and the Blessed Virgin Mary, for all of their departed ones, for the souls in Purgatory, and that the Lord would protect their cattle, their fields and their harvest. She offered one Our Father in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary and one Our Father in honor of God’s providence. They also used to say the Anima Christi, Hail Holy Queen, and the Act of Contrition. Draga added that many people had a devotion to Saint Anthony and they would often pray Saint Anthony’s Rosary as well.

In the afternoon hours, Draga said they would pray while stringing up tobacco leaves. She wrote that at times they would pray “Our Lady’s Rosary”, which consisted of 63

Hail Marys in memory of Mary’s life, especially in May and October. They would also pray seven Our Fathers in memory of the Seven Joys and Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, along with the Creed. “I remember well that we prayed a lot while separating tobacco leaves.” They would sometimes use prayer books, and the pages of those prayer books would get stained from the tobacco. Draga wrote, “Before the apparitions, we did not have the Holy Bible. We bought our first one in the beginning of the apparitions, after Our Lady invited us to read the Holy Bible every day.”

On Saturday evenings as well as during bad weather, Draga stated that they would bless their homes with holy water, praying the Creed and seven Our Fathers. Draga further stated that the parish of Medjugorje has always been full of religious vocations and that the parishioners have always been loyal to their priests and religious sisters.



Picture behind St. James of girl stringing tobacco leaves

The Seven Joys of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1. The Annunciation: the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary that She would conceive a child through the Holy Spirit
2. The Visitation: the Blessed Virgin Mary visits Her cousin Saint Elizabeth
3. The Birth of the Child Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem
4. The Adoration of the Magi
5. The Blessed Virgin Mary finds the Child Jesus amongst teachers in the temple in Jerusalem
6. The Appearance of Christ to Mary after the Resurrection
7. The Assumption and Coronation of Mary as the Queen of Heaven and Earth

The Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1. The Prophecy of Simeon
2. The Flight to Egypt
3. The Loss of the Child Jesus for three days and He was later found in His Father’s house
4. Mary meets Jesus while He carries His Cross
5. Mary’s pain while Jesus was crucified on the Cross
6. Taking Jesus down from the Cross
7. The Burial of Jesus

Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for June: Families –

We pray for Christian families around the world; may they embody and experience unconditional love and advance in holiness in their daily lives



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The First Organized Pilgrimage to Medjugorje

The following testimony is excerpted from the opening comments by Frano Zubac for the 7/1/20 episode of "Jesus Rosary" on Mary TV. You can watch the episode and pray the Jesus Rosary at marytv.tv/jesus-rosary-2/. You can read about the Jesus Rosary in our March 2013 issue, which is in the archives on our website.

Before I start to pray Jesus Rosary with you, somehow I've been inspired to tell you about the first organized pilgrimage to Medjugorje from abroad.

In 1981, it was just local people here coming, and as you know, Medjugorje wasn't prepared for any kind of pilgrims. So they would come for one day and go back home. We didn't have running water, we didn't have toilets, washing rooms or any facilities here – just village, simple village, people working very hard in the fields and producing tobacco and grapes. And half of the population (men) went abroad to Germany to work. ... So no hotels, no any accommodations here...

1982 – we were praying in the church and something happened at the beginning of the Mass. Some movement from the back of the church and group of people are coming in and heading down, pushing the local people (women) and going towards the altar and then just around the altar. And then we can hear... "Madonna, Madonna!" Italian! Italians came over! ...They heard Our Lady is appearing in Medjugorje so they came just for two-hour trip from seaside [for] the evening program. And what was very significant – a lot of people would be pushed and they all run to the altar, and visionaries were coming out from the right-hand side chapel (there is one room) so all of them were kneeling down and crying and excited. Oh dear!

Next year – [at] the time wasn't allowed the organized pilgrimage to come. You know, police would stop at that time, communist police (militia). They were going into the bathrooms – they would ask if you have Bible or rosary – they will take it away from you and confiscate it and take it away.

In 1983, also people from seaside, they were just coming for one-hour, two-hour evening program and

they would go back. So it was very interesting. Nobody was able to speak Italian and Italian people often asking questions in Italian, but nobody was able to answer them these questions whatsoever.

