

**THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE**  
P.O. BOX 6614 • ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA 16512  
[www.spiritofmedjugorje.org](http://www.spiritofmedjugorje.org)

**SUBSCRIPTION RATE - FREE WILL OFFERING - PLEASE SEE PAGE 8**

*If this is the first time you have received this newsletter, and you would like a "Beginner's Guide," please contact us for one.*



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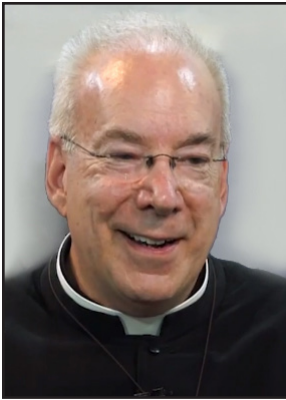
## MONTHLY MESSAGE OF FEBRUARY 25, 2020

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.



“Dear children! In this time of grace, I desire to see your faces transformed in prayer. You are so flooded by earthly concerns, you do not even feel that spring is at the threshold. You are called, little children, to penance and prayer. As nature fights in silence for new life, also you are called to open yourselves in prayer to God, in Whom you will find peace and warmth of the spring sun in your hearts. Thank you for having responded to my call.”

*The painting above, titled "King Jesus", is the work of Croatian artist, Petar Šibenik, who graciously gave us permission to use it. St. Rose of Lima, our patron saint for 2020, once said, "Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may get to Heaven."*



# What is Lent All About??

By Fr. Ray Donohue

We have started a very special time in the life of the Church! And, since we ARE the Church, the living Body of Christ, we should know just what we are experiencing!

I could go into a history of Lent, how it got started and developed, but I would rather spend this space for now reminding us what it means for you and for me.

Lent is given to us by Holy Mother Church to assist us in a most Holy Time. All time is holy. Time is a gift from God to us, one of the infinite gifts He bestows on us. We fill that time with eating, sleeping, relationships, work, vacations, and what could be the most dangerous times we have, idle times.

We make "Resolutions" on New Year's Eve, and usually by mid-January, many if not all drop by the wayside. Why? Because it is only one day! A lot can happen in one day, or nothing can happen. Lent is so different. We do not make "resolutions" in Lent, we make life decisions. Not for a day but for our life. We mean to change! We make a pledge to ourselves and to God, with His help and the help of our Mother and all the Angels and Saints who give us example and direction and guidance. This "pledge" we make is to be a better person, a holier person, a kinder person. It involves changing our schedules and life styles. It means we are going to incorporate God into our morning, noon and night and in our life situations and relationships, with each other and with God!

We all need a starting point. LENT is our starting point! Lent is a journey in Faith, a journey with God, daily and often conversations with God and His Saints! I once read: "If you don't fill your life with prayer, you will fill it with anxiety, worry and resentment." I will also add to this, "sin". I tell all my spiritual directees and those who come to Holy Confession to me (and I tell myself this everyday) not to try to "fit" God into your schedule, but work your schedule around God.

I find I am a morning person. I am up every day about 6:00 or 6:15 a.m. I take Dublin outside, come back in, make my bed, and go to my "prayer-chair" where I keep my Breviary, a Rosary, a Crucifix, my spiritual reading, and my favorite prayers which I pray every day. Note, I do not "say" my prayers. I "Pray" my prayers. I begin my prayers in quiet, and then say, "Almighty Father, I place the Precious Blood of Jesus before my lips before I pray, that my prayers may be purified before they ascend to your Divine Altar". (This is a prayer prayed and written by Saint Magdalene de Pazzi.) If you are a morning person, spend time in the morning in holy prayer. If you are night person, then pray mostly then, but also, morning person or "later in the day person", pray

throughout the day, in the car, on breaks; find some quiet time and pray.

When I was a child, my mother would tell me to make my bed. Why? I was only going to sleep in it again later that evening! But, I would make it because my mother asked me to do it. Simple, right? It taught me so much. I got into the routine of making my bed in the morning as part of my morning ritual. Discipline is so important to every Catholic. To this day, making my bed is still a part of my ritual. It makes things neat and clean and in order. Do we do this with our own person and relationship with God? Things that are neat and clean and in order make us feel good about ourselves and life. It starts us off on a very good start!

