

**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 SEPTEMBER 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.



“Dear children! Pray that the Holy Spirit may enlighten you that you be joyful seekers of God and witnesses of love without bounds. I am with you, little children, and, anew, I am calling all of you: take courage and bear witness to the good works that God is doing in and through you. Be joyful in God. Do good to your neighbor so that it will be good for you on earth and pray for peace, which is threatened because Satan wants war and peacelessness. Thank you for having responded to my call.”

October is the month dedicated to the Holy Rosary. On September 25, 2019, Our Lady said, “Dear children! Today I am calling you to pray for my intentions so that I may help you. Little children, pray the Rosary and meditate the mysteries of the Rosary because, in your life, you are also passing through joys and sorrows. In this way, you are transforming the mysteries into your life, because life is a mystery until you place it into God’s hands...” The picture shown above was taken at the Oasis of Peace in Medjugorje.



Fr. Ray

# To be Holy is to be Happy!

By Fr. Ray Donohue

At one point, I was going to call this article: "To be Happy is to be Holy", but I chose not to. To quote what my dad used to remind us as kids: "Don't put the cart before the horse." I never understood him when he said that, as we did not have a cart, and we had a dog and a canary, not a horse; but dad always looked like he knew what he was saying, so just in case we

had a cart and a horse and I just didn't know we did, I kept quiet.

Truly, many people on this earth think they are happy with having 2 cars, a nice house, a good family, and money in the bank. Nothing wrong with this, but to be truly happy and blessed – to be holy – is to act as God wants us to act, and to do what God intended us to do, and put Him first before all else. Then, and only then, true happiness follows. Holiness is what comes not from what we have, but from what we have to give!

To be holy means to understand the Will of God. God wants us to be happy, but He also created us for a purpose. The purpose is for us to be used by God without the Heavenly Father in any way forcing His Will on us, as we have free will as a gift from God, for love comes from the heart – it is never forced – it is something that we give freely.

Our Blessed Mother was asked by the Angel Gabriel to be the Mother of God. She was never "told" to be. The Angel Gabriel was asked by God to announce this most important message, as angels and saints and all of God's holy creation have free will to say "Yes" or "No". Yes, even the angels have free will, as we see with the fallen angels, satan and his minions. The devil loved God at one time, and God always loved and loves ALL of His creations, even the devil. Satan loved God, then he wanted to be like God, then he wanted to BE God. He became evil through envy, disobedience, pride, and hate. Evil hates everything. The devil and his minions in Hell hate others, hate themselves, hate Hell, hate humanity, hate God and hate all things. There is no joy in Hell. There is nothing holy in Hell, and the souls who are there put themselves there by their actions, and their lack of actions.

To love is to give of oneself, in charity and kindness, freely and without regret. This is the beginning of holiness! Taking time for holy prayer each day and throughout the day, kind actions to others, putting others' needs first as best we can – this is holiness. To bring God and His love into this world in our thoughts, words, and deeds – this is holiness. To love for God, to speak for God using Holy Scripture, prayers, actions, and showing through what we say and do that we are God-centered, bringing God's light into this world of darkness and hate – this is holiness!

We can feel holiness, just as the saints and martyrs felt the holiness that they developed in their openness to God to live and to even die for God and the holy faith! Can we have this kind of faith, as did the men and women who suffered terribly for the holy name of Jesus and the holy faith? Yes. It is nurtured in our hearts. We pass on the faith and encouragement by the grace that God gives to us, the grace Jesus had, the holy martyrs had, the Blessed Mother had, and – as they are in Heaven – *still* have in their heavenly state! It is deep love, and love that is lived out and shared with all others!

In our daily lives, we are called by inviting others to know, love and serve God by our actions, by our personalities, and, most especially, by our example. Do we swear and use other bad language? Are we firm in our faith? Do we truly attend Holy Mass, not just in our bodies, but with our whole soul, heart, mind, and attention? Even for the infirmed who cannot get to Church, do you watch it on TV and participate in a reverent way, not drinking coffee and talking while the Holy Mass is being celebrated? My Aunt Winnie was like a living saint: bed-ridden, as she suffered terribly from MS, being very frail, thin, and yet so holy and lovely, and I never heard her complain. I was just a little child but loved to visit her; she lived with my grandmother, her mother. She always talked about the saints and the Blessed Mother, and how much God loves us. She was always so kind and loving, yet later, as I was older and she had already passed, I found out how much horrible pain she was in constantly.