So what happened in 1984, my sister had a phone call from Italy because my aunt from Sarajevo gave our number to our relative who married an Italian and lived in Bologna. Her name, Adriana. She had been working for...agency in Bologna. And they pressured her, the people wanted to go to Medjugorje. She is from Croatian seaside ... a beautiful, beautiful place on the Adriatic coast. So she desperately needed somebody from here to know anything, and she has to bring the people with a big bus. So she contacted me and she said to me, "Please, please, I've been coming last year just two hours from Adriatic coast and people don't like it because ... just coming here for two hours and going back. They want to stay as close as possible to Medjugorje, because they are coming just because of Medjugorje, ... not because of the beach or holiday. It was for Medjugorje they wanted to come." Oh dear!

I asked her, "What do you want?" She said, "I need hotel in Citluk. Go there and book it for us for five days." So I went to hotel and spoke to the manager and he said, "Are they pilgrims?" I said, "Yes." He said, "No chance – the central committee is having breakfast every morning here (the communist party). No chance. No chance." ... "They said to us, 'Whoever coming to Medjugorje, no accommodations for them.'" "All right. OK. Thank you so much."

And then she [Adriana] said to me, "Please, surrounding area – you know, go around as close as possible to Medjugorje. Go to Hotel Ljubuški." So I went to Ljubuški Hotel... The manager said to me, "Are they pilgrims?" I said, "Yes." "We received order from top from communist party – no pilgrims, no accommodations." They [are] empty but no accommodations for pilgrims – Medjugorje [pilgrims]. "All right."

And I called her [Adriana] and



Frano

said, "Adriana, second hotel I've been searching and no chance." She said to me, "Go find as close as possible." "OK! For God's sake, I will do it." And no, no chance as far as I can see. So I went down ... next to the bridge, hotel. And a young man coming with a smile on his face. I introduced myself. "I'm Frano and I'd like to accommodate a group of Italian people here for five days/five nights, full board." He smiled, "Oh yes." I said [to myself], "I got to tell him they are pilgrims because when they come, he will say, 'Go away because you are pilgrims.'" I said, "Listen, young boy, they are pilgrims." He looked at me. He said, "So what? You Frano?" I said, "Yes, I'm Frano." He said, "I am Dušan. Dušan, that is a Serbian name." I said, "OK, Dušan, yes." He said, "Frano, nobody can label me. I'm a Serb. They can label you like a fascist or an opposition to communist party or Yugoslavian against the state ... I am Serb. You are Croat. Welcome. You're welcome. Bring them here and you can eat without any charge. Bring your wife or girlfriend, whatever, all of you and you're welcome... Just bring them and be free."

Then I called my relative. "Yes." "How far is that?" I said, "It's 20 to 25 minutes." "Oh wonderful! They are so happy – the closest accommodation to Medjugorje."

So it happened actually, they accommodated there... and then coming here for time of apparition in the church, and then after apparition they came and called – so hard to say – overwhelmed with happiness and joy!

And a man who was serious, a gentleman, a real gentleman, approached me. He said to me, "Frano, young boy, you are a rich man." I said [to myself], "Oh goodness me," because I know how much money I have. I thought he was trying to insult me or something. I said, "Adriana, my cousin, what he's about?... How could I be rich? Is he joking?" She said, "No no, Frano, he's a very serious man. He's a nobleman from Bologna. He's got his castle and all this property, and what he said to you, he really meant it. You *are* a rich man." I'm asking myself, "How?" But in Croatian language, "rich"

means "bogat". It means "Godly, with God". OK – bogat – but then I'm thinking – to have God with me, I *am* rich really. To have God, Jesus, as friend and Our Lady as Mother, and She's queen, so I belong to Royal Family! So I'm really bogat – rich man!

So that was the first pilgrimage what I remember in 1984, organized pilgrimage to Medjugorje. I'm so happy to know I helped them with accommodations as close as possible here.

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"The One Who Fasts..."

By Beverley Ann Price



Medjugorje bread

"Little children, the one who prays is not afraid of the future, and the one who fasts is not afraid of evil."

