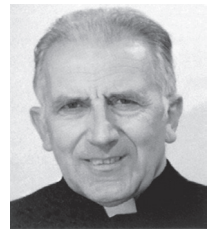




Echo of Medjugorje



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Fr. Angelo Mutti, founder
Echo of Medjugorje

Message of 25 September 2015:

“Dear Children, also today I pray to the Holy Spirit to fill your hearts with a strong faith. Prayer and faith will fill your heart with love and joy and you will be a sign for those who are far from God. My children, encourage each other to prayer with the heart, so that prayer may fulfil your life; and each day, you, my children, will be, above all, witnesses. witnesses of serving God in adoration and of your neighbour in need. I am with you and I intercede for you all. Thank you for responding to my call.”

A Strong Faith!

Our Lady often speaks of the importance of having a strong faith. Thinking we know that our faith is strong can make our faith sterile; and today our blessed Mother is warning us of the risk of having a weak faith. “Also today I pray to the Holy Spirit to fill your hearts with a strong faith.” Mary intercedes on our behalf, for love of us; but we cannot stand back and be mere spectators. Our Lady’s work could not be fruitful unless we too do our part.

We must hope beyond hope, and believe beyond belief; and pray that our faith be increased till it is as strong as that of Abraham’s. I suggest reading chapter 11 of the Letter to the Hebrews which exalts the faith, with the capacity to melt our gelid hearts, even today.

And let us remember that Mary’s is praying for our hearts to have faith, and that our faith be strong! She is praying to the Holy Spirit on our behalf! So let us join her prayer, and open our hearts, with faith in the power of the Holy Spirit!

Every dream of human power is work of the devil who obstinately tempts us with the age-old temptation, with which even the devil tried to tempt even Jesus (Lk 4:1-13). So let us not be seduced by the shadows, we who tend for the Light, and let us not be discouraged by human betrayals. May the Holy Spirit strengthen our faith so we can remain standing even amid the disappointments and betrayals of life!

Prayer and faith will fill our hearts with love and joy, and our witness will help others come close to God, Our Blessed Mother tells us.

“As the rain and the snow come down from heaven to make the earth fertile” (cf. Is 55:10), may also this message be as a seed in our hearts that may grow strong and bold. Peace and joy in Jesus and Mary!

Nuccio Quattrocchi



8th December: Immaculate Conception of the B.V. Mary

Message to Mirjana, 2 Sept. 2015:

“Dear Children, my dear apostles of love, my bearers of the truth: I call you anew, and I gather you around me so that you can help me; so that you can help all my children who thirst for love and for truth; who thirst for my Son.

I am a grace of the Heavenly Father, sent to help you live the Word of my Son. Love one another! I lived your earthly life. I know that it is often not easy, however, if you love one another and pray with the heart you will reach the spiritual heights and the way to Paradise will be opened for you. I, your Mother, await you there because I am there.

Be faithful to my Son and teach fidelity to others. I am with you and I will help you. I will teach you the Faith so that you can transmit it to others in the right way. I will teach you the truth so you know how to discern. I will teach you love so you will know what true Love is.

My children, my Son will make it so He speaks through your words and your works. I thank you.”

Message of 25 October 2015:

“Dear Children, Also today my prayer is for all of you, especially all those whose hearts have hardened to my call. You live in days of grace, and you are not aware of the gifts which God is giving you through my presence. My children, decide also today for holiness, and take the example of the saints of this time and you will see that holiness is a reality for you all. My children, rejoice in love, because in the eyes of God you are unrepeatable and irreplaceable, because you are the joy of God in this world. Witness to peace, to prayer and to love. Thank you for responding to my call.”

Witness peace, prayer, love!

Mary’s work at Medjugorje is still underway. Her messages may not be a theological or Christological treatise, but they are a very lofty witness to motherly love and tenacity, and encourage us to not give up, nor to neglect her exhortations and prayers for mankind to find the way of salvation, for the world to know peace, and for God’s Kingdom to triumph in the universe.

Also today Mary prays for us all, and especially for those whose hearts have hardened to her call. She knows our weaknesses and our fragility, but these do not stop her from appealing to us to put our trust in her. As Mother with an Immaculate Heart, Mary is not subject to doubts, uncertainty and seduction. Sin and evil cannot touch her.