The Annunciation Station on Apparition Hill

When I am in any pain, I try to think of Aunt Winnie; and every day in my holy prayers, when I pray a Novena to Saint Thérèse the Little Flower (who my aunt just loved and showed me how to have devotion of St. Thérèse), I ask St. Thérèse to bring my Aunt Winnie next to her in Heaven and pray to the Blessed Mother for me. I tell Saint Thérèse how similar they both are and I know they are close friends in Heaven.

To be holy is to make friends with the angels and saints in Heaven, and those on earth. We all know saintly people here on this earth; follow their example and the love you see in them. They are not perfect, nor are we, so always be patient and kind. Remember that Christ Jesus is dwelling in us all; so, try to remember to see Jesus in each other, and above that, try with all humility and kindness and love to show others Jesus dwelling in you!

Be happy with what you have and with what you do not have. Be content with who you are and who you are not. If we strive for God, then we strive for holiness and goodness in our hearts, words, actions and our relationship with God and others. Treat others as you treat God. You wouldn't want to call God names, be mean to Him, say bad things behind His back, complain about things you have or don't have, and the list goes on and on...

Remember, when I say or write anything for you, I am really writing and saying it to me! I learned, and I keep

learning, to take my own advice as God is calling both you and me to holiness, kindness, truthfulness, and generosity in sharing our faith, our earthly wealth, our time, energies, and most of all, summed up in sharing the Love of God that is within us.

That is holiness. That is what the saints learned to do – some from a very young age, like Saint Thérèse, Saint Bernadette, Saint Padre Pio, and countless others; some from middle age; and others, in their old age. Remember, Saint Paul persecuted Christians at one time. God spoke to his heart, and he converted. We are never too young or too old to have the same thing happen to us! As Jesus reminds us: “Be Holy, as the Heavenly Father is Holy.” This is what

the Blessed Mother has been calling us to do and to be for so long in Medjugorje. This is what makes us happy, kinder, more loving, and generous in helping the sick, infirmed, elderly, youth, poor, helpless, homeless, and all of God’s people and creations. What we do and how we act always comes back to us, and with interest. Be kind, and you will find that out of all your love and actions, you will be called “holy”, a faithful servant of God and our Blessed Mother!

God bless you in this wonderful month of October in all its beauty and charm!

In Jesus and our dear Blessed Mother,

~Father Ray and my little pal Dublin ☺

*The following is an email sent a few years ago by the former website, [livethefast.com](http://livethefast.com).*

## Fasting and Joy

Have you ever met a person who was so joyful, they shined? And because they were so joyful, you wanted to be with them all the time? The Gospel...encourages us to “shine like lights.”

We live in a society of overconsumption and materialism. How often during a normal day do we eat because we are bored? Fasting helps us to distinguish between a want and a need. By depriving ourselves of the food that we enjoy on a regular basis, we can grow in virtue and holiness and thereby shine like lights to others.

Admittedly, many of us do not “shine” with joy on fasting days. Perhaps we can be a bit grumpy when our stomachs are empty. Attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist (daily, if possible) give us the grace to have a joyful and successful fast. In the afternoon, when our stomach is crying out for food, go to a quiet place and pray. Prayer is an integral part of our fasting routine. When we are following God’s laws and open to the graces of the sacraments, we can’t help but “shine” and be joyful.

## “The Best Vacation I’ve Had in My Life”

*The following testimony was taken with permission from the website, [imedjugorje.com](http://imedjugorje.com). This testimony was given by a boy named Luke during his pilgrimage to Medjugorje. It is dated September 9, 2022.*

I’m 11. I was really worried that this whole week that we’ve been here was going to be just praying and being in the church the whole entire time. I thought this was going to be kind of a fun trip, but it was going to be mainly praying. I was not so excited for the trip.

Now, after the whole week we’ve been here, it was probably the most fun experience of my life. It’s fun to be here with my siblings. We haven’t had a family trip in so long. This has been great for our whole family to bond. We’ve had so much fun doing everything together.

My favorite thing is listening to and seeing all the crazy miracles that have happened, like the Risen Christ statue where the knee was leaking tears. It’s so amazing that it’s happening right there in front of your eyes.

