



ECHO OF MARY

Queen of peace

82

May 1991

Our Blessed Mother's message of 25 March 1991:

"Dear Children, also today I invite you to live the Passion of Jesus in prayer, and union with Him. Decide to dedicate more of your time to God, Who has granted you these days of grace. Thus, my Children, pray and in a special way renew the love for Jesus in your hearts. I am with you and I accompany you with my blessing and my prayers. Thank you for responding to my call."

LIVE YOUR PASSION, IMMersed IN THE FATHER'S WILL

A suitable message for the Holy Week: "I invite you to live the Passion of Jesus in prayer, and in union with Him."

As we meditate on Christ's Passion we become aware of how He was totally immersed in the Father, totally concentrated on fulfilling the Father's will. During the court hearing His words were very few, and spoke practically only to the High Priest: "I AM," He said; and to Pilate He confirmed His Kingship with: "You say that I am King." This is our call: be united with the Father through Jesus. In the Passion we also read of another person, of Judas, who sold the Son of God for a few coins. But we are called to be united to the Father, through our prayer to Jesus, because prayer is our lifeline without which we would become a Judas. So the second thing that Our Blessed Mother asks of us is to "pray with Jesus" on the Mount of Olives. That is, learn to forgo our own will in favour of God's will: to throw ourselves into the Father's arms, and ask for the strength to accept His will even when we do not understand. It is here, on the cross, that our prayer becomes tremendously effective. Together with Jesus we can say: "Father, forgive them, as they do not know what they are doing..."

When our prayer is sincere and unites us to Jesus and, through Him, to the Father, new life blossoms in us. When we are united to Jesus' prayer and surrendered to the Father, we can ask forgiveness for everyone, even for our enemies. Our Lady promises to help us achieve just this, with her blessing and her prayer.

Fr. Tomislav

MESSAGE OF 25 APRIL 1991:

"Dear Children, Today I am inviting all of you; that your prayer might be prayer with the heart. I would like each of you to find the time for prayer so that in prayer you may discover God. I do not want you to talk about prayer, but to pray, really. May your every single day be full of thankful prayer to God for life and for all that you have. I do not want your life to be full of words, but that you glorify God with your deeds. I am with you and I thank God for every moment that I pass with you. Thank you for responding to my call."

The essence of the message is to enter into prayer and experience prayer. Our Lady insists on us praying with the heart because it is there that we can find God. She insists of the importance of praying, as opposed to "talking about" prayer. This is very important. It is easy to listen to meditations on prayer, but it is difficult to pray, because prayer is a battle, a battle against Satan and against our own negativity. Prayer is the moment of our redemption, when we meet with the living God. And it is here that we must recognize our wounds and sins. Our hearts put up defence; they close up. That is why we tend to avoid prayer, and prefer to find something to listen to, or nice formulas to recite, which is much easier.

Our Lady however, wants our encounter with God to be a prayer of thanks. This can never happen if we do not meet God and we do not discover His goodness in our daily lives. When we discover in our hearts that God is good in all situations, then we can thank Him and then we will bear much fruit in our works and these works will glorify God.

The tendency to listen to and to talk about prayer is a sign of our superficiality; it is a sign of our aversion to entering into intense life with God. And it is for this reason that we must force ourselves, every day, to pray with the heart, where rather than picking up prayer, we continue to pray with the heart, always, without stopping. If we remain with God in prayer, we will continually bear the fruits of salvation that come through the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.

Now, let us pray:

Oh Lord, I pray to you for all the pilgrims and all those who will read these pages: may the Holy Spirit descend and enlighten the minds of all men so that they may understand this message.

Oh Lord, send Your Holy Spirit to open our hearts, so that the wills of all men may accept all Your plans and so that there will be no resistance in the hearts of men.

Oh Lord, prayer is a grace and we beg You to grant us this grace, so that we may pray really.

Oh Lord, send Your Holy Spirit and give us the strength to confront the battle of prayer and defeat the enemy.

Then the peace and the joy of the Lord will enter your hearts and you will be able to contemplate God's face. I bless you in the Name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Tomislav Vlasic'

13 May: Our Lady of Fatima

YOU WHO HAVE OFFERED YOURSELF...

In the summer of 1916 the angel at Fatima taught the three young shepherd children the following prayer: "My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee! I ask forgiveness for all those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee!"

A year later, on the 9th August 1917, Our Lady recommended that they: "Pray, pray very much, and offer sacrifices for sinners," adding, "Many people go to hell because no one offers sacrifices or prayers for them."