This reminds me of when I was in Medjugorje for my fourth trip in 2006. I was alone in the pansion. I had been fasting and struggling with it. A little voice inside me was saying, "Oh, you

can start this fast when you go back to Australia. Relax here, enjoy yourself."

So after much temptation for hours, I walked down to the corner store. I stood in front of the ice creams, chocolates, and the battle roared within me. Then I looked up and there was a row of breads and rolls. So I walked over and bought a bread roll. As I was leaving the shop, I tripped over on the edge of a step and bruised and cut my leg. I just thought, "You didn't win this one, Satan," and I picked up my roll and bag and walked on very triumphant!

Then on returning to the pansion, I laid on the bed to pray. It was evening, and all of a sudden, I was gripped with fear and Satan's presence, and I must say I was really spooked.

Then these gentle words went through my mind, "*The one who prays is not afraid of the future and the one who fasts is not afraid of evil.*" I thought, "I have done both – I have no need to fear." And a complete peace descended on me, the peace that Jesus says He gives that the world does not.

I said, "Thank you, Mother, for teaching me, for Your words which have resounded in my heart. I do not fear the future and You have just removed the presence of Satan." It was wonderful. Her words are wonderful. I am so glad to have Her as my teacher.

Always remember Her words whenever fear or doubt or evil come, as She says, "*I am with you and I am teaching you, little children.*"

Editor's note: Beverley is from Melbourne, Australia.

Mother, Give Thanks and Remember!

The following was written by the late Fr. Angelus Shaughnessy, who gave us permission, at the time, to use anything he had written in the newsletter "Mother Love".

We need the Holy Family. We need the family HOLY. Nothing in this world can make the family more holy than the Holy Eucharist: Holy Mass, at least every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation until the day you die, hopefully receiving Holy Viaticum at the end, our food for our trip into eternity.

When you receive Jesus in Holy Communion, try to make a proper thanksgiving afterwards...That time after Holy Communion is the most precious in your entire day, the most precious in your entire life. You and I will not get closer to God this side of Heaven.

After Holy Communion, we have equivalently what the Virgin Mother of God had when She conceived Christ nine months before His birth at the time of His enfleshment. Jesus was within Mary's reproductive organs. With you and me in Holy Communion, He is right within our digestive tract.

If you ever want something from God (and who of us doesn't?), Holy Communion is the best time to ask for it; because, when we pray, we don't change God. God is immutable. He cannot be changed. Change implies going from a lesser to a greater state, or from a greater to a lesser state. You can never predicate change in God. He is pure life, pure love, and pure act.

When we pray, we dispose our own hearts to receive. And what better timing for that than when the Sacred Eucharistic Heart of Jesus is resting, is living, is beating right within our own hearts.

When Pope John Paul II was offering Holy Mass in his private chapel, he would sit down right after Holy Communion for 10 minutes to make his thanksgiving before the dismissal of the people. "Strive for this holiness without which no man can please God." [Hebrews, 12:14]

What better time and place to give thanks and remember to be, to become all that our God wants us to be, to become?

"Mother Love", Spring 2009

As of May 25, 2022, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 37,182. Thank you.

Read Sacred Scripture

By Peggy Angstadt

“Read Sacred Scripture, live it, and pray to understand the signs of the times.”
(Message 25 August 1993)

Great blessings await pilgrims in Medjugorje. I was blessed to attend three retreats in Medjugorje, but the retreat with Fr. Jozo Zovko in April of 2002 was a turning point in my life. One aspect of the retreat was his teaching on the Bible in the simplicity of Franciscan tradition. Before this retreat, I would randomly open the Bible, which resulted in prayer with the words GOD offered me. But Fr. Jozo made the Bible come even more alive in his teaching and his example.

Who is the Bible?

Fr. Jozo would not ask, “What is the Bible?” but rather, “WHO is the Bible?” He encouraged us to approach the Bible with the same reverence we approach the Holy Eucharist. It is truly an encounter with the Living GOD. Before Mass, we prepare for the Eucharist; similarly, we must pray in preparation before the reading of the Bible. Throughout the week-long retreat, we prayed the Pentecost Sequence before each of the daily sessions. “Come Holy Spirit, come! And from your celestial home, shed a ray of light divine...” Each repetition of this lengthy and profoundly moving prayer would bring us deeper and deeper into the presence of GOD. It also became the preparation for discovering GOD’s will and His Word in the Bible.