My favorite activity has been the waterfalls. It was so fun. The water was really cold, but it’s really hot, so it’s worth getting in the water. It’s very relaxing.

Hiking Cross Mountain was really fun. I was really energized that morning. We got up at 4 AM and then we hiked the mountain to avoid the sun because it gets

so hot. I was running up there the whole time. It was really cool. Once we got to the very top, the view was gorgeous. You could see the whole area, where we were staying and the church. We went back into these bushes and there were a few rocks and there was a massive heart made out of rocks.

My mom has been here like eight or nine times. My whole childhood she’s been telling us about it. She would tell us, and I’d be like, “Wow that’s really cool,” then go on about my day.

Now that I’m actually here, it is so beautiful and so cool and so amazing. I don’t even know how to describe it.

100%, without a doubt, come here. It is the best vacation I’ve had in my life. It’s been the most fun trip I’ve been on in a really long time.

I got closer to God. Before I came to Medjugorje, I would go to church and I would feel like I didn’t want to go to church at all. I had no desire at all. I was like, “I just want to lay in bed and relax or watch TV or do whatever I want.”

Now that I’m here, I understand how everything works. Now that I’ve gotten closer to God and Mary, I think that I will want to go to church more.

I think I will definitely change.

It’s been such a blessing to be here.



*Kravice Falls near Medjugorje*

*Our thanks to Fr. Ray Donohue, Carol Bleck, Dorothy Bennett, Diane Niebauer, Pat Berrier, Sue Taccone, Mary Spaeder, Laura and Kevin DiBacco, Tom McIntire, Georgia Chludzinski, Mary Jo Jaglowski, Jane Culmer, Barb Cesare, Louise Lotze, Cindy Bielanin, Darleen Wilkinson, Irene and Dan Zuba, Peggy Chludzinski, Joan Peterson, Marlene Figurski, Barb Sirianni, Kandace Lyons, Peggy Smith, Kathy Wayman, Elaine Brady, and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the September mailing. We thank Diana Stillwoell and Susannah Klins for the use of their photos in this issue. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, our webmaster, Jason Klins, and our prayer group administrator, Patti Millar.*

# A Word of Encouragement

By Cathy Nolan

*"Dear children! God permits me to be with you and to lead you on the way of peace, so that through personal peace, you build peace in the world. I am with you and intercede for you before my Son Jesus, that He may give you a strong faith and hope in a better future, which I desire to build up with you. You be courageous and do not be afraid, because God is with you. Thank you for having responded to my call."* (August 25, 2022)

Our Lady concluded Her August 25, 2022 message with these words of encouragement: *"You be courageous and do not be afraid, because God is with you."*

Not only is Our Lady with us, but God is with us!!! What could we possibly fear? But the enemy is a master at spreading fear and discouragement, so we have to stay close to our Mother!!!

I want to share a story that Fr. Joe Freedy began his homily with yesterday at English Mass in Medjugorje (September 5, 2022). I will transcribe it here, but also give you the link [Pg. 5] so you can hear it for yourselves.

Fr. Freedy told us this incredible story:

I want to share this story with you because it provides so much encouragement for me in my prayers. Sometimes we get discouraged. And I want to say that the voice of God is always the voice of encouragement... never of discouragement. The devil's voice is always the voice of discouragement and never encouragement. The devil's modus operandi, the way he works, is always the same. He wants to get us discouraged and get us to despair. That is what he is always leading to: discouragement and despair.

What God wants to do is to encourage us and fill us with hope! Amen! Yeah!

So...my buddy, John, told this true story, that happened in Pittsburgh, in a little town called "Green Tree", which is right outside of Pittsburgh. His name is John Petrovich. He is a very normal guy. Just a good guy. And he told me this story. And I said, "John, that is an amazing story; can I tell it?" And He said, "Absolutely!" And so, I tell it everywhere I go.

He was jogging one morning in a neighborhood that he is not used to jogging in. And he saw an ambulance in somebody's driveway. And because he is a really good guy he thought, "Should I stop and see if everything is OK?" But then he said to me, "You know, Fr. Joe, I am not a doctor and I didn't know this person. So, I kept jogging."

