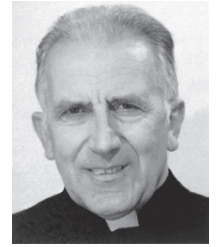




Echo of Medjugorje

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Fr. Angelo Mutti
Founder Eco di Medjugorje

25 January 2016:

“Dear Children, Also today I call all of you to prayer. You cannot live without prayer, because prayer is the chain which brings you closer to God. Therefore, my children, with humility of heart return to God and to His commandments so that with all your heart you are able to say: *As it is in Heaven so may it be on earth.*”

My children, you are free to decide in liberty for God or against Him. See how Satan wants to draw you into sin and slavery! Therefore, my children, return to my Heart so that I can lead you to my Son Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Thank you for responding to my call.”

In Heaven as it is on Earth!

Jesus came into the world to reconcile Heaven and earth; God and man. In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve lived in God's presence, but when they gave in to the serpent's temptation, they reached for the forbidden fruit in the vain hope to become like God. In doing so, they dragged all of creation into division and transience. Though they were punished by God, they were not abandoned by God; and then down through the centuries, amidst ups and downs, the great Event happens.

The coming of God in man's midst reconciles the Creator to His creatures; it raises man up to God. The foolish dream of Adam and Eve to become like Him has now become reality: an unthinkable gift, entirely divine and divinely granted to mankind. Heaven and earth are no longer so distant and separated. They have become a single Reality which will reconcile all of creation to its Creator. When and how this will happen is not for us to know, but our faith in Revelation, and the Word which speaks to us through the BIBLE (the Old, and the New Testament in particular) affirm this Truth, which our reasoning finds hard, but our hearts are willing to accept!

From Medjugorje, Mary has been leading and supporting us in the Faith for over 34 years. Also today, the 25th January 2016, in this beautiful message, Our Lady is encouraging us to continue on the way.

Let us treasure these teachings, admonitions and advice! Those who

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CHRIST IS RISEN!

*Message, Mirjana
2 JANUARY 2016*

“Dear Children, as Mother, I am joyful to be among you because I desire speaking anew about the words of my Son and of His love. I hope that you will accept me with the heart, because the words of my Son and His love are the only light and hope in the darkness of the present time.

This is the only truth, and you who will accept and live it will have pure and humble hearts. My Son loves those who are pure and humble. Pure and humble hearts give life anew the words of my Son; they live them, they spread them and they make it possible for everyone to hear them. The words of my Son renew life in those who listen to them. The words of my Son bring back love and hope.

Therefore, my dear apostles, my children, live the words of my Son. Love each other as He loved you. Love each other in His name, in memory of Him. The Church advances and grows thanks to those who listen to the words of my Son; thanks to those who love; thanks to those who suffer and endure in silence and hope in the final redemption. Therefore, my dear children, may the words of my Son and His love be the first and the last thought of your day. Thank you.”

25 February 2016:

“Dear Children, In this time of grace, I call you all to conversion. My children, you love little and you pray even less. You are lost and you do not know what your purpose is. Take up the cross, look at Jesus and follow Him. He gives Himself to you to death on the cross, because He loves you.

My children, I call you to return to prayer with the heart so that, in prayer, you may find hope and the meaning of your existence. I am with you and I pray for you. Thank you for responding to my call.”

Call to Conversion!

Our Lord Jesus says: *“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life?’”* (Mt 16:24-26). And: *“Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honour whoever serves me.”* (Jn 12:25-26).

Our Lady says: **“In this time of grace, I call you all to conversion. My children, you love little and you pray even less. You are lost and you do not know what your purpose is.”** And: **“Take up the cross, look at Jesus and follow Him. He gives Himself to you to death on the cross, because He loves you.”**

The aforementioned Gospel passages and Our Lady's words are not to be taken lightly. More than just exhortations, they are essential for our lives here on the earth and in heaven. **The Incarnation of Christ is no myth! It is a reality!** It is the true sacrifice of Jesus-God, the pledge and fruit of eternal salvation. We concern ourselves with the quality of this brief life on the earth, and we neglect the offer of Eternal Life gained for us by Jesus our Lord!?