Those people who offer themselves (after having understood this redeeming mission) continue in themselves this chain of love and suffering for the sake of others. Aware of their call, they invoke strength from the Blessed Mother so they can carry out the mission to their best. "They were put on show in front of the whole universe, angels as well as men" (1 Co 4:9).

IT SEEMS THAT THE THIRD SECRET OF FATIMA

CONCERNS LOSS OF FAITH

We already reported that when the Pope was asked about the 3rd secret of Fatima (at Fulda in Germany) he replied with a plea to pray the Rosary because it is the medicine which can defeat evil. The "Medjugorje Milano" publication recently reported the conclusions of a study carried out on the subject. Following is a summary. Early 1982: Prior to his pilgrimage to Fatima on 13 May, John Paul II consulted a Portuguese priest from the Curia, asking him to translate the secret and point out the peculiarities of the language.

10 Sept. 1984: The bishop of Leiria-Fatima declared that the contents of the 3rd secret concern our faith; and in particular, the loss of our faith.

Padre Michel's opinion/interpretation concludes with:

"The dogma of the faith will be preserved in Portugal, but in many other nations it will be lost. The pastors of the Church will seriously fail in carrying out their duties and because of this a great number of consecrated people and faithful will let themselves be seduced by widespread pernicious errors (i.e. that cause great harm).

This will be the decisive moment in the battle between the Virgin and the devil. A cloud of diabolic disorientation will spread throughout the world. Satan will sneak his way into the highest positions of the Church; he will blind people's spirits, and harden the hearts of pastors, because God will abandon them as punishment for having refused the requests of Mary's Immaculate Heart."

It rings out a loud warning. Just think of the progressive ideas that have seduced the Church, and of the Masonic influence that nourishes her!

Cardinal Oddi, who was very close to the latest Pope's, is of a similar opinion.

ON PRIDE AND SELF-GLORY, AND HOW THEY DIVIDE

"Keep watch, and pray!" This is everyone's watchword; in particular for visionaries who are more subject to the devil's traps. It is said that incense is a drug. With incense I mean fame and praise. We don't realize the damage we cause (them and us) when we treat visionaries as though they were idols, and seek to increase our own prestige in the eyes of others. Only humbleness and discretion can protect us and them from Satan's attacks.

It is clear that visionaries are given the mission of witnessing, but they need to place themselves under a spiritual director, and be obedient to him.

A very expert priest told me how not only has he met false visionaries, but also real visionaries who have ended up losing their charism, and were no longer able to "see", or were giving messages of dubious source. Being charismatic, or being graced with celestial visions, are not a guarantee that one will remain with the "truth", and will not err.

I cannot stress how important it is, then, not to abuse of visionaries, and not to judge them either. God often confounds us by allowing that exceptional graces and puzzling weaknesses exist together in these people. Visionaries have the duty of transmitting as faithfully as possible the messages received, nothing else. Therefore, we should not expect them to have the answers to all our problems. For these we have prayer and priestly advice, not forgetting that our expectations, when laboured by time, mature our faith and God's true will.

Visionaries must be careful not to nourish disagreement and contrasting attitudes, as they would no longer transmit God's gift, which is communion, but would create division and factions, similar to Paul's Corinth - with serious damage to the simple people who become involved, then bewildered and confused. This is playing at Satan's game who is terribly irritated by the many graces at Medjugorje, and who wishes to cause division and destruction.

Those who have heard and responded to Mary's call, but have not carried it out - caught up by the love they have for themselves, by an unconscious desire for praise, by feelings of protagonism (without mentioning those who aim at material profits) - "use" Mary's works rather than put themselves at Her service. Whether priests or not, worldly criteria takes possession of those who do not keep step with prayer with the heart, and who do not remain attentive to God Who speaks to them in their hearts, and who, because of this, aren't in a continuous journey of conversion and purification. It is no wonder then, that these people will no longer understand or no longer follow the way of peace, or if in the end they will even oppose it.

Let's not be surprised then if not all in "Medjugorje" is holy. It is easy for human nature to take over when our prayer life weakens; and this can happen anywhere, even if Mary's grace will triumph in the end over man's wretchedness and reap new conversions in those who have simple and open hearts.

Fr. A

SATAN YES - SATAN NO

How not to fall under his dominion

By Fr. Gabriel Amorth

On a recent TV show which was debating on the existence of the devil, I was asked about the references made to the devil by the Queen of Peace. What became evident in this and other recent television debates on the subject was that the television gives greater coverage to people who minimise the devil's influence; and also that men of the Church, much more so than the faithful, largely refuse to believe in the devil's existence and influence; but, in truth, we have always suspected this.