And he said that as he passed by, he said one "Hail Mary". He didn't stop and fold his hands, and he didn't get down on his knees. He didn't pray from the heart like we are taught to do. He just prayed the "Hail Mary." Maybe some of you do that. When I see an ambulance, because I am a priest, I give the ambulance and the people inside it a blessing. And he said he just prayed one "Hail Mary".

He said, about a week later, he had thought nothing of it. And he was jogging around the same neighborhood... this is a true story... And he heard a woman call out, "Hey,

you!! Sir!" And he said to me, "Fr. Joe, I just kept jogging because I didn't know anybody in that neighborhood. And she said, 'No, you, the jogger!'" And she was on her porch, pointing at me." And he turned around and said, "Me?" And she said, "Yah, you!" And she said, "You saved my life!" And he said, "Sorry, ma'am, I don't think we know each other. I'm not from this neighborhood. I'm from a few neighborhoods over."

And she said (listen to this, guys): "No, I recognize your face." She said, "Last week I had a stroke. And I was rushed to a hospital in the city of Pittsburgh. And I was in the hospital bed and I was dying. I knew I was dying. And Jesus appeared to me. And He held out His hand. And your face was on the palm of His hand. And He said, 'You were going to die, but because of the prayer of this man, you are going to live.'" She recognized my friend's face in the palm of Jesus' hand!

Folks! How many hundreds of thousands of Hail Marys have you prayed? How many hundreds of thousands of Rosaries have you prayed? How many thousands of Hail Marys have you prayed just in your time here? I just want to let you know, and for anybody who might be discouraged, that every time you turn your heart and your mind to Our Lord and to Our Lady, that they have heard your prayers!! Amen!!

There is no unanswered prayer. Every prayer you have prayed, whether it is fully from your heart, though that is how we desire to pray, or whether it is just offered, a sigh of your heart, it has been heard, because She is an attentive mother! Amen!

So don't be discouraged! Be encouraged! Maybe some of you have had the thought that "the situation I have been praying for is

beyond the reach of God...it's an impossible situation." But we know that there is nothing that is impossible for our God! You have seen miracles in your life. We have all seen miracles. God can do it!

Remember the *Chronicles of Narnia!* C.S. Lewis. The great scene where Aslan is down on the beach. (Aslan is the Lion.) He is representative of Christ. And there are two people talking, and one is a little bit discouraged.

And the older person says to the younger person, "Yes, things do look dark. Things do look bad."

Maybe we look out on the world, and we think things are dark, things are bad – the countries, the states and cities we are from, even our families are broken – but he says, "But listen, Aslan is on the move." Aslan is the Christ-figure.

I want to let you know that in all the situations that you have come here to pray for – your children, your grandchildren, your marriages, your work situations, maybe your own depression, or your own physical infirmities – Aslan is on the move! And if it seems like things are only getting darker, Aslan is on the move! God has a perfect plan! Amen! Be encouraged today!!!!



Fr. Freedy

*"Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive"*  
(Mt 21:22).

Well, thank you, Fr. Joe! You are a man of encouragement!! We are encouraged!! We will pray for you as you spread the Good News through your priesthood!!

Follow this link, and listen to Fr. Joe directly!! His homily

is anointed and wonderful!! <https://marytv.tv/english-homily-in-medjugorje-2/?smid=iwyOxjs4h19&slid=IRBKmbjFsDA>

*"You be courageous and do not be afraid, because God is with you."*

[www.marytv.tv](http://www.marytv.tv)

"Have confidence in prayer. It is the unfailing power which God has given us. By means of it you will obtain the salvation of the dear souls whom God has given you and all your loved ones. 'Ask and you shall receive,' Our Lord said."

—St. Peter Julian Eymard

## God Has a Sense of Humor

By June Klins

My parents were born on the same day, the same year, and in the same hospital. They were together at birth in the nursery, and when they met up again 20 years later, became soul-mates for sure. So as the anniversary of our mother's death approached on September 8, my brothers and I predicted our Dad would die on that day. But God had other plans.