“You live in days of grace, and you are not aware of the gifts which God is giving you through my presence” Our Lady tells us. And the hardness of heart which she points out is one of the main causes of our lack of awareness of the gifts which God gives us through Mary’s presence in Medjugorje.

It is indeed a serious thing to have our hearts so hardened after all the graces God has showered down on us. And it is not just the individual to have hardened hearts, but it is also a thing of the communities. **My children, decide also today for holiness, and take the example of the saints of this time and you will see that holiness is a reality for you all.** Our Lady never tires of encouraging us; so let us pay heed to her. And if our faith is strong the song of today’s sirens will not have power over us, and we will be able to bear witness to the peace, prayer and love which Mary gives us. *N. Quattrocchi*

2 PRACTISE CHARITY, MERCY, FORGIVENESS!



At the weekly General Audience of the 16th December 2015, the **Holy Father Pope Francis** focused on the signs of the recently-opened Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy.

“Dear Brothers and Sisters, The Jubilee of Mercy was inaugurated this past week by the opening of the Holy Door, not only here in Rome but in dioceses worldwide, as a visible expression of our communion in the universal Church.

Fifty years ago, the Second Vatican Council reminded us that the Church is called to be, in Christ, the visible sign of God’s merciful love for the entire human family.

Each of us, by practicing charity, mercy and forgiveness, can be a sign of the power of God’s love to transform hearts and to bring reconciliation and peace.

By passing through the Door of Mercy during this Holy Year, we **show our desire to enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ’s redemptive love.**

Jesus tells us that he himself is the door to eternal life (cf. Jn 10:9), and he asks us, through genuine conversion, to open the doors of our hearts to a more sincere love of God and neighbour.

A special sign of grace in this Jubilee of Mercy is the **sacrament of Penance**, in which Christ invites us to acknowledge our sinfulness, to experience his mercy, and to receive the grace which can make us ever more effective signs of his reconciling love at work in our world.”

www.vaticannews.va



Be courageous, and go to confession! Every time we go, God hugs us and rejoices! (PF)

The following is an excerpt from a recent reflection by Fr. MASSIMO RASTRELLI regarding recent events.

And we are at war!

We are at war. It can be seen by all. Pope Francis has been saying it when he refers to a “third world war in pieces and fragments.” This war is different to what we are familiar with. It is a treacherous war with attacks on helpless citizens, and sudden explosions of violence during an apparent peace.

And the difference between the “fighters” of this war, and all the fighters in the historical wars is both extraordinary and terrible. The fighters of this “new” war attack by attacking themselves. They kill by killing themselves! It is something out of the ordinary and it is particularly significant and frightening. Will the atheist Nations know how to fight “this war, and this enemy”?

What is behind all this? It is certainly not “human”! It is most certainly “demonic”. The time has come for us to wake up and begin to act. We have a precise order from Jesus. It is this: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature... Whoever believes will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned.” For centuries, Europe has lived according to this command.

The demonic “non truth” must be countered with the “divine Truth” which we have received, but which we have discarded. And this is something we are responsible for, we are gravely responsible for. But those who come to offer us a false god know only too well that we are no longer those Europeans of time past who believed. We are no longer “strong.” We are nothing, and we know we are worth nothing because we have preferred to think “our own way”, and do things “our way”, and to end up believing ourselves super humans because we are full of ourselves, but entirely void of God and of the strength of God. Satan has made us his, and he devours us. The strength of fanatics in our midst is our weakness, and in Europe, it has become the weakness of the Europeans.

Such overwhelming dominance has been able to happen because of Europe’s absolute cultural void. The Peoples of Europe are living a general apostasy!

In this situation, it is not God who is forsaking man, but man who has forsaken God! Today’s Europe represents an absolute religious void, and also an absolute void of ideals and faith. Today’s Europeans do not

believe in anything. Today’s Europeans are sadly indifferent and uninterested in the Christian faith which was “life” for so many centuries.

If the demonic fanatics have such free rein, then upon which “protection” can we count? Surely there is none for us, because the demonic will surely always win against what is merely human power. Jesus alone is the all-powerful who can defend us! Those who believe in Jesus know that only too well. And those who do not believe are even unable of understanding.