Does Satan exist? Does he influence today's society more than in the past?

1. The devil exists. He is spiritual and a personal being (and should not be confused with the abstract idea of evil). He was created good by God, but due to his own fault he became irreparably lost. Thus, from an angel he became a devil.
2. The devil also has the power to provoke possessions, or in other words, he can introduce himself into a human body and possess it, even if he may not necessarily possess that person's will. And even if certain theologians deny such a possibility, it is a reality.
3. All those who believe in Christ, and in particular, in the succession of the Apostles (with the Bishops) have the power to drive out Satan. Those who don't believe should read the Gospel; if you do not believe in the Gospel, you will never believe in my reasonings. Just as Our Lady continues to tell us at Medjugorje, Satan is very strong these days. Not only, but he is furious, and attacks us with particular anger.

Of course I do not share the ideas recently expressed by Msgr Balducci who estimated that the number of people in this state are no more than 40 (in Italy). I do not know what he bases this idea on; I know that he is a demonologist, that is, one who studies the phenomena. He is not an exorcist and therefore has no direct contact with possessed people. If I add up the possessed people that I cure, plus those being cured by the other exorcists that I know, I get a total of a few hundred. And there are many more people who suffer other types of troubles, more or less serious, that are not cases of possession, but are of diabolic origin and medically incurable. The list of causes whereby one falls into malefic illnesses will also help us understand why such illnesses are more numerous these days than in the past (and it is expected that they will increase in the next few years).

The possible causes are three. The first cause is simply by God's permission. But let me make one thing clear: nothing can ever happen without divine permission; but while for the other two causes a free human contribution is necessary, for the first cause it is only God to permit the devil to possess or disturb a person with the aim of purifying or testing that person. Such was the case with Job who was struck in his children, possessions, and health. Such was the case with St. Paul who had to suffer an illness of satanic origin to prevent him from becoming proud (2 Co 12.7). Many saints were also tested in this manner, and I recall Fr. Calabria and Sr. Mary of the Crucified Jesus, among the latest to be beatified.

The second cause is when a person is the victim of witchcraft. And the type of witchcraft used the most is the curse. In spite of certain theologians' scepticism, witchcraft exists. In our society where faith grows less and less (and it is for this reason that people become superstitious), witchcraft is on the increase, abundantly filling the pockets of the many

swindlers and the not so many sorcerers. In the third case, the blame is entirely on the person who has been struck by the illness. It may depend on the person being set in particularly sinful ways. I know of cases where people insist in their sexual perversions united with violence; cases of homosexuals who take drugs and commit other crimes; cases of repeated abortions ... I think that the Gospel gives us a symbolic example in the figure of Judas when it says: "Then Satan entered him" (Jn 13.27).

Then there's a whole list of other ways where we are exposed to these evil influences or to being possessed: participating in seances, practising magic or other forms of occultism, resorting to clair-voyants, sorcerers, fortune-tellers, or frequenting satanic cults (and the apex of which are black masses), joining a satanic sects. A consecration to Satan exists, it is possible to make pacts with the devil, and other forms of ties with him. Those who know about these things, also know that these experiences are growing; and therefore, the cases of diabolic disturbances are also on the increase.

In all of the schools where I have been invited to talk to the students, I have always found someone who plays at invoking spirits (the 'game' with glasses on a table) or calling on the dead; but then someone always ends up being struck by the devil. We must warn the young people, put them on their guard, as they are very exposed - it could be out of curiosity, an imprudent action, it doesn't take much to be struck by this negative influence and have to bear it for the whole of one's life.

The main cause of these illnesses, I repeat, is the lack of faith; and that's why people then make recourse to its substitute: superstition. I would also like to add that those who pray, who live in a Christian manner and receive the Holy Sacraments, are protected. The devil has no power over us if it is not us to give it to him. The Blessed Virgin, the great and indomitable enemy of Satan, protects us. Our guardian angels and our saints also protect us. There is no need to be afraid of one who has been defeated by Christ. We only need to resist the devil and he will run away from us. (Jm 4.7)

Fr. Gabriel Amorth

MIRJANA TELLS OF MARY'S IMPASSIONED CALL FOR PRAYER FOR NON-BELIEVERS

On her birthday, Mirjana received her annual apparition (18 March). It was 7 pm and she was in her home with her husband and other guests. After half an hour of prayer, Our Lady appeared to Mirjana and remained for several minutes. Here is the message:

"Dear Children, I am glad that you have gathered in such a large number. I would like you to be always united in prayer to my Son like this. I desire that you dedicate all your prayers for my children who do not know my love and and love of my Son. Help them to come to know this love; and help me because I am the Mother of you all.