The night before he died, I prayed at my father's side the Divine Mercy Chaplet, a Rosary and the "Three Beautiful Prayers" for the dying from the *Pieta* book, before I went to bed that night. The next morning, the hospice nurse said Dad was transitioning and the end was very near. As family began gathering at the house, I needed to stay my distance because I had been exposed to COVID a couple of days prior. (Hospice said I could care for my Dad with a KN95 mask, as long as I tested negative.) I went home for a bit and then headed to Mass to pray for my father. When I arrived back at his house after Mass, my brother greeted me at my car and told me I did not need to put my mask on. I knew when he said this that Dad had passed. I was very upset because I had wanted to be there praying for him when he passed. It did not take me long to realize, however, that I was in the *best* place to be praying for him – at Holy Mass. I asked what time he had died and my brother said he took his last breath at 5:27 P.M.

The wheels in my brain started turning as I began trying to calculate what part of the Mass we were at when Dad took his last breath. Since Mass started at 5:15 P.M., I believe it was around the gospel or the homily about the gospel. In a moment of comic relief, I realized what a great sense of humor God has. The gospel that day was one that my father *always* had a problem with – the one about the workers in the vineyard who all got the same pay, whether they worked all day in the scorching heat or just one hour late in the day. As a former business owner with employees, this gospel never made sense to him. Whenever I would find a good explanation of this gospel, I would print it out or email it to him, and he would be satisfied until the next time it came up and we would go round and round about it again.

One of the main messages of Our Lady in Medjugorje is *conversion*, so I get really excited when I hear stories of conversion, and especially late-in-life or deathbed conversions. So, I would ask my father if he would begrudge

any family members who have been away from the grace of God a chance at the everlasting life, even if it happened at their last breath. I would say, "Don't you want those people to be with you in Heaven?" He would agree, but forget until the next time we heard that parable.

So that day, while my father was on his deathbed, probably meeting the "Owner of the Vineyard", the priest at the Mass I attended was giving a beautiful explanation of this gospel, unlike any other explanation I had ever heard. I talked to him the next day and asked him if he had written his homily down, and he said he had not. So, I will do my best to give the highlights of his homily, because my father cannot be the only one who has ever questioned this parable.

Fr. Jason, who teaches at a Catholic university here, said that this gospel reading (Mt 20: 1-16) should be read in conjunction with the reading directly prior to this one, (Mt 19: 27-30). The "usual daily wage" earned by all the workers alike represents "Eternal Life" (Heaven). Father cited St. Teresa of Avila, who said that in Heaven everyone has a "full glass". But then he reverted back to the passage prior to that story, in which Peter asks, "We have given up everything and followed you. What will there be for us?" Jesus answers



*Full glass in Medjugorje*

that those who have given up "houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more," which indicates that our good deeds *will be* "counted" in Eternal Life. Fr. Jason went on to say that St. Thomas Aquinas wrote about this, and to expand on the "full glass" analogy, St. Thomas Aquinas would have said that although everyone has a "full glass" in Heaven, the glasses are not all the same size. Some are bigger than others, according to our good deeds.

When I shared this analogy with our mailing crew, I said that Fr. Ray (our spiritual advisor) would have a huge barrel-sized glass, while I would have a little shot glass!

Rest in peace, Dad. I hope you finally understand that gospel reading now! ☺

*"Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?" (Mt 20:13)*

*As of September 25, 2022, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 39,248. Thank you.*

# From Mary to Jesus in Medjugorje: My Experience

By Father Joe Mills

We thank Michael Douglas from Ireland for permission to use the following story from his book, *Medjugorje, the Road to Damascus*.

I had picked up on some of the publicity that appeared after the reports of the visionaries back in 1981. I was immediately impressed, so much so, that I remember relating the story to a class of first year pupils in St. Patrick's Secondary School in Dumbarton.

But, it would be some 23 years later that I would agree to visit this famous shrine. What had disillusioned me, in the meantime? Simply the reports of pilgrims that their rosary beads had turned gold and that they all seemed to have seen the sun spinning in the sky. Like most of my fellow priests, all those claims confirmed a scepticism that may well be bred as a result of our theological background. We were trained to treat such phenomena with great reservation. I may say here that we priests, when we get together socially, can often unintentionally discredit private revelation to the point where any attempt at a serious examination of the claims becomes impossible. I was part of all that. The result of this was that in the different parishes to which I had been appointed over the years, I would inevitably be approached by members of the parish prayer group and be invited to accompany them to Medjugorje. No amount of persuasion would entice me – not even a promise to pay my fare!!