Wishing you a holy Lent, in Jesus and Mary!

Nuccio Quattrocchi.

THE JUBILEE OF MERCY

POPE FRANCIS to the Padre Pio Prayer Groups

Vaticano. 6 February 2016.

"I see there are so very many of you! I greet all of you who have come from many countries and regions, united in great love and gratitude to St Pio of Pietrelcina. You are very grateful because he helped you to discover life's treasure, which is the love of God, and to experience the beauty of the Lord's forgiveness and mercy.

We can truly say that Padre Pio was a servant of mercy. He did so full-time, sometimes practising 'the apostleship of listening' to the point of exhaustion. Through the ministry of Confession, he became the living caress of the Father, who heals the wounds of sin and revives the heart with peace. St Pio never tired of welcoming people and listening to them, expending time and energy in order to spread the perfume of the Lord's forgiveness. **He could do this because he was always connected to the source:** he ceaselessly quenched his thirst with Jesus Crucified.

I think of the prayer groups, which St Pio called "nurseries of the faith, the fertile soil of love"; they were not just centres for happy gatherings with friends and to find support, but the fertile soil of divine love. This is what prayer groups are! Prayer, in fact, is a true and proper mission, which brings the fire of love to the whole of humanity. Padre Pio used to say that prayer is a "force that moves the world". **Prayer is a force that moves the world! Do we believe this?** It's true. In the words of Padre Pio, it "spreads the smile and the blessing of God over every languor and weakness."

So, prayer is not a nice practice for finding a little peace of heart; nor is it a means of devotion for obtaining useful things from God. Were it so, it would be an act of subtle selfishness: *I pray in order to be well*, just as if taking an aspirin. But this is just making a deal. **No, it's not like this.** Prayer is something else! Prayer is instead a spiritual work of mercy, which means **bringing everything to the heart of God.** It should be like speaking to him in a simple way. It is saying: **"You, take it, you who are Father. Look at us, You who are Father"**. This is the relationship with the Father. Prayer is like this. It is a gift of faith and love... In a word, **it means to entrust:** entrust the Church, people, situations to the Father - "I entrust this to you" - so that you

will take care of it. That is why **prayer, as Padre Pio liked to say, is "the greatest weapon we have, a key that opens the heart of God"**.

A key that opens God's heart: it is a simple key. The heart of God is not "heavily guarded" with many security measures. You can open it with a common key, with prayer. For his is a heart of love, a father's heart. And it is the Church's greatest strength, one which we must never let go of, for the Church bears fruit only if she does as did Our Lady and the Apostles, who "with one accord devoted themselves to prayer" (Acts 1:14), as they awaited the Holy Spirit. Dedicated and united in prayer. Otherwise we risk relying elsewhere for support: on means,

on money, on power; then evangelization vanishes and joy is extinguished and the heart grows dull. Do you want to have a dull heart? [the people respond: No!] Do you want to have a joyful heart? [Yes!] Pray! This is the recipe.

I encourage you: May the prayer groups be "centres of mercy": centres that are always open and active, which through the humble power of prayer may bring the light of God to the world and the energy of love to the Church.

Padre Pio, wrote: "prayer is the highest apostolate that a soul can exercise in the Church of God." May you always be joyful apostles of prayer! **Prayer works miracles!"**

www.vatican.va

CHURCH of MEDJUGORJE, TEMPLE of MERCY!

We all know that we are in the middle of the **Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy**, and like every Holy Year, it is "a special time for the Church, a time when the witness of believers might grow stronger and more effective" (Misericordiae Vultus, 3).

But the Christian expression, "**time of grace**" means something more than a mere time span. Time is what God uses to speak to us, through events and historical facts in a continuous line that guarantees Christ's promise: "*I am with you always, till the end of time*" (Mt 28, 20). God intervenes in history, and He does it by placing limits on evil. This "divine limit which is imposed upon evil in history" - says John Paul II - is called mercy.