My dear Children, how many times have I asked you here in Medjugorje to pray! I ask you again because I would like you all to open up your hearts to my Son, that He might enter and fill them with His peace and love. Let Him enter! Help Him with your prayers, so that you too might be able to spread peace and love to others, since this is now most necessary for you in this time of battle with Satan. I tell you anew: Pray! Pray! Only through prayer

can you drive away Satan and all the evil that comes from him. I promise you, my Children, that I will pray for you; but I seek from you more vigorous prayers. I want you to spread peace and love. I have been asking this of you for nearly ten years. Help me! I will pray to my Son for you."

At the end, three angels were waiting for Our Lady and she departed with them.

(Alberto Bonifacio)

A group from Bolzano was present during the apparition, and these met Mirjana the day after. They said Mirjana explained that when Our Lady appeared she was accompanied by little angels (something she saw only 8 years previously); and that generally Our Lady prays one "Lord's Prayer" with Mirjana, but this time she prayed three. The first one was for non-believers, the second one for the sick people present at the apparition, and the third one to ask for God's help for us all.

Mirjana also reported that Our Lady asked that we pray the complete Rosary (Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries) every day for non-believers, and that we attend Mass once a month especially for them.

(Anita)

WITH THE CRUCIFIED AND RISEN CHRIST

Good Friday.

The Passion play was sung with the participation of many characters. In the evening and despite the drizzling rain, a few hundred people climbed Krizevac, praying while climbing up the muddy and slippery track. After the songs and the recital of the Sorrowful mysteries Our Lady appeared to Ivan at 11.00 p.m. at the foot of the Cross and She invited all to accept the cross as Jesus did.

Easter Saturday:

Long lines of people for confession. Only a few priests were able to arrive for Easter, but the confessions continued both on Saturday and Sunday, around the church and on the apparition hill, wherever a priest could be found. At 7.00 p.m. the big Easter Vigil began for the parishioners with the Mass of Resurrection at midnight. The church was overflowing with people.

Easter Monday:

A beautiful starry evening for the climb up Podbrdo. Our Lady appeared to Ivan for 5 minutes and lengthily prayed for peace.

At Tihalijna:

Fr. Jozo dedicated the morning of Easter Saturday to a long catechism for the Italians. He spoke of suffering and the cross, of Christ's pressing invitation to forgiveness. (If I cannot forgive I cannot obtain salvation; many diabolic possessions are caused by not forgiving.) He spoke of fasting, necessary to relive Christ's passion; and of confession to destroy all our idols.

"Divorce is on the increase," he said, "because man is no longer able to love, because he does not love God. Priestly vocations are on the decrease because parents do not teach their children how to make sacrifices. He confessed having seen Our Lady cry for priests and that

she said, "You do not know how to read the Bible..."

A young man who had been healed at Medjugorje from drug addiction and who intends becoming a priest gave the following testimony: "Look at my hands. They broke and distributed drugs.. tomorrow they will break and distribute Eucharistic Jesus. "

(A. Bonifacio)

PUBLIC CONFESSION IN MEDJUGORJE

by man who gave false witness at Fr. Jozo's hearing

"My name is Tihomir Karacic', and I was born on 18th June 1962. My mother died in 1969. We were very poor, and I joined the Police Force in Sarajevo because the school was free. Four years later I became a local policeman at Listica and stayed there for 6 years. Three years ago I left the Milicija (Police) on purpose and since then I have not been able to find a job. Every now and again I go to Germany to earn a bit of money.

During my third year of schooling (in 1981), while I was doing work experience in Listica, I was sent to Medj. together with the president of the local Communist youth group to listen to Fr. Jozo's sermon. Back in Listica, I referred everything I could remember to the commanding officer of the Milicija, but I had the feeling that they knew everything already. One Autumn day, during my fourth year at Sarajevo, I was summoned to the police headquarters at Mostar and asked to give witness in the case against Fra Jozo. The director of the school told me to go and not to fear. At Mostar, detective Gaspar Augustin, who later became police superintendent of Mostar, told me to keep myself ready, but not to go home so as not to let anything leak out. So I stayed with my aunt at Ilici. Gaspar came to see me at my aunt's home. He told me to get pen and paper and write down exactly what he said. I had to learn it by heart so that I could repeat it in court as a witness against Fra Jozo.