Having been appointed to St. Mary's Church, Duntocher, in 2004 (on the western side of the Archdiocese of Glasgow) I was approached again by the ladies of the prayer group. I told them that I would go with them if I could get a "supply" [substitute] for the parish. That was really a "get-out" clause; I wasn't going to go out of my way to get someone for that particular reason.

I should have known better. The prayer group simply booked me onto the flight and that was that. I felt obliged to get another priest to fill in. It would be an exaggeration to say that I went off to Bosnia-Herzegovina screaming and shouting, but nor did I feel that the trip had been my idea. I was to find out just how true that was to be.

The moment I stepped off the coach and put my feet on the pavement in Medjugorje, I could feel the atmosphere of peace. This, in spite of the fact that the rain was "bucketing" down and it was pitch black. I helped an elderly lady with her luggage and she led me to the wrong boarding house. I fought back the agitation and irritation, in spite of which, I still felt a strange calm.

After waking up the first morning, to a beautiful bright day, I made my way down to the church to meet the other pilgrims to attend the customary briefing. After that, the whole week seemed to flash by in a kind of blur. I hardly had time to stop even for a personal prayer! If you're a priest in Medjugorje, you are in constant demand. If you are not accompanying people up hill and down dale from the "Hill of the Apparition" to the "Hill of the Cross", you are leading the rosary or spending hours hearing confessions. Someone is always looking for you to

share some burden or even to ask you to bless a medal, a statue, or a pair of rosary beads. To say that there is never a dull moment is the understatement of the year.

On October 7th, the Feast of the Holy Rosary, I was invited to be principal concelebrant at the "English" Mass. This happened on the second day of the pilgrimage. I decided to explain in my homily how the mysteries of the Rosary direct us beautifully to the redeeming love of Christ. I happened to mention that I personally had found that when I felt that I was not being faithful to my prayers, or that I felt dried up and uninspired, if I turned to Our Lady, She always directed my attention back to Her Son – a simple enough thought and in no way original. However, I was to recall those words a few days later. They were to be reborn in my heart in a very dramatic way.

But before I describe that extraordinary experience, let me share with you the elation I felt at ministering to so many people who were experiencing radical conversion and deep repentance of their sins. The queues for Confessions and the faith of the people took me back to the Church as I remembered it many years ago. I watched the people reciting the Rosary all day and every day. I began to examine my conscience to discover how my sophistication had robbed me of that natural and simple faith that I had been taught by my parents.

The night before we left Medjugorje, pilgrims were still coming to visit me in my room for absolution and blessings. I don't remember feeling tired that night because Our Lady had visited me with an extraordinary favor that will stay with me for rest of my life.

That afternoon, immediately after lunch, I found myself with some time to myself. I remember thinking that I had hardly had time to say a wee quiet prayer just for me. I sat to the side of the beautiful statue of Our Lady of Medjugorje in the square and opened my Breviary to recite the afternoon prayer of the church known as Vespers. It was a beautiful sunny afternoon, but I became distracted from my prayer as I noticed a blue-black mark, like a pencil line on the statue running down towards Our Lady's chin, on the left of her face, the side nearest to me. It seemed faint at first and I would have ignored it, I'm sure, if the mark had not got more pronounced and darker or blacker as it seemed to me. I put down my Breviary, and got up to walk round to see the face full on. As I watched, another, similar black mark, which looked at first like a stain, appeared down the right side of Our Lady's face. After some time, I could see that these marks or stains joined together and I knew that what I was looking at was a beard. All this took a fairly long time. The whole experience, which I shall describe in detail, took one and a quarter of an hour. While the face was disfiguring slowly, I did not believe what I was seeing, and pretended to myself that someone had disfigured the Holy Image. I bent over the little railing to see if someone perhaps might



Statue of Our Lady of Medjugorje in front of the church

have trodden over the flowerbed to get to the statue but, of course, the flowers were untouched.