If we try to see the action of mercy in history, especially from the end of the last millennium and at the beginning of this one, and how it put limits on evil, we will notice how much of it has a Marian aspect to it.

St. Maximilian Kolbe, in a letter to Franciscan clerics in February 1933, said that history can be interpreted in Marian terms. Up to 1854, the year that the Immaculate Conception was declared a Dogma, we have a **first page** the purpose

of which was to know Mary more fully and recognise the value of her presence. Then he speaks of a **second page** opening up, in which "we must disseminate this truth in the hearts of all men, those who now live and all who will live until the end of the world, and we must watch over the growth and fruitfulness that leads to sanctification."

The Immaculate Conception had been declared a dogma four years prior to the apparitions of Lourdes (1858). And it is at Lourdes that Our Lady says of herself: "I am the Immaculate Conception". Around this core moves a great spiritual movement, which became united to what already existed (with the "Miraculous Medal" in Paris 1830, and the apparitions of La Salette in 1846).

The response by the Catholic population was strengthened further by the publication of the "Treatise on True Devotion to Mary" by **St. Louis De Montfort**. This **Treatise** was published in 1843, over a hundred years after having been written, but during which time it had remained "unknown". When found "by chance" in 1842, it quickly spread among the faithful and became an incredibly efficient tool for the diffusion of true devotion to Mary.

With this great Marian force behind her, the Church enters into some of the hardest battles of her history, on religious, political and social levels. These will culminate, dramatically, under the pontificate of Pius IX (1846-1878) and Leo XIII (1878- 1904). Numerous documents were published by the Popes to invite the faithful to pray the Rosary, "to stop the evil threatening the Church". The Rosary prayer spread even further thanks to Blessed Bartolo Longo, from the shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of **Pompei**.

Our Lady's apparitions at Fatima (May- October 1917) came at a tragic



time for Europe, even in political terms. In a Europe where nations were being scourged by WW II while still suffering from previous social, cultural and religious problems, Our Lady comes and promises the war will end. She asks for peoples to **consecrate** themselves to her Immaculate Heart, and urges them to be faithful to penance and the Rosary prayer. She finds three splendid witnesses: Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta; and She moves a whole nation.

However, Our Lady also warns that her words will go unheeded: "a worse war will start", and Russia "will spread its errors to the world". Just days after the end of the Apparitions, the **October Revolution** (October Uprising) broke out in Russia with the installation of the Bolshevik party in government in Moscow. Then, a truly worse war did break out.

In Rome (Italy), three days after the sixth apparition at Fatima, and on the eve before the Russian Revolution (the evening of 16th October 1917), three Franciscans priests and four friars met in the cell of Maximilian Kolbe. They founded the **Militia of the Immaculate**. In its first statute it states its purpose as: "the conversion of heretics, schismatics, and especially of Freemasons."

In the 20th century, the Lord gives us from the heart of Poland ("which continually beats with the heart of the Mother", John Paul II) the apostolate of **Divine Mercy** for our times, through Saint Faustina Kowalska: "Today I send you all of humanity... I desire healing it and holding it close to my merciful Heart." And then also: St. John Paul II, whose priestly vocation matured in the summer of 1941, at the same time when, just a short distance away, St. Maximilian Kolbe was offering up his life in the concentration camp at Auschwitz.

In one of his first pilgrimages, Pope John Paul II confessed his great desire to "involve the whole Church in a great Marian prayer", and he entrusted this task to Mary, adopting as his motto **Totus Tuus**. After the attempt on his life, he publicly renewed the act of consecration to Mary. And Mary did not wait long to respond. Just a few days afterwards, She began to appear in Medjugorje; her "programme" there being "to be with you to lead you on the way of holiness".

All these facts which we have only mentioned here are links in a chain, stages in a single journey that express the gift of divine mercy which puts a limit on evil. And to do this, God has called on Mary and the saints, His faithful servants who follow Christ and are thus able to make His merciful face fully present once again in all the circumstances of our history.

Marco Vignati,
Comunità Casa di Maria, Roma.