After the court hearing, I returned to Sarajevo to finish my last school year and I was under the impression that I was being treated with particular attention. My superiors even offered me a home in Sarajevo as a help in my career, but I refused it and returned to Listica, where I was a local policeman for 6 years. My superiors here treated me as an enemy. I even refused the offer of a special course at Sarajevo to join the Kosovo, and I then resigned. I was then unemployed, and not only, but I was kept under observation. I went to Germany for work, but I was denounced and had to go back home. Back in Listica, it was rumoured that I was a spy, a dishonest person, people were told to avoid me.

As a Catholic and a man who wanted to be honest, I greatly suffered for having given in to the secret police, thus harming an innocent person. As the years went by my conscience weighed down on me more and more. I didn't confess for 10 years, knowing that I couldn't present myself to God, without first having asked Fra Jozo's forgiveness. For the same reason, I didn't marry. For many years I tried to go back to see Fra Jozo, but in vain: something always impeded me, including in part, lack of courage. Luckily I found a local monk that served as intermediary and helped me meet Fra Jozo. Fra Jozo greeted me as a friend and forgave me with all his heart. Then he confessed me. Afterwards, we embraced

and kissed each other. My soul felt as if it had been freed of a heavy load.

The whole affair weighed down on my conscience because I had told a deliberate lie, even if my superiors had pushed me to do it... But not even they are completely at fault; the real culprit is the system of that time. A system that took advantage of the weak, and the ambitious to serve its own means. Thank God that this system has finally come to end here too, after the rest of Europe. This can only be works of God and Our Lady. I have no hard feelings, because I am a Christian and I forgive everyone, just like Fra Jozo forgives. All I want to do is live as an honest Christian and an honest Croatian.

The confession was heard by Fra Jakov Bubalo and Ferdo Vlastic', who have no doubt whatsoever as to its veracity.

MIRJANA: Who are non-believers? What happens on the 2nd of every month?

Q. What does Our Lady mean by non-believers?

A. When Our Lady says "non-believers" She also means those people who go to church merely out of habit. She would like us all to consider the church as our home, and God as our real Father, a Father of whom to ask council and advice.

Q. What did she tell you in the last encounter?

A. That people should start praying in the family again. She says many parents complain about their children not going to church and not wanting to hear about God or Our Lady. Our Lady says the first to blame are the parents, as they ought to pray together with their children. That's why she want's us to pray the Rosary together in the family. She says families should pray together every day. Then she spoke of the pilgrims who come to Medjugorje, who go to Mass and pray, but when back home drop all these practices with excuses such as "Mass back home isn't as nice," etc. Our Lady says these excuses are useless, and that Jesus is present wherever Mass is said. She also said that it would be proper for us to remain in the church a little after Mass.

Q. What happens on the 2nd of each month?

A. Most of the time is spent in prayer. Generally, when she appears I see her with my heart, the way Jelena does, but I also hear her speak, just the way I can hear you talking to me. However, just recently, I have started seeing her with my eyes.

Q. When Our Lady comes, is She worried or serene?

A. Worried, because She says that we are all Her children, and as Mother to us all, She suffers for the non-believers. She asks for our help, our prayers, by saying: Please pray.

Q. Is it true that She says She is not happy because we don't pray enough?

A. She always says that we do not pray enough. When something goes wrong or something is not right, She always says it. We think that She doesn't think of us, or of our friend,

instead She thinks of everyone. We think we are better than the others. But this is not true. We must pray much more and offer more sacrifices and not judge the others.

Q. I thought that after the strong message of the 25th January (by now only the Rosary can make miracles) during the war in the Gulf, you might have revealed the first secret...

A. (She shook her head in denial, and continued) Our Lady is displeased because there are no believers: there only need be a few. I remember that God said that if He found just a few men, He would not chastise the world. She wants all Her children saved. That's why She never says: I am happy.

Q. You say that we are protected by Our Lady and thus we are not to be afraid if something should happen..

A. Those who believe in God and have their hearts filled with God, do not fear because they are sure that their enemies cannot harm them. It is not just now that Our Lady said, Grasp hold of the Rosary, but right from the beginning.

Q. Mary taught you how to pray with the heart, but not us!

A. But there is no need to receive any particular instruction. Your heart only has to love God; and think of God and Mary as your parents; and pray with your heart full of love for Them. There is no need for any particular instruction. (Mirjana was asked about the apparition of the devil, but she did not want to reply. She only affirmed: I am sure that the devil exists, and I am surprised that certain theologians and priests deny his existence. When you pray, however, he cannot harm you.)

Q. Can you tell us something about Heaven?

A. I saw it like in a film for 2 or 3 seconds. I saw people who were all about the same age; about 30 years old and they were walking like in a big garden. I was astounded by the look on their faces: full of happiness and love. I couldn't see anyone looking worried, like we see people here on earth. Just serenity and peace. That was what touched me the most.

Q. Can you describe Our Lady's beauty? Fr. Jozo does not want to talk about it.

A. He is right not to talk about it, as Her beauty cannot be described. She has love on Her face, and when you say that Her hair is black, Her eyes are blue, you haven't said anything. Her beauty is beyond description. Yes it's true that I have tried to paint Her many times ... but with little luck.

Q. We know that you know the 10 secrets and that sometimes when you speak about them you start crying. But you continue to live normally, you work, you got married ... The secrets then, and the punishments, should not make us frightened?

A. I said before that those who have their hearts open to God, and think of Him as a Father, do not fear anything, because they are sure that God will not prepare anything terrible for them. You must just pray every day. If you want to be someone's friend you have to speak to them for the friendship to last. It's the same with God: if our friendship with Him continues to grow we will not be afraid.

Q. Can you remember the secrets, or have you written them down?

(She replies that she has written them down on paper given to her by Our Lady, and that the paper is object of curiosity, because it is neither paper, nor cloth.)

A. Each secret must be revealed to the priest 10 days before the event, then we will fast for seven days, and three days before the event, he will reveal it to all.

Q. If the world should return to God, will the world be chastised anyway?

A. Our Lady has not said anything to me about this.

Q. Years ago people said that the first secret would be that a part of the world would be completely wiped off the face of the earth.

A. I have never heard anything of the sort... I can say nothing about the secrets, otherwise they would not be secrets.

Q. There are some people who take the example of Bernadette of Lourdes and Lucy of Fatima, and are surprised that you decided to marry.

A. In the first year of the apparitions, we asked Our Lady what we should do with our lives. She replied, Do what God wants, and what you feel in your heart. I felt that I had to form a family. She says that in these times, there is a need for Catholic families that can serve as a model for others. What can I say of my family? We pray together, we go to church: God is always first for us. First we do what God wants, then what we want. And we are happy with our lives.

Q. Do you have to transmit the messages that Our Lady gives to you singly, or to the groups and that teach how to pray with the heart, also to us?

A. The messages that Our Lady gives to a single person, or to the group are for the whole world, not just for us, or for Medjugorje. (...)

(Alberto Bonifacio for Radio Maria 25 Feb 1991)

CONVERSION AS A PROCESS OF HEALING

Notes of a retreat led by FR. TOMISLAV

Out of the 650 participants; 30 were priests. Fr. Tomislav plotted out in three points the quickest way to God:

1. HUMILITY

Man must acquire humility; the same humility that permitted Jesus, Almighty God, to

descend to the earth; the same humility that defeats Satan's arrogance. Mary is humility personified, and it is through her that we must acquire this virtue, by praying continuously, so that God will grant it to us.

2. OBEDIENCE TO THE ETERNAL FATHER

Just as Jesus obeys His Father, we too must obey Him. When I place myself before the Father to listen to Him and be obedient to His Will, there is no room for arrogance in me; and Satan is defeated. There is no other person (not even mystics or visionaries) who can hear God on my behalf. Satan fears this obedience because he lost everything due to his disobedience. Satan tries to fog up our minds to stop us discovering the truth. When I am obedient to the Father, this fog is dispersed so that I find the light.

3. EXPERIENCING GOD'S MERCIFUL LOVE

To experience this merciful love one must be constantly before God, certain of His infinite love for each of us. If I have sinned and I kneel before Him, asking for His forgiveness with an open heart, then He will caress me just as an ordinary father would do. Satan is powerless before the splendour of divine love. For this divine love to be in us we have to fight our own ego; our own bad habits. The purification which enables this comes from God, through trials. We must discover God's face even in suffering. We have to let ourselves be crucified. Through a total offering of ourselves to God we allow the merciful love to explode within us."

On the subject of Satan, he pointed out that the Bible and the teachings of the Church tell us that he exists. Also the saints also tell us that Satan exists. "In Medjugorje Our Lady often speaks about the devil; and she has invited us to wear blessed objects on our persons; to have our homes blessed; and to consecrate ourselves to Jesus and Herself numerous times during the day as a form of defence. If our faith has been awakened he will know of it and he will tempt us, and try to wear us out, to wear down our faith, and our trust in God. Satan closes people's minds and souls to the action of the Holy Spirit. But our strength is prayer that gushes from the heart, and fasting, and joy which comes from God. In a dark, unlit room, we are unable to see and move about and this makes us frightened. It's a bit like being closed up in a tomb; and this is how man's life is when his soul is darkened by sin.

Holding on to our vices," he explained, "is like leaving a door open for Satan. At times, mental disturbances and diabolic possessions give place to similar phenomena, but the roots of these are different. A psychologist can get down to the wound, but cannot see what the cause is. Another way which opens a door for Satan is wanting at all costs a certain grace from God, without accepting His will. Being the director of one's own life means we are nothing and can do nothing (for "without God we can do nothing"). We must only try to see positive things in people, not their faults.

Satan works on opening up our wounds; his strength is expressed in condemning, while Jesus' strength is expressed in saving. We should not judge others, we only ought to love them. Judging others causes wounds to open up, while love heals wounds. Through our egoism, Satan is able to illude us; and if we love money, we belong to Satan.

On Saturday afternoon, Fr. Tomislav made us all go out to the beach to experience the prayer of praise; to recognize God in the nature that surrounds us; to see His greatness in the

immensity of the sea and to feel His love in the blowing breeze. It is true that creation had united us to the Creator. We became children again.

Fr. Tomislav prayed:

Father, may all the lands that are wet by these waves be blessed. Father, bless all the people who will be touched by the rays of the stars tonight. Bless all those people who will be touched by the rays of the sun.

In this cosmic prayer, God is praised in all creation. If our prayer is just a formula, we remain trapped in by it. Our prayer must be a space where we can encounter God, so that the Holy Spirit may pray in us and we will live in harmony with all creatures. To be able to pray with an open heart, we must make space in our hearts where only God can enter. If we manage to respect this space, we can adore God even in the most profound darkness. Our prayer must blossom into a blessing, so that others may discover the force to pray through our example.

We have to learn to live with our sufferings, without shunning them so that the supernatural dimension develops in us. If we use spiritual life to transform our whole being, then our life will become a happy announcement.

UNITY IN GOD - I must never have hard feelings against anyone, including God, for things that don't go the way I want, but I must see things in their positive aspect. This is the Church, when everyone forms one heart.

BELONGING TO A GROUP - Whether I am Franciscan, or a priest, or a lay person; what counts is that I am in God. The various groups manifest themselves in different ways, but the important thing is to be united to God.

THE EUCHARIST - is prayer par excellence, because it comprises the Word of God that heals, the offering where I give myself to God, and communion with Jesus. When the Eucharist is lived in this manner, God silently heals our deepest wounds."

To conclude, Fr. Tomislav warned us against the grave sin of making a habit of the Eucharist, a habit of Mass.

A.P., La Spezia, Italy.

RADIO MARIA IN POLAND

Fr. Tadeusz writes

Dear Fr. Angelo ... the testimonies, the letters, from those who've been saved, in the Soviet Union, Poland, Germany, and elsewhere, bring me so much joy. These people have been born again in Christ, thanks also to you. Many wonderful letters from all over the Soviet Union encourage me and urge me to pray and work even more for them. Some of the letters

are by priests. One young one wrote: "Thank you so much for all your help. People rejoice on receiving religious articles (little picture cards, rosary beads, the Echo... or a book). I can assure you, Father, that we pray for all those who send help."

Another priest writes: "...I thank you for the chalice and the paten, for the star and the spoon... and for the typerwriter, for the catechism and prayer books; indeed, for everything... Now we have a lot to do, especially in restoration works, but most of all in reconstructing the people. We need many prayers."

The words that Fr. Maximilian Kolbe used to say when he went to pray the Rosary always come to my mind: "I'm going to shoot down Satan." I thought that shipments of a different type of bread could have been organized: you know; weapons to kill Satan (rosary beads, catechisms, holy vestments, the messages of the Queen of Peace, the Bible, etc) for our sisters and brothers of the East. Present orders have put a stop to everything. Yet the Mother of God always finds men and ways to organize shipments and avoid bureaucracy. She continually surprises us. She shows how much She loves Her children, and that She is the organizer of the 'chain of hearts.'

A radio station very soon at Torun. Nicolaus Copernicus, revolutionary for the world of science, was born in Torun in 1473 and it was there that his heliocentric theory was formed. In 1991, the first Radio Maria will be born for the so called Eastern Bloc countries, in Torun - to show the men that our God is the centre of the world's system and that all men and peoples in Him are His people and that we are all brothers and sisters.

This commitment keeps me very busy and goes beyond human possibilities. I know, there are certain things that only people like Fr. Maximilian Kolbe can deal with, not I. At times, my nights are sleepless. I entrust my every fear to Mary. I know She has many helpers, people like Fr. Kolbe; and I pray to Her that She may send them to us, to organize this project, Her project; that She may let the Fr. Kolbe of today be found. The Evangelization Centre for the East will also be in Torun. It will be from here that we want to systemically ship the Echo..., the messages, the books, the catechisms, etc...

Dear Father Angelo, it is Mary's will if we are pursuing the same thing. I put all my strength and everything that I possibly can into it; the Poles give their strength, their prayers and their work. In the states formerly dominated by communism, the enormous spiritual and economical damages are now emerging. It is all very serious: many people live in dire poverty; and that is why we need these evangelization centres. The centres depend on your help. We hope and count especially on your prayers, and then on any material help you may be able to send.

We need a computer, a fax for rapid communications would be wonderful. We need the paper for printing, means of transport; and soon there will be the need for more radio links. Everything that I gain, that I have, I use for this purpose, but it isn't much for such a big project. A miracle is needed.

Father, I count on your help for this work which really is yours, since it all started from you. Just recently, someone wrote to me and said: In the concentration camp in Siberia I was always sure that I would have returned home. When I was nearly dead from starvation, I cried out to the Blessed Virgin: Dear Mother, save me, You can see that I will soon die from

hunger. A few minutes later, a prison mate came to me with a piece of bread, saying: 'I've got my channels that the guards don't know about. It was through these that I came into possession of this piece of bread. We're saved.

Father, I ask for your prayers; I pray that Mary may want to be the organizer of Her works, that many children may be saved from dying of starvation, that they may start living, because Jesus lives. He rose for every man, and we will live if we share the Risen-bread with the hungry!

Feast of St. Joseph, 1991 Yours in Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Tadeusz.

Russia does not need bread alone Drive out Satan with Prayer

(...) Dark clouds are forming of the Soviet Union. The perestrojka is failing... Some expect to return to old ways. While provisions rot at the stations and ports, thousands of trains are carrying army tanks to safety beyond the Urals. It is a world power reduced to begging, yet they have their atomic bombs! Is the time ripe for that feared migration of starving masses from the East? It is said 100 million people will migrate into the West within the next 10 years. In any case, any material help is useless for as long as the Soviet people are without spiritual values. We have a pastoral duty to fulfil: that is, re-evangelize the newly freed countries through the radio, with priests, sacraments, literature, and other appropriate means. In deed, where people have been deprived of God and dominated by Satan, it takes much more than a perestrojky to save them. That's why Jesus gave His apostles the strength and the power to drive out demons before sending them to announce the Kingdom of God (Lk 9:1).

There is no need for a special mandate for this type of exorcism, for Jesus says that this type of demon can only be driven out with prayer and fasting (Mk 9:28). But the stench of Satan poisons not only the East, but also the West. Satan is conducting a world war. On all fronts, and especially in the secret of our hearts, he is trying to put out the light of God. Hence, he must be driven out from every corner, and immediately! Perhaps the catastrophe of the Persian Gulf, and of the Kurds, and the anger of so many oppressed peoples are God's last warning to make us turn away from sin...

Werenfried Von Straaten

The Eastern Bloc: after its liberation, we must invoke unity and peace for Churches of

the Ukraine

The hierarchy of the immense Soviet territories is being reorganized. An archbishop has been nominated for Moscow, two bishops for Byelorussia and another three for territories beyond the Urals. In the next European synod there will be 40 bishops from the West and 30 from the East, plus a further 15 representatives from other Christian Churches (not just as observers, as they will be allowed to speak), and there will also be a representative from both the Jewish and Muslim faiths, all according to the Pope's desires. It is concerning that the disunity and rivalry among the various Churches continues: that is, amongst the Uniates, the Orthodox, the new Orthodox Church which broke away from the Russian Patriarch of Moscow, the former Poles of Latin Rite (the latter are not well seen by the Uniates); claims and disagreements are the order of the day.

The Queen of Peace has a lot of work to do in the Ukraine. Patriotism can easily become a demonic trap, which leads away from the Gospel of peace and unity, and devoid the Church of its real ministry which is the salvation and sanctification of all people. Let us pray, then, for our brothers and sisters, that they might learn that it is not the number of faithful that counts, nor is being popular with the people. The important thing is to live Christianly, by loving and supporting each other for the greater glory of God. Longlasting fruit can be produced only if we work for God's glory. Mary counts on our help for this to plan to succeed.

Fr. Angelo Mutti