The next significant thing I remember was that Our Lady's nose had become very masculine, and finally I realized that what I was looking at was the face of Christ. I left my spot in front of the statue and went back to where I'd left my prayer book to see the face in profile. It looked like what you and I would describe as the face of Jesus. But there was more drama to come. As I returned to face the image full on again, I noticed that the chin began to twist to one side. Before it had done so, and Our Lady's face had still been recognizable, Her lips had begun to swell as though She had received a heavy blow or blows to the face. I thought of the way two lads would look in the schoolyard after a bruising fight. I also saw that at the beginning of this experience, Our Lady's face had been stained by patches of dirt that were visible on Her forehead, Her face and hands, and even on the wrist of Her outstretched left hand. The dirt was ingrained like that of a miner.

Several people passed by, walking round the statue, as they do. I got a chance to ask one lady whom I recognized as a friend and fellow pilgrim: "Can you see anything?" She said she did, but then moved off to consult her husband!! Two nuns knelt beside me; both, I think, saying the Rosary. I asked the older one if she could see the face on the statue. She looked at me blankly at first and then, I thought, suspiciously. After a second question in an attempt to get some "back-up", she said, "No capisce, Padre." She then clasped the arm of the young nun and they both fled!

I should still have been in doubt, if it had not been for the eyes that appeared standing out of the marble, as it were. In spite of all that had gone before, I did not quite believe what I

was seeing. But as these eyes replaced the ones on the statue, I felt instantly that I was having a genuine supernatural experience. For me, they were the eyes of Christ. They were tearful, but tears were not actually shed. These eyes seemed to stand out from the rest of the vision. It is very hard to explain. It was something like the 3-D experience in film but even more pronounced.

That was my experience at Medjugorje in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I know it went on for one hour, fifteen minutes because I looked at my watch before opening the Divine Office to pray at 2:15 pm, and at the end of the "manifestation." I asked Our Lady's permission to go for my four o'clock meal. As I retell the story, this always causes a laugh, especially for those who know what a healthy appetite I have. But seriously, those who have been on pilgrimage to Medjugorje know how important it is to get the evening meal over because there are so many things still to be done, especially by a priest, in the evening. It was now 3:45 pm. The face on the statue was still not normal. Our Lord's face had gone, but the face of Our Lady continued to show distortions: quivering swollen lips and the black stains mentioned before, but the movement now had become quieter and less dramatic. I hardly ever see that statue exactly as it was sculpted. The Holy Mother always displays some kind of mark or distortion on Her face, when I am in front of Her.

I organized a youth group, to return to the shrine. They went back to their secondary school and astonished the whole staff by leading the Rosary at the school assembly. Many of these kids had not attended Mass or the sacraments before their trip to Our Lady of Peace.

## On the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, a Church Identical to the One in Medjugorje Was Consecrated in the Philippines



*Replica of St. James in Talisay*

The Blessed Virgin Mary is considered to be the patroness of the Philippines, and the residents there show their devotion to her by building a church where the Blessed Virgin Mary is honored in a special way. As they said from the Philippines, one of the fastest growing Marian devotions in that country is the devotion to Our Lady of Medjugorje.

On this occasion, a replica of the Medjugorje Church of St. James was built in the Philippines, whose patron is Our Lady of Medjugorje, and the church is being built with the financing of a generous family that is also dedicated to Mary.

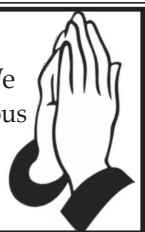
The Great Church of Saint James (Our Lady of Medjugorje) is located in the city of Talisay, under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Diocese of Bacolod, which is headed by Bishop Msgr. Patricio Buzon. And this church, like the original one in Medjugorje, was entrusted to the administration of the Order of Friars Minor through the Custody of St. Anthony of Padua - Philippines, and the church was opened today on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Our Lady.

The local bishop, Msgr. Buzon, dedicated this church, with every detail meticulously copied from the original in Medjugorje, today with the assistance of the custodian of the Custody of St. Anthony of Padua in the Philippines by Fr. Renee C. Dean.

A message of support and encouragement was sent to all who honor the Queen of Peace in the Philippines by the Provincial of the Franciscan Province of Herzegovina, Fr. Jozo Grbeš, and it was read by Fr. Renee C. Dean during the Holy Mass at which the church was consecrated.

*Medjugorje.hr (9/13/22)*

**Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for  
October: A Church Open to Everyone –** We pray for the Church; ever faithful to, and courageous in preaching the Gospel, may the Church be a community of solidarity, fraternity and welcome, always living in an atmosphere of synodality.



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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 \$.84 postage on it.



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