In the months of January, February and up to the first half of March, Medjugorje is quite different from the rest of the year. The Parish of St. James looks very much like any other parish in Hercegovina, frequented by the locals, and by very few pilgrims who choose to come at this time of the year in order to find quiet time for personal prayer.

This year we, as a Parish, celebrate the 47th anniversary of the dedication of the Church of St. James in Medjugorje. The Parish had been established in 1892, and the first parish church - which was quite big for those times - was completed in 1897. But the land it was built on was not stable, and the walls soon began to crack. Therefore, immediately after WW I, thoughts of building a new church were had, but work did not begin until 1934. It was finished and dedicated in 1969. Today, the Church of St. James is the centre of the sacramental and prayer life not only of the parishioners of Medjugorje, but of a multitude of pilgrims from around the world.

Thursday, 21st January 2016, was the 14th anniversary of the death of Frà Leonard Oreč (1928-2002), former parish priest of Medjugorje. Frà Leonard worked at Medjugorje from 1988 to 1991. During those years he proved to be an experienced shepherd and fervent promoter of Our Lady's messages of peace and reconciliation. In 1992 he founded the "Medjugorje Mir" humanitarian association which is still operative today.

Our present Parish Priest, Frà Marinko Sakota, has introduced a novelty: Lenten meetings for the parishioners of Medjugorje held in the "St. John Paul II" hall after the evening Mass every Wednesday of Lent. Ash Wednesday is the exception, because that particular evening is dedicated to prayer and fasting, with silent meditation, the Word of God, and a community "poor meal" of bread and water. The Parish Office explained: "It is a way of returning to the fasts of Wednesday and Friday, as a Parish. Doing it as a community will help us make that decision."

During Lent, in the parish of Medjugorje, the Way of the Cross is prayed every Friday at 2 pm on Križevac, and in the evening in the church, after Mass.

The youth of the parish of St. James have also decided to live this Lent the best way possible. For the entire duration of Lent, every evening after 8.30 pm, they will pray the Rosary together on Podbrdo; except for Fridays of Lent when, instead, the Via Crucis is prayed, and except for Sundays, because on Sundays, all

throughout the year, the Parish prays the Rosary on Podbrdo at 2 pm.

On the 19th February 2016 the Parish held its annual spiritual retreat, led by Fr. Ciril Čuš, who also held a series of conferences for parishioners, and was animated by the group of Young Franciscans of Medjugorje.

Fr. Ciril is a famous priest from Slovenia. He preaches Spiritual Exercises. He spoke of his own conversion and the gradual forgiveness of his abusive father. From hatred, he learnt to forgive and was even able to tell his father that he loved him. After that introduction, he spoke of the need for **spiritual healing**. Among other things, this is what he said to parishioners:

"We are called to build peace and the Kingdom of God. Forgive and you will be forgiven. The journey of forgiveness is not easy; at times man must fall down on his knees and pray.

The time of LENT is a time in which we can draw closer to God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. How nice it is to prepare for Mass with the prayer of the Rosary! How nice it is to be with the Lord! At times it is hard for us to pray; we can't concentrate. That's why we pray to Mary, our Mother, to help us follow the Light of the world; it is why we pray the **Rosary** at home. It will help our hearts to open.

The second thing we do in Lent is works of mercy; concrete things. With the help of God, we can help each other. The third thing we do is fast.

The journey that helps us understand that God loves us, has **eight steps** we need to take:

The **first** is to look for the good in every person.

The **second** is to be sincere in our relations with others.

The **third** is to quickly acknowledge our errors.

The **fourth** step is to forgive for first if we argue with someone, so that God's love can win in every heart.

The **fifth** step is to be aware of our own littleness.

The **sixth** step is to serve the truth, serve for love's sake.

The **seventh** step is to know that we can learn something from everyone.

The **eighth** step is to be grateful to God for everything, for the things that please us, and the things we don't have a desire for.

Let yourselves be embraced by the Lord and by Mary, our Mother! God always loves us!"