I have heard leaders oppose the values of national culture. And have we forgotten that Europe – because of French initiative – determined to officially forswear its Christian roots? I have heard the People say, “We do not want to renounce the Values of our way of life.” But which? Going to the bar? “We want to meet whomever we want,” but who? “We want to say whatever we wish,” but what? ... Unless we see ourselves in God who loves us, we can never know who we are. Without God we are blind and dark.

What I see is a telling realization of Jesus’ words about his subjects not wanting to be ruled by Him. After the attack on Paris we saw France and Europe feel the pinch, as it were, and appearing to wake up. Then, each dealing with its own devil, does what it thinks, which obviously falls short of being adequate. The People protest, saying they want to idle their lives away. They think they can combat Satan by pandering him. What a diabolic illusion! What darkness: moral and spiritual darkness! The People think they can fight Satan with human means; but that is delusional, because the demonic is much stronger than the human!

I repeat: we are before a diabolic attack. It is true even if our society does not want to see it or accept it. Of course, the actions taken by our Governments are necessary; but even so, they are not enough. There is still the diabolic nature of this war which is way beyond the power of our human nature. Fighting on a purely human level against Satan is impossible. A demonic attack must be fought on adequate levels. The fight must be against the men of Satan, and against Satan himself. But Jesus said that He alone can defeat Satan; and this Europe of ours is without faith and without knowledge of Jesus.

But we Europeans who believe in God; those of us who remain believers; those of us who know Jesus as King and Victor: we have to fight as believers, and we have to pray believing! And we have to do it all the more, given that non believers do not pray. And then we hope for peace as we invoke our King, Victor and Saviour, and ask for

As we know, the Medugorje event has been going on for **34 years**, and that is without doubt a prolonged time for Marian apparitions. This length of time is certainly not a random circumstance, and its significance can be deduced from the messages.

In 1985 Our Lady had already anticipated that she desired giving you messages as never before (4th April). On various occasions she has spoken of the extraordinariness and value of this prolonged time: "I have been calling you for years to urge you to live a more profound spiritual life" (25.12.1989); "God has allowed me to remain with you for such a long time, and therefore, I urge you to live my messages with love" (25.2.1995); "I have been with you for so long, and all this time showing you God's presence" (2.2.2012); "It is for a long time that I have been asking you to be my apostles" (2.2.2015).

The length of this phenomenon seems to be motivated first of all by the fact that Medugorje is part of a plan, like a programme that unfolds, and this takes time. Our Lady spoke of "her plan which

the salvation also for our enemies and the unbelievers. And we ally ourselves with God the Father who loves us and who weeps over the mass apostasy of this Europe. We must not fall asleep; and we absolutely must not lose any of the Christian wealth. Christian wealth includes all of the great certainties of Christian eschatology [the last things].

Today's Europeans, so indifferent, disbelieving and faithless, say that they are not interested in what happens after death. This is certainly a terrible tragedy. It makes us commit even more to prayer. Not just for our sins; but for this great sin of Europe! We must believe in God's great mercy for all mankind. Where crime abounds, grace overflows! This is a fundamental part of our faith. It is essential and so important.

Yes! We were falling asleep and had forgotten about this aspect of our splendid faith. Now, the events are forcing us to wake up and to return to a greater faith. A much greater faith.

We must hope and rejoice because the Lord has told us many beautiful things full of such goodness for our eternal future. God has told us that we are not like those who have no hope. It is important to believe this. And to honestly believe it, and believe it intensely. And therefore we must rejoice.

[The full text of **Fr. Rastrelli's** article, in Italian, is here www.antiusuramoscati.it - documenti]

involves this parish" (24.4.1994); "the great plan of God being accomplished through Medugorje» (25.6.2007).

Even though many years [34] have passed, we are still in the initial phase. This is still the time for communicating the message. Three of the visionaries, in fact, still have daily apparitions, and one of them receives monthly messages which are to be released to the public.

This is a very important aspect of Medugorje, because it clearly indicates that Our Lady still has to bring her work to completion. Therefore, rather than conclusions, this is still the time for fidelity and listening. Within this frame, we more clearly understand Our Lady's calls to those who accept her to persevere. "I call you to renew in your families the fervor of the first days, when I invited you to fast, to pray and to convert" 25.10.1998); "you who have said yes, be strong and decisive" (25.8.2011); "say YES to the Father with your hearts, and undertake the journey on the way of salvation upon which He calls you through the Holy Spirit" (2.5.2011).

It is fundamental and important that we understand that the communication of the message must be complete; and until that happens it is our task to follow, without analysing. In certain messages Our Lady called us to humility and trust: "the only truth is that which my Son left you with. You don't have to examine it much; you are asked to love and to give, as I did" (2.1.2015); "do not lose time understanding if you are worthy or not to be my disciples. The heavenly Father will judge you all, but you: love Him and listen to Him! I know that these things confound you - even my presence in your midst - but accept it with joy, and pray for the understanding that you are worthy to work for heaven" (2.2.2015).

The passage of time allows us to establish a discerning point in the continued phenomenon of pilgrimages and of the development of the cult, which after 34 years has been consolidated and continues to grow and to spread more widely. In the letter of acknowledgement of the apparitions of Lourdes, the Bishop, Mons. Laurence, spoke of the universality and continuity of the flow of pilgrims as something that could only come from God. And that was after a period of 4 years, and at a time (between 1858 and 1862) when pilgrims were exclusively from France. Medugorje, which draws pilgrims from around the world, is still at its initial stage: "as long as I am with you" (25.4.2007), and it is a time of grace.

The fact that the Medugorje phenomenon has lasted "so long" is a lesson in the principle which Pope Francis mentioned in *Evangelii Gaudium* when he said that "time is greater than

space". **This means that Christians are called to be concerned about initiating processes rather than possessing spaces"** (EG 223). For example, consider processes in time begun by us, but carried forth by others, then we are not preoccupied with managing and controlling situations.

For many, the question regarding the length of these apparitions continues to be something difficult to explain. But for us, it is very clear. Our Lady herself makes it clear: "I know there are many things you cannot comprehend; just as I could not comprehend everything my Son taught me as He grew beside me. But I believed Him and I followed Him. This is what I ask of you, my children: to believe me and to follow me. To follow me means to love my Son above everything else; to love him in every person without distinction" (2.8.2014).

Marco Vignati,
Comunità Casa di Maria, Roma.

NEWS FROM MEDUGORJE

The Call to Holiness

Autumn in Medjugorje is usually a busy time. And this year's warm autumn days were filled with pilgrims and with events. The sky has been very red, even blood red. It made me think of all the innocent blood that has been spilt, even with latest events around the world.

September had its usual special festivity for the Holy Cross which is always celebrated on Mount Krizevac on the Sunday following the feast day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.

October is Mary's month, and to mark this there were many arrivals of pilgrims from every part of the world.

The dates for the international Seminars have already been fixed. These can be consulted at the official web site for Medugorje www.medjugorje.hr This year's Youth Festival will begin on the 1st August 2016, rather than the 31st July because of the dates for the World Youth Day with the Pope in Poland.

Parish priest, Fr. Marinko Sakota, has begun holding meetings with pilgrims two or three times a week to impart correct information and catecheses. The Parish has also been organizing extra formative events, including theatre and debates, many of which on the theme of defending life.

The Apparitions to Mirjana on the 2nd of each month have continued even though it was thought they could no longer be held publicly. Pilgrims begin to gather at the Blue Cross for prayer in the early morning as they wait for Mirjana. Our Lady has especially [Cont. p. 4]

Message to Mirjana 2 OCTOBER 2015

“Dear Children, I am here among you to encourage you, to fill you with my love and to call you anew to be witnesses of the love of my Son. Many of my children do not have hope, they do not have peace, they do not have love. They seek my Son, but do not know how and where to find Him. My Son is opening wide His arms to them, and you are to help them to come to His embrace.

My children, that is why you must pray for love. You must pray very much to have as much love as possible, because love conquers death and makes life continue.

Apostles of my love, my children, with an honest and simple heart unite in prayer regardless of how far you are from each other. Encourage each other in spiritual growth as I am encouraging you. I am watching over you and I am with you each time you think of me.

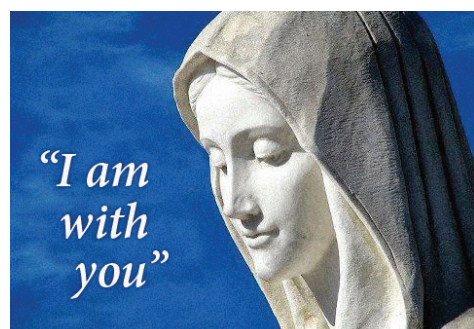
Pray also for your shepherds, for those who renounce everything for the sake of my Son and for your sake. Love them and pray for them. The Heavenly Father listens to your prayers. Thank you!” §

WHY WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Homily by St. Augustine

Awake, mankind! For your sake God has become man. Awake, you who sleep, rise up from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you. I tell you again: for your sake, God became man.

You would have suffered eternal death, had he not been born in time. Never would you have been freed from sinful flesh, had he not taken on himself the likeness of sinful flesh. You would have suffered everlasting unhappiness, had it not been for this mercy. You would never have returned to life, had he not shared your death. You would have been lost if he had not hastened to your aid. You would have perished, had he not come. ... Let us then rejoice in this grace, so that our glorying may bear witness ... [An excerpt]



[Continued from p. 3, column 3] asked that our faith be made manifest with works of love. She also said that we should not under evaluate the grace of her presence here. She has encouraged us to look up to her, remembering that she awaits us in Heaven to offer us her embrace.

November is the month we remember our deceased. Masses were celebrated at all three cemeteries in the Parish. On the 15th November we began a novena to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the death of Fr. Slavko, which is remembered solemnly on the 24th November with the prayer of the Via Crucis on the way up Mt. Krizevac, and a Mass in the evening.

Already for many years Our Lady has been calling us to holiness and to follow the example of the saints. If we observe them more carefully, we will see how the lives and the personalities of the saints are so different and unique. These days one of the most difficult things seems to be keeping one's identity and uniqueness. The pressure to be (to dress) and behave as others do can wear us down and make us feel uncomfortable. The saints, instead, always defended the values for which they stood. Their example, therefore, calls us to “open our eyes” and to resist being “re-educated” by the world which more than ever desires distorting our true identity as men and women and as children of God. Holiness is a reality to which we must yearn if we desire finding our true selves.

Our Lady calls us to ask the Holy Spirit for discernment. A soul cannot be abided by faith alone, or by love alone. In God everything must be harmonious and united in communion. It is one of the main criteria for the discernment of spirits. The various expressions of God's presence in us must be both present and operative. For it to be true, the faith has to be connected to works, love to kindness, hope to spiritual help for the brethren.

In the days of purification, which are necessary for the annihilation of all that does not belong to God, Our Lady invites us to lose neither our hope nor our strength (cf. message of 2.11.2015). Letting ourselves be guided by her, will enable us to reach the true union with Christ and hence be saints.

Paula Tomić, Medugorje

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THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU!



Our Web page: www.ecodimaria.net

Dear Friends of the Echo of Medjugorje,

The Queen of Peace has told us that she wants Jesus to see love and goodness in our hearts, and not hatred and indifference. We must see all the people whom we meet with love and with goodness, and not with hatred and indifference. But unless we make the precise and determined proposal to do this, we would instead see the men and women we encounter from day to day with indifference, and some even with hatred.

The Queen of Peace has told us that to relate to other people means we must give them attention; be closer; be kind.

Our Lady says it. The Pope does it. We, personally, have to do it.

But the terrorism of our times, which causes fright, leads us into temptation. Our Lady has called us to defeat evil with good. And we must be positive about it. It is more than ever necessary to be Christian, and to live the Christian joy. It is Christmas; and as Christians we have to be aware of the reality of Jesus' birth.

God loves us and came to save us.

I extend to each of you a blessing filled with Christmas love. In this darkening world we must bring the radiant light of the faith which enables us to show love to everyone.

Christmas blessings, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!

Fr. Massimo Rastrelli, S.J.

Mantua, December 2015

Resp. Ing. Lanzani - Tip. DIPRO (Roncade TV)