

Message given by Our Lady, Queen of Peace, on 25 July 1991:

"Dear children! I invite you to pray for peace. In this period of time peace is being threatened in a particular manner, and I am asking you to renew fasting and prayer in your families. I would like you to understand how serious the situation is my dear children, and that much of what will happen depends on your prayers. But you pray too little.

Dear children! I am with you and I am asking you to seriously begin praying and fasting as you did in the first days of my coming.

Thank you for having responded to my call."

GO BACK TO THE WAY YOU WERE .. AND HELP CARRY THE BURDEN OF THE WORLD'S SINS

Much of what will happen depends on our response

"I invite you to pray for peace. In this period of time peace is being threatened in a particular manner ... I would like you to understand how serious the situation is." That is what Our Lady said and if She has never spoken like that before then things must be grave. It was with this prophetic message that Our Lady prepared us for the recent upheavels in Russia - just like July of last year with Kuwait (when Our Lady repeated the word "peace" seven times), and last June with Yugoslavia.

This time, however, Our Lady gently reminds us that **we do not pray enough - "begin praying and fasting as you did in the first days of my coming."**

1. The community chosen by Our Lady then is the first one that must search its conscience, and recall all the extraordinary graces that it received and how it generously responded to them in the beginning. For instance, that early fervour when they prayed and fasted for 3 days, and the most wonderful miracles of faith and reconciliation transformed the town into an oasis of peace, full of unselfish love. Every evening the community gathered in the church to ardently sing and pray and it became a model for everyone that arrived in Medjugorje.

That is why, Our Lady repeats, "Satan tries to destroy my plans." How? By slowly wearing down our commitment to prayer, fasts and sacramental life through "worldly worries and the illusion that wealth brings us happiness, but which are like thorns that suffocate the grain." How many are now contented with the easy money that comes from the pilgrim business? And even though the fighting within Yugoslavia has ceased the flow of pilgrims, only a small number of parishioners have seemingly returned to prayer, or at least publicly.

2. All those people who have heard Our Lady's call over these past ten years must also search their conscience. How many have returned to their old ways after that initial fervour? Why do we go to Medjugorje now? It is not by chance that this interruption, due to political crisis, has come about. Both pilgrims and parishioners can now carefully consider past behaviour to purify their intentions and actions.

There are some people who do not want to hear Medjugorje being criticized, as if everything just had to be perfect there, but they do not realize that in doing so, they follow that logic that governs and makes institutes, businesses and even sanctuaries run smoothly. Instead, the logic of the Gospel tells us that conversion is a non-stop process. Neither do they help the pilgrims understand that the devotion at Medjugorje is not that of any other sanctuary, but an urgent appeal from Above.

Sure, the time of grace has not come to a finish, Maria assures us with last month's message. She always works miracles for those with an open heart. There are some wonderful families and people filled with God. The rank of humble people has not yet reached its limit, and little by little, the Grace reaches all of them. If some of the first fall by the way, then the number that make up the last will grow, because Mary continues to gather up her children from all over the place to oppose Satan.

We are called then to open our eyes and see the urgency of Mary's call, especially now that the house seems to be burning around us, and before we burn with it. In fact, much of what will happen depends on our prayers. If we do not pray then, what type of events can we expect to encounter? We know the remedy by

now, we have known it for ten years. It all depends on us: "you are important ... I need you to realize my plans." Each and every one of us must make the burden of the world's sins ours. The strength and the remedy to cure any type of war within man, in the families and in the society, resides within us. "You will have to feed this crowd," you who have been satiated with the bread of life and quenched with the superabundance of the Spirit of peace - Mary seems to say to us - like Jesus said to the apostles in front of the hungry crowd of people.

I am with you! Our Lady assures us that our mission will not fail because it is under Her guidance.

Fr.
Angelo

PENTECOST AT CZESTOCHOWA The Pope entrusts the youth with a mission

Two worlds meet and embrace. It happened at Jasna Gora where a million young people, from the East and the West gathered around the common Father. There were 100 thousand from Russia (1200 from the church of Novosibirsk in Siberia alone!). They arrived the best way they could, they had no money, some didn't even know the sign of the Cross. They were empty-handed, but simple and crystal clear. The Blessed Mother made a wonderful fusion out of all those present. It was an effusion of grace and Christian values. The hill, Jasna Gora, became the Cenacle for the whole world on that day dedicated to the feast of the Assumption 1991.

Here is the mission that the Holy Father entrusted to the youth from 80 nations: "Mary shows you the way: it is Jesus Christ .. It is a steep and difficult way, but for those who know how to walk along it, with the Gospel as a standard for one's life, it is a way that takes one to real joy. Don't be happy with mediocrity, don't let the modern trends condition your lives, don't yield to the flattery of consumerism. Christ is calling you to participate in great things - don't let Him down!"

The Pope gave lit candles to the young people from six continents, so that on their way home, they would take the fire of the Holy Spirit with them. For the Holy Spirit is a fire that burns up all human misery, every egoism, every mean thought: "Take this fire to all corners of the world. Jasna Gora has been your Cenacle, a new Pentecost - the young Church, the missionary Church, once again united with Mary ... You are the young blood of the Church, who lend themselves to face the new millenium. Be the Church of tomorrow, our new hope."

The Pope recalled, "the fall of an ideology in the Eastern bloc countries has left a feeling of emptiness in many; the impression of having been deceived; and a depressing anxiety for what the future may hold." Concerning the West, the Pope said: "Most of the young people can see no reason for living, and drug-taking is a sign of this bewilderment. The lack of interest in politics betrays that sense of powerlessness in many - powerlessness in the fight for what is good." He gave them the following task: "You are sent as messengers to these brothers and sisters - messengers of the Good News that saves. Through your joyful testimony they will meet Jesus Christ and they will learn that they too are sons of God, and they will thus discover the real sense of life. In fact, what is wrong with them is that they are starving, starving for the meanings in life; and Jesus Christ is the Truth that frees us."

He then adds: "Your mission then, my young people, is to ensure that the world of tomorrow contains values such as complete religious freedom; respect for personal development; protection of the right to live, starting from the moment of conception; promotion of the family; exploitation of the diversities that exist in the different cultures for reciprocal enrichment, and

safeguarding of the ecological equilibrium which is at serious risk." In renewing the vows of Baptism and Confirmation, he said: "Receive the Holy Spirit! Clothe yourselves with the strength that emanates from Him - become builders of a new world..."

With a beautiful prayer at the end of the Mass, the Pope entrusts the youth to Mary: "... We want to pray with You for those who are looking for Your Son's way, and also for those who do not know and do not want to know about our meeting; for those who do not know God, who do not know Christ, who do not know You... Give the mystery of life back to love, by means of purity. Through You, purity becomes an answer to the mystery: happy are the pure of heart because they will see God. You know that the thing that corrupts this world the most is impurity: it is from impurity that hate, homicides and war are born..."

Teach us to assume the responsibilities in the Church and in social life ... The modern world in its whole is waiting to be evangelized. Each one of us, in his own way, would like to become a missionary in this task, together with Christ, sanctifier and transformer of this world.

Guide us to Your Son, reconcile us to Him, recommend us to Him, take us back to Him. Amen."

PRAY AND WORK FOR PEACE IN CROATIA

Appeal from Medjugorje to all the peace centres and prayer groups inspired by Medjugorje:

Dear friends! We rejoice with you, because through your centres, prayer groups and communities, Our Lady's messages of peace are spread to the whole world.

It is by now ten years that the messages have been travelling around the world and winning over the hearts of millions of people. People who wish to work for peace and who try to make it a part of their lives and then spread it to the others. We are certain that Our Lady has already put wonderful peace movements into motion in Europe and the whole world. She continually asks us to pray for peace: She asks that our prayer be live, intense, decisive and courageous - a prayer that can change people's hearts, change human relations within families, between people, peoples and nations.

Unfortunately, however, the