Paula Tomić, Medjugorje

believed in the Medjugorje event from its early years, rather than boast, have the task of examining themselves to verify the results of their faith and to act accordingly. The time of waiting is getting shorter, but it isn't over yet, and this message confirms it. Even if it seems that nothing has changed in man since that 25th of June in 1981, it is not so. The turmoil, divisions and wars are still the front page stories; but we know there is an underlying reality that confirms this closeness between Heaven and earth.

What to do? Our Lady is clear:

1) **Without prayer we cannot live**, because prayer is the chain which keeps us close to God.

2) **We must humbly return to God** and to His commands, so we can say with all our heart: As it is in Heaven so may it be on earth.

The two suggestions are linked to one another, and cannot be considered separately.

What a joy to hear the words, **"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"**: words taught to us by Jesus in the beautiful prayer to His and Our Father! The more we say, with sincerity, the Lord's Prayer to Our Father, the more we live it, then the greater the awareness in us that we are His children!

Peace and joy in Jesus and Mary!

Nuccio Quattrocchi

SAINT JOSEPH

Our Lady to Venerable Maria de Agreda: "The children of the world are ignorant regarding the privileges and rights which the Most High has conferred on my holy spouse, and **the power of his intercession** with the Divine Majesty and with me. But I assure you, my daughter, that in Heaven he **has great power to avert the punishment** of Divine Justice from sinners. In all trials seek his intercession, because the Heavenly Father will grant whatever my spouse asks."

"On the Day of Judgment, the condemned will weep bitterly for not having realized how powerful and efficacious a means of salvation they might have had in the intercession of St. Joseph, and for not having done their utmost to gain the friendship of the Eternal Judge."



Message to MIRJANA 2 FEBRUARY 2016

"Dear Children, I called you, and I call you again to know my Son, to know the truth. I am with you and I pray that you may come to know my Son. My children, you must pray very much to have ever more love and patience; to withstand the sacrifice and to be poor in the spirit. My Son is always with you by means of the Holy Spirit.

His Church is born in every heart that knows Him. Pray to come to know my Son. Pray that your soul might be one with Him. This is the prayer; this is the love that attracts others and makes you my apostles. I watch you with love, with motherly love; I call you;

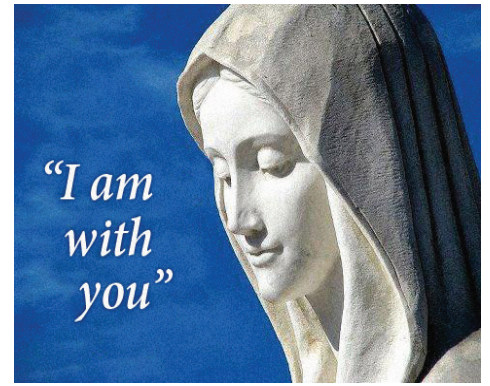
I know your sorrows and your suffering because I too suffered in silence. It was my faith that gave me love and hope. I repeat: my Son's resurrection and my assumption into heaven are for you hope and love. Therefore, my children, pray to know the truth; pray to have a strong faith able to lead your heart and to transform your sorrows and suffering into love and hope.

Thank you."



ANTIQUÉ PRAYER of Entrustment to Mary

We fly to thy protection, O Holy Mother of God. Despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin.



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God bless you!

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Dear Friends of the Echo of Medjugorje,

I have in my heart the latest message of the Queen of Peace, dated 25th February 2016.

Our Lady, who loves us with the same love that God has for us, can see us as we truly are. That is why she calls us and warns us.

For more than 34 years, She has been calling us, and we for the most part do not do what we ought to be doing. Our Lady has even told us that we are lost and that we have lost the purpose of life itself.

However, Our Lady has also said that she will not give up on us.

And we, too, must make the decision to not give up! We must insist on entrusting ourselves to God our merciful Father, through the help of Our Lady!

I BLESS YOU with all my heart, and together with you I call upon Jesus our Saviour!

Fr. Massimo Rastrelli, S.J.

Mantua, March 2016