Just as my mother asked me to do this, it was because she wished me to do it. She had a reason. So, I did it.

Our Mother in Heaven is a very important part of our Lenten journey! Our Mother has reasons for asking us to do certain things: Monthly confessions, Daily prayers, Fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, Listening to God through prayer and the Holy Scriptures, Extra Masses when we can go on weekdays. Does this sound like Lent? Stations of the Cross are so important. If we cannot attend the Stations at our Church, pray them at home while holding a Crucifix.

I promise you, you and your Lenten experience will never be the same!

But before we do things, we need to ask God, "What do You want me to do this year for Lent?" Lent helps us to put our life and situations, and our relationship with God, in such a way as to make our lives a clean, neat and orderly place for Him to dwell, and for us to welcome Him into this dwelling we call our "self".

This Lent, be sure to get to Confession at least twice. We need to turn off the TV, cell phones (*especially* the cell phones), distractions (as we heard on Ash Wednesday, "Go into your inner

room, close the door, and pray to your Father in private"). We need this one-on-one time with the Lord. He speaks to us and we speak to Him. He listens to us, and we listen to Him. Prayer is conversation, and never one-way. Can you imagine a telephone call where you could only speak and not hear the person on the other end, or hear that person but they could not hear you? Communication is both ways, and prayer is communication. We clean the house, and we need to clean our "house" – our mind, our bodies, our bad habits – and we do so one step at a time and asking the Lord for His help! Bad habits include, but are not limited to: not praying every day, not fasting (either on bread and water, or from TV programs, cigarettes, excessive drinking, gossip, holding a grudge, being mean), coming late for Holy Mass and/or leaving early, receiving Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist in the state of sin, or not in a prayerful way, where we really and truly invite Jesus into our hearts and lives and remember we are now Living Tabernacles ourselves after receiving Jesus. Lent is a time of cleansing! After a workout, or a long day, doesn't a clean fresh shower or bath feel terrific? Lent helps



Confessionals in Medjugorje

us to do spiritual as well as physical cleansing. We work on getting rid of the bad, and getting used to the good!

But remember, and this is very important, the devil will try to stop us any way he can! He'll try to discourage us, especially if we try to do something and fail in some way. Don't listen to him. Get right back up and start all over again! As a child, when we were playing a game and it was getting boring or too long or we didn't like the way it was going, we would call out "Do-Overs"! Then, we would simply start all over again, like it never happened at all, and we started fresh again, sometimes making changes to make it better. God is the KING of "Do-Overs"! He wants us and encourages us to make these "Do-Overs" in our lives. He is always open to give us another chance, to start it all over like new. The devil wants us to feel terrible and pulls us down. God never does that. NEVER! God lifts us up to begin with Him all over again! Remember this all during this Lent. Remember it all during your life. But when you make a "Do-Over", make sure you mean business, that you truly want to begin again and do better and better. It will make you stronger and stronger.

Prayer will help us, the Holy Eucharist will strengthen us, and spiritual reading will open our hearts! If you can, I suggest you read the Passion of Jesus in Mark's Gospel. It is the shortest and First Gospel written and pulls no punches.

Mark is blunt and to the point. Begin with Mark, Chapter 14, and go from there. Pray it slowly as you read, and put yourself in there. You can be a bystander, but don't just "read", pray it, and be a part of it. Ask Jesus to show you what He was going through. Put what is going on in your own life with that of what was going on in Jesus' life. Be one with God.

May we keep each other in Holy Prayer all throughout this Holy Lent. Let's make this Lent the best we have ever had so far, by giving ourselves to God and to each other in service. Pray, fast and be converted. Doesn't Our Lady, our Mother make sense now? She is asking us to make this time special. Can we refuse our Mother? Can we say "no" to God? I will answer that for us all: "NO!" We will indeed open ourselves up like never before. Do everything in the Name of Jesus. Be the best we can, and do it with love because our Mother, Holy Mother Church, asks us to do it. And, if we need to do a "Do-Over" at any part this Lent, we will ask our Guardian Angel and Holy Mother Mary, and our Lord Jesus and all the Saints to assist us. They are all there for us, and we are there for them!

Know that I remember all of you in my daily Holy Masses and Holy Prayers.

In Jesus and Mary,  
~Father Ray

## Message to Mirjana on February 2, 2020

"Dear children, by the act of the decision and love of God, I am chosen to be the Mother of God and your mother. But also by my will and my immeasurable love for the Heavenly Father and my complete trust in Him, my body was the chalice of the God-man. I was in the service of truth, love and salvation, as I am now among you to call you, my children, apostles of my love, to be carriers of truth; to call you to spread His words, the words of salvation, by your will and love for my Son: that with your actions you may show, to all those who have not come to know my Son, His love. You will find strength in the Eucharist – my Son who feeds you with His Body and strengthens you with His Blood. My children, fold your hands [in prayer] and look at the Cross in silence. In this way, you are drawing faith to be able to transmit it; you are drawing truth to be able to discern; you are drawing love that you may know to love truly. My children, apostles of my love, fold your hands [in prayer], look at the Cross. Only in the Cross is salvation. Thank you."



Drawing by  
Molly Klins

## Struggling with Fasting

By Janet Moore

When I first heard about Medjugorje and listened to the reported messages almost 30 years ago, my heart was inflamed with great love and fervor! Along with this fervor, God gave me the grace to fast without difficulty as I eagerly heeded the reported messages of Our Blessed Mother, in which She repeatedly asked us to fast. For it is an integral part of Her call to lead us ever closer to Her Son, Jesus. It was such a joy to me!

But, that ease has been gone for over 20 years now. Therefore, this particular call of Mary to fast twice each week on Wednesdays and Fridays has been the call in which I have failed the most. I have often thought of this as a shame, but maybe it's not in the eyes of God?

Let me explain: When I first began to make holy hours in front of Jesus in Adoration, I remember repeating a phrase often to myself that helped me as I got used to staying in prayer for an hour at a time. The phrase went something like this: Consolation is God's gift to you. To continue to pray, even if you feel nothing, is your gift to God.

It seems that this must also be true with fasting. If we fast

with great ease, it is definitely a grace and a gift from God to us. But, if we struggle to fast, yet determinedly begin again and again, regardless of how often we fail or how painful it is, that is our gift to God. So, by allowing us to struggle, isn't this an opportunity for us to grow in truly loving God – by purifying us of our self-centeredness and our tendency to live only to please ourselves?

Thus, even while God allows us to struggle for our good in order to purify us – I also know that God looks with compassion on us and sees how many of us fight to live the call He has given to us through His Mother. He, therefore, longs to help us choose to fast even in the midst of temptations and trials.

*Editor's note: Janet lives in Wichita, KS and is the founder of the "Apostolate of Priestly Consecration," which provides free pilgrimages and resources for priests to aid them in drawing close to Mary to help them live Her messages in holiness and Total Consecration. She writes at [enteringintothemystery.blogspot.com](http://enteringintothemystery.blogspot.com) and at Queen of Peace Facebook group.*

# “I Want You to Meet the Mother That I Can Never Be”

By June Klins

In our December 2019 issue, we featured a story about a miracle with a “Christmas crucifix” that was distributed by a man named Jim Browne. In January, I felt a little nudge to read about Jim Browne and found that he had three testimonies on Mary TV’s *Fruit of Medjugorje* ([marytv.to/fruit-of-medjugorje](http://marytv.to/fruit-of-medjugorje)) – #29, #44, #199. My hope is that you will watch these testimonies, because my condensed version will not even come close to capturing Jim’s emotional and inspirational story.

Jim grew up in a small town in Ireland in a violent home, with a father who was a “beautiful man who went to work”, but as soon as he took alcohol after work, he became “a lunatic – violent, destructive, and abusive.” Jim’s mother, Molly, was beaten almost daily, as was Jim from the age of four. When he was six, Jim had to sleep in the same room as his father, who would even pull him out of bed to beat him.

As a child, Molly, who was a cousin of Fr. Patrick Peyton (“The Rosary Priest”), used to walk in her bare feet the seven miles from her home to Knock, where Our Lady appeared in 1879. So every year the family would travel three times to Knock. Jim loved those days, because on those days he felt like he belonged to something and had a family that loved him. One day at Knock, when he was six, he asked his mother why they had to come there, and she said, “I want you to meet the mother that I can never be.” She continued, “I want you to ask Our Lady to be your mother, and I will always be with you when I can, but She will always be with you when I can’t.”

Jim’s experience at school was not much better than at home. He had some violent teachers who told him he was no good, just like his father did. One even made him stand at the back of the room and bray like a donkey.

At age 15, Jim’s mother got him a job as a shoe salesman in his small town. He was very good at it, and by age 19, he was traveling Ireland selling shoes. By 23, he was earning more money than the teachers who told him he was no good. He thought this was success – having a big car, nice clothes, and money. “I didn’t know that success was who I am in Jesus.” But during this time, Jim began to drink heavily and continued to drink every day for the next 20 years. “It allowed me to forget who I was and where I came from.”

Jim married in 1986, but admitted he did not know how to love his wife. He could not understand how anyone would want to be with him, since he was always told he was no good. As his pain continued to grow, he began to increase the alcohol. In 1992, the alcohol, which had been “the solution”, now became the problem. His wife was concerned about his alcohol consumption, and so he entered a treatment program run by two nuns.

At the age of 38, Jim finally became sober. But the strange thing is that he started to stray from the Church. He began to substitute AA meetings for Mass. He also got involved in New Age practices. He got into pendulums, crystals, Shen, holotropic breathwork, feathers, etc. He became a

Reiki Master. As a result, he got involved with many aspects of the occult. Jim lamented, “And the greatest deceit of all was that I was told I was developing my relationship with Jesus, and *nothing could be further from the truth.*” “I didn’t realize, in fact, that not only were these not working, but I was going further and further away from my faith. And every time I did some new therapy, it was another insult

to the First Commandment.” Five years into Jim’s recovery from alcoholism, he and his wife separated. He blamed the New Age practices. “I had invited all the satanic influences and spirits into my life, into our house.”

In January of 2000, Jim was about to start up his own business as a Reiki Master, when he met a Christian woman who warned him that everything to do with New Age is a counterfeit and an insult to God, and warned that a lot of his bodily functions would break down. He had been sick for a year prior to that, and did not want to hear what she was saying, but knew deep inside that she was speaking the truth. This woman also gave Jim a love for the Bible and how to incorporate it into his daily life.

In April of that same year, a friend from the shoe business asked Jim to come look at a new line of children’s shoes. In the evening, he

invited Jim to go with him and his wife to pray the Rosary with another couple. Jim did not want anything to do with the Rosary and said he wanted to watch his favorite TV show that night. But when he sat down to watch the show, he got a strange feeling, like the seat was on fire. Since he could not get comfortable, he agreed to go with them and pray the Rosary. He led the 5<sup>th</sup> Glorious Mystery. On the way home, he heard his mother’s words from 39 years earlier, “I want you to meet the mother that I can never be.” Jim got very fearful when he found out these words did not come from his friend’s wife in the back seat.

When they arrived back at his friend’s house, the man gave Jim a copy of the Divine Mercy Novena and said, “If you do this novena, especially on Good Friday, I can promise you a miracle in your life.” Jim replied, “A miracle is what I need, because everything in my life that could go wrong has gone wrong.”

Jim had been in the habit of going to Knock every Good Friday, even when his faith was wavering. He did not stay long, but he would make an appearance there. That year, he prayed the novena at Knock, and although he did not have a rosary, he prayed the Chaplet on his fingers. On the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the novena, he was booked on his first trip to Medjugorje!

Jim’s pilgrimage started on May 2, 2000. When he got to the airport at 5:00 AM, his first impression was that all the people were crazy – they were hugging each other and saying how lovely it was to meet each other. A lady came over to him and was fixing his collar and told him that he would never be the same again after this trip. He thought to himself, “You’re never going to be the same again if you don’t leave me alone!” This same woman sat near Jim and shared her Medjugorje experiences with him, and when she told



Jim’s mother, Molly

him about the sun spinning, he could not take anymore. He snapped "I'm an alcoholic. I drank every day for 20 years. I saw everything spinning – the hotel room was spinning, my breakfast plate was spinning. Everything was spinning. So leave me alone."

In Medjugorje, they were staying at a small house. Jim had planned to be alone, but the group insisted he join them. "It was like the Agony in the Garden with the soldiers coming for me." He eventually gave in. Jim asked one of the pilgrims to take him to Apparition Hill. When they got to Apparition Hill, Jim did not pay the taxi driver and just told him to wait because he would be right back. Jim told his companion to say a prayer, so he said the Our Father. Then Jim said the Hail Mary. But as he said it, his voice began to tremble and with each Hail Mary, his voice trembled more. His eyes began to fill with tears as he said the third one. He went back, paid the taxi driver, and told him he didn't need him. He went back up the hill, praying the Rosary, and when he returned to the house, he felt a lot different – a lot better.

Back at the house, the pilgrims were talking about going to Confession, so Jim asked the priest in the house if he could go to Confession to him. The Confession took over three hours, and when he was done, the priest hugged Jim and said, "James, every sin that you have ever committed for your entire life has been forgiven." Jim exclaimed, "I could have jumped over the house!" Jim reflected upon the other times he had "confession" with AA. He said in Step 4, you make an inventory of all the harm that was done to you and all the harm you have done to yourself and others, and in Step 5, you have to tell it to another human being. Jim had done that three times. He said, "Even though they could empathize with me...they couldn't do the most important thing of all. They didn't have the power to forgive me... But when this priest gave me absolution, I knew that for the first time in my life, I was as clean and bright and as white as snow. And I felt all the peace and all the glory of God. And I knew that I had found what I was looking for all my life!"

Jim reflected upon the role of the Divine Mercy Novena in his Confession experience. Because of his background he was never able to trust anyone. "This Divine Mercy Novena opened up this love and this trust that God had put into my spirit when I was born." It helped Jim to trust the priest he didn't even know to hear his whole life's story.

The next day, at Mass, at the Sign of Peace, the celebrant said, "If there is somebody in your heart that you need to forgive, before you shake hands with the people beside you, maybe you need to forgive that person first." Jim began to cry so hard that he had to sit down, and then he had to kneel down. The seat in front of him and the seat behind him were both shaking he was crying so hard. "All I could feel with these tears was JOY, PEACE, LOVE, and FORGIVENESS!" Jim began to recall the many times of joy, love and laughter of his family that the pain had blotted away all those years. And he spoke to Jesus, saying, "Jesus, tell my mother and

father that I love them. And thank You for giving them to me." Jim continued, "I just only ask for one thing – that now You take this brokenness that's in me so that I can do Your work and my own work. I don't know what You want me to do, but I want to do something with this pain. It's been in me too long."

Jim went back to Medjugorje five months later and attended an apparition to Marija. After the apparition he knew that his job was to bring people to Medjugorje. Our Lady put an airline attendant in his path who also felt called to bring people, and together they began bringing people to Medjugorje.

One time Jim was going to have to lead a group by himself, so he asked a family friend, Fr. Benny McHale, to be the spiritual director of the pilgrimage. Father exclaimed, "You have no idea the amount of Masses that I said for you as a young boy. And your mother, Molly, she would come up to me every time she had a few pounds and she'd say, 'Fr. Benny, could you say another Mass for James?'" So Fr. Benny replied, "You have no idea how big an honor it would be for me to work with you to bring people to Medjugorje!" Jim and Fr. Benny brought alcoholics to Medjugorje, drug addicts, and also parents who have lost children. (Jim told a number of stories about the miraculous conversions he has witnessed among his pilgrims, and we will share those in another issue sometime. If you don't want to wait, you can watch his testimonies on Mary TV.)

Jim was happy bringing people to Medjugorje, but he felt there was something else he was meant to do, so he began praying about it. In 2004, a friend invited him to go to Medjugorje with him for Christmas. This man was a friend of Vicka, so he invited Jim to visit Vicka on Christmas Eve. He told Jim to bring some medals and crucifixes so that they could be blessed the next day. On Christmas Day, Our Lady appears with Baby Jesus in Her arms as She did on the first Christmas, and both She and Baby Jesus bless the medals and crucifixes. Jim brought 300 crucifixes to be blessed. He began giving them out to friends and family. People started to report about "fantastic healings" that were attributed to praying with these special crucifixes. People who had cancer were going back to work, people in comas were coming out of them, alcoholics were becoming sober, etc. (Some of these miracles will also be in a future issue.) The next year, Jim got 1,000 crucifixes for the Christmas apparition, then 5,000, and then 10,000. Jim found his purpose!

In the meantime, Jim began speaking to groups around Ireland, and then outside of Ireland, including the Youth Festival in Medjugorje. People wondered what courses he took to be able to speak in front of all those people when he could barely answer a question in school. He brought out his rosary and replied, "When I have my hand in the Mother's hand, I don't need any assertiveness courses..."

"And the promise that my mother made to me when I was six years old has come true every day of my life since I arrived in Medjugorje."

*"When you stand to pray, forgive anyone against whom you have a grievance, so that your heavenly Father may in turn forgive you your transgressions" (Mk 11:25).*



*Jim and Vicka*

# A Medjugorje Moment

By June Klins

In our December 2019 issue, we had a story about a miracle with a "Christmas Day Crucifix" distributed by Jim Browne (see story on pp. 4-5). I never dreamed I would ever be able to obtain one of these crucifixes, blessed by Our Lady and Baby Jesus at the Christmas apparition to Vicka. But in January, Louise Lotze, one of our mailing helpers, shared information with us from *Medjugorje Magazine* about ordering a Christmas Day Crucifix.

What is interesting is that the lady who distributes the crucifixes in the U.S., Barbara Kleaveland, is one of our subscribers. She is also a Facebook friend of mine. I had no idea of this ministry of hers. Her Medjugorje testimony was in our October 2009 issue and is also in our book, *I Have Come to Tell the World That God Exists*. Small world!

Barbara shared with me that using her story in our book prompted her to go back to Medjugorje, which is where she met Jim Browne and got involved in this ministry. And now I would be so blessed to be receiving a crucifix from her! Wow!

I was so excited when I received my crucifix! The following



Sunday I wore it on a chain around my neck to Mass. I was scheduled to be a greeter that day. I told no one about my special crucifix. But just as a family walked by me, and I greeted them, I heard one of the children, a toddler, say clear as a bell, "**Baby Jesus**". That child, who had no idea about my crucifix, must have sensed the presence of Baby Jesus from the special blessing! I had to fight to hold back the tears!

*Editor's note: According to Medjugorje Magazine, the St. Benedict crucifixes, which are bought with donations, are delivered to Vicka before Christmas, and when Our Lady appears holding Baby Jesus in Her arms, He blesses the crucifixes and kisses one of them, and then Our Lady blesses them. The next day, the crucifixes receive the St. Benedict blessing and exorcism blessing by a priest. Pilgrims bring them to the U.S. To send for a crucifix (ONE only per order), include your name and address, typed or printed legibly, and a minimum of a*

*\$5.00 donation for postage to Barbara Kleaveland, 822 Moulton Ave., North Muskegon, MI 49445. Any donation beyond the postage helps buy more crucifixes for next year.*

## Rosary Mysteries of Forgiveness

By Deacon Jerome Peterson

### 1. Jesus forgives the condemned woman.

Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more." (John 8:10-11)

### 2. Jesus forgives the Prodigal son.

'But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' (Luke 15:32)

### 3. Jesus forgives Zacchaeus.

When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost." (Luke 19:5-10)

### 4. Jesus forgives Peter.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He then said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." [Jesus] said to him, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-17)

### 5. Jesus forgives me.

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." (Luke 23:33-34)

*Editor's note: Deacon Jerome is a deacon of the Diocese of Erie and a nephew of our late spiritual advisor, Msgr. James Peterson. I suspect he may have gotten a little help from him while composing these mysteries!*

## Bits and "Peaces"

- As of February 25, 2020, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 28,754. Thank you!
- Don't forget to let us know when you have a change of address! It saves time, effort and money. Thank you!
- Please let us know if you did not receive last month's newsletter. (There was a problem and we suspect 20 people may not have received their newsletters.)
- Please pray for a special intention. Thank you!

# March 19, 2020

By June Klins

Do you know what happens on March 19, 2020? No, it is not the day we take down our St. Patrick decorations because we are too tired or too busy celebrating visionary Mirjana's birthday on the 18<sup>th</sup>. No, March 19 is the feast day of St. Joseph, husband of Our Lady and foster father of Our Lord. And this year is special because for the first time in history, thousands and thousands of people will be consecrating themselves to St. Joseph, thanks to a new book, *Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father*, written by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC.

This book follows the 33-day preparation format similar to the Marian Consecration of St. Louis de Montfort. Although it is too late to join the consecration on March 19, if you have not already started, there are seven other suggested times throughout the year to do this. The next one is May 1, the feast day of St. Joseph the Worker.

One of the suggested days that piqued my interest was January 23. Do you know why January 23 is one of the dates? Fr. Calloway's book explains it. Although it is not on the calendar for the universal Church, January 23 is the feast day of the Holy Spouses, and it is celebrated in some dioceses throughout the world. What is very interesting is that the "Santo Anello", the Holy Ring that St. Joseph gave to Mary on their wedding day, is housed in a reliquary in the Cathedral in Perugia, Italy. This is so interesting! I never knew this. You can read more about this in the book.

Why is this consecration so important today? Fr. Calloway writes: "There are many reasons, but I believe there are two that are especially important. First, we need the spiritual fatherhood of St. Joseph to help us protect marriage and the family. Marriage and the family have always been under attack, but in modern times, the threats have reached extraordinary heights. Many people no longer know what it means to be a man or a woman, let alone what constitutes a marriage and a family. Many countries even claim to have redefined marriage and the family. There is great confusion on these matters, greater confusion than in any previous era of human history. The Servant of God Sr. Lucia dos Santos, the longest-lived visionary of the Fatima apparitions, knew the seriousness of the times and made a powerful statement about this issue. She wrote: **The final battle between the Lord and the kingdom of Satan will be about marriage and the family.**

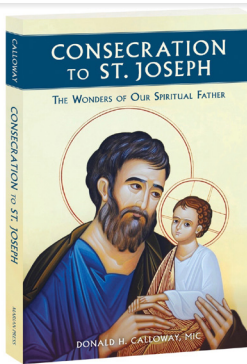
"To combat and overcome Satan's deceptions, the Church needs St. Joseph. His example and protection are the only way out of the confusing mess we are in. Who else can we turn to who can help us understand what marriage and the family are all about if not to the Head of the Holy Family and our spiritual father?"

"Second, the entire world needs to be re-evangelized, including the vast majority of baptized Christians. Saint Joseph was the first missionary. Today, he desires again to bring Jesus to the nations. Many nations and cultures that were previously Christian have fallen away from their Christian roots and are on a path of self-destruction. Countries once established on Judeo-Christian principles have become overrun by ideologies and organizations that seek to strip society of all that is sacred. **Without a major turnaround, civilization itself is going to self-destruct.**"

If you have never done a consecration, you may wonder what it means. Fr. Calloway answers this question on the consecration website, [www.consecrationtostjoseph.org](http://www.consecrationtostjoseph.org). "Well, it basically means that you acknowledge that he is your spiritual father, and you want to be like him. To show it, you entrust yourself entirely into his paternal care so that he can help you acquire his virtues and become holy. Total consecration to St. Joseph means you make a formal act of filial entrustment to your spiritual father so that he can take care of your spiritual well-being and lead you to God. The person who consecrates himself to St. Joseph wants to be as close to their spiritual father as possible, to the point of resembling him in virtue and holiness. Saint Joseph, in turn, will give those consecrated to him his undivided attention, protection, and guidance."

A frequently asked question (one I thought of myself) is: If you are consecrated to the Blessed Mother, can you also be consecrated to St. Joseph as well? Fr. Calloway answers this question: "The answer is a resounding 'Yes!' God desires that all children be committed to the care of a mother and a father. **You are not a member of a single-parent spiritual family.** Mary is your spiritual mother, and St. Joseph is your spiritual father. The spiritual fatherhood of St. Joseph is extremely important for your spiritual growth. Total consecration to Mary is not diminished by total consecration to St. Joseph. Mary wants you to consecrate yourself to St. Joseph! Jesus wants you to consecrate yourself to St. Joseph! Everything you have given to Jesus and Mary can also be given to St. Joseph. The hearts of Jesus, Mary, and St. Joseph are one."

*Editor's note: If you are on Facebook, you can read inspirational posts and view related videos at Consecration to St. Joseph with Fr. Calloway.*



## Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

**for March Catholics in China:** We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.



*Our thanks to Pat Berrier, Diane Niebauer, Marge Burchard, Sue Taccone, Joan Peterson, Chris Falk, Julie Hansen, Joanne and Tom McIntire, Rose Heintzel, Peggy Chludzinski, Cindy Bielamin, Barb Cesare, Marge Spase, Georgia Chludzinski, Dianne Yochim, Irene and Dan Zuba, and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the February mailing. 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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