What is the value of a Bible?

To know GOD’s will, we must not be ignorant of HIS Word! Fr. Jozo told us about a time and event of Christian persecution in Alexandria when priests were tortured and burned at the stake. The people only had their Bibles. Then, with gruesome force, all Bibles in the region were collected, placed into a huge mountainous pile, then set afire. In the written account of the event, there were similarities to the Crucifixion: as the Bibles burned, the sun was darkened and the earth shook.

How do we treat our Bible?

At one point, Fr. Jozo borrowed a Bible from a retreatant and held it up for all to see. Its cover was of colored stones sewn onto a beautiful brocade, trimmed in gold. The cover was a work of love! This example, he stated,

demonstrated to others that the book was very valuable. It was not hidden in a bookcase covered with dust.

As when the priest proclaims the Gospel during Holy Mass, he said we too must take the Bible into our hands, raise it to our lips and kiss it as a sign of love and of deep respect for this tremendous gift of GOD Himself. After kissing the Bible, we were told to place it on our hearts and hold it there while remaining in prayer to the Holy Spirit for His wisdom, His guidance, His gifts to be poured into our heart and soul by what we were about to read.

How do we learn GOD’s Will for us?

At this point, Father Jozo recalled a written account by St. Bonaventure of the life of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis went to the Church of St. Nicholas with Brother Bernard. There in prayer, he opened the Bible three times, and the texts were ordered as follows: Matthew 19:21, Luke 9:3, and Matthew 16:24.

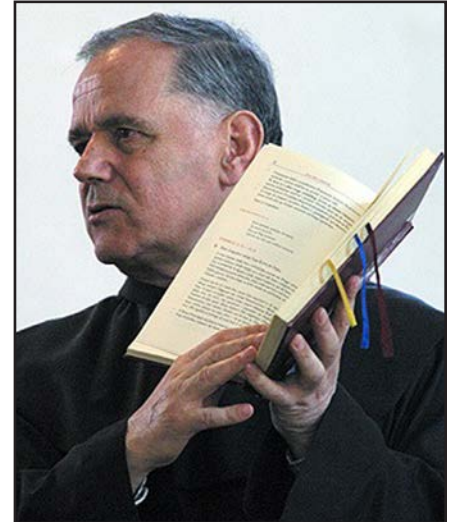
- Matthew 19 says to sell all you have.
- Luke 9 advises to take nothing for the journey.
- and Matthew 16 says, “Follow Me.”

This was GOD’s will for Francis. Now we, too, would encounter GOD, as did St. Francis.

After a period of personal prayer to and in the Holy Spirit, we were directed to:

- open to a page in the Bible – Old Testament or New Testament, wherever we felt led.
- place our hand on the page and begin to read the verse to which we were drawn.
- read it s-l-o-w-l-y; read – not a chapter – but rather one verse or a few verses.
- re-read it *again*; slowly. We are there to **listen**.
- sit with it; surrender your mind and your heart to the Holy Spirit.
- if distracted, re-read the verse(s) as needed.

Sometimes the Spirit waits for our heartfelt attention...and comes just as we consider opening to another place in the Bible. Wait then, patiently, in His Presence.



Fr. Jozo

We did this again two more times. Each time, we opened to a new place, placed our hand/fingers where we were led and s-l-o-w-l-y read one or two lines; then slowly re-read these lines. GOD would speak; we would listen. We would know when to move on to the next selection. I think approximately 30-40 minutes were given for this encounter with the WORD...three openings, three selections...which were guided by the Holy Spirit. When the time came to a close, we were to once again reverently kiss the Bible – the person of GOD.

I do LOVE the Old Testament. I opened to the Old Testament once and the New Testament twice during that first experience. It was the Book of Esther I opened that first time. I was blown away by what I read. Oh my, this was very, very moving for the place I was in my life at that time. Queen Esther remained with me for the rest of that retreat. I have also used this with students preparing for Confirmation. Those who shared at the end (and even years later!) were both surprised and excited by the encounter with GOD.

You may recognize this method of Bible reading as *Lectio Divina*. There are books written on it. But at its heart, this is a simple meeting of hearts in prayer: our heart and the Heart of GOD. Yes, there are times when you open to a passage that seems unrelatable, one that may seem to have no connection to your life. Do not take this as a hindrance! I read once that the

action words in the verses can direct our attention...the verbs. So, if I'm feeling a sense of 'disconnect' to the verse(s), I check the verbs in the sentences. What are the 'action words' telling me – words like: go; remain; rest; battle, etc.?

"It is the Word of Jesus that frees, that blesses. It is His Word that is our peace, our resurrection and our joy. The

human word is nothing. It is worthless. It is deceitful. It is empty. The world is full of human words. It is the Word of God that we need. Let His word be heard in your home." (from the book, *As She Asks*, by Fr. Jozo Zovko)

Editor's note: Peggy lives in Shrewsbury, VT.

Jesus Speaks About Confession

"Today the Lord said to me, "Daughter, when you go to confession, to this fountain of My mercy, the Blood and Water which came forth from My Heart always flows down upon your soul and ennoble it. Every time you go to confession, immerse yourself entirely in My mercy, with great trust, so that I may pour the bounty of My grace upon your soul. When you approach the confessional, know this, that I

Myself am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest, but I myself act in your soul. Here the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy. Tell souls that from this fount of mercy souls draw graces solely with the vessel of trust. If their trust is great, there is no limit to My generosity. The torrents of grace inundate humble souls." (St. Faustina's Diary, #1602)

Questions to the People Who Built the Cross in Medjugorje

By Kay Mule

I have been thinking about the people who built the cross in Medjugorje. You may recall, Croatian villagers carried up the cement, stones, water, whatever it took to construct the 30-foot, 16-ton cement cross on top of what is called Mount Krizevac or Cross Mountain.

If I could speak to you, the young people of 1933, I would ask you some questions. I wonder if you could have envisioned the strangers that this cross would bring, the priests, bishops, nuns, those who believe who come to strengthen their faith, those who are skeptics coming to see why so many are drawn to this place?

Could you have realized the changes this cross would bring to your poverty-stricken area? Could you have dreamed that your homes would be turned into small hotels where millions of foreign people would sleep? That Medjugorje would become a household word in many areas of the world?

Did you know that your grandsons and granddaughters would become guides for pilgrims seeking to renew their faith? That your sons would not have to go to Germany for half the year to find gainful employment to meet their families' economic needs?

There is no way you could have envisioned the building and construction of ever larger houses and mini-hotels that

would dot the farm landscape. Did you realize that the narrow roads through which your children walked to school or brought home your sheep and cows would be used by huge tour buses that barely fit? What would you have said if you had known that thousands of pilgrims would be walking through your vineyards and tobacco fields?

Would you find it hard to believe that the atheistic government, which was so strict on where and how you would worship, would actually encourage people to come to your church to pray? That the church, which was too big when it was built, would become unable to hold all the pilgrims so that an outside chapel would be necessary?

You built that cross as a penance, a sacrifice and also as a plea to God to protect your hidden little valley from terrible lightning and hail storms that destroyed your crops. As we come to Medjugorje to climb that same rugged path of the mountain where you painstakingly built your cross, we reflect on your cross and ours. We realize that, as you could not foresee the good effects of your penance and sacrifice, we may not feel the effects of our sacrifices either.

We pray for God's strength and the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and sustain your descendants as more and more pilgrims come seeking, in your peasant simplicity, something which is lacking in "modern" society.

The Medjugorje Star, October/November 2020



Words of Thanks from the Editor

It dawned on me recently – and it is really hard to believe – that this issue marks 20 years since I took over editing this newsletter, when Joan Wieszczyk was unable to do it anymore due to health problems. I remember being nervous at the beginning, wondering how I could handle this with my teaching job at the time. How could I fill all these pages? Time has shown that Our Lady provides! It boggles my mind to think that we have sent out 240 issues in that time. I am eternally grateful for all the contributors of articles, photos, financial help, and mostly prayers to keep this going month after month. And I am so grateful for the faithful staff we have that is second to none. Thank you, thank you, 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 \$.78 postage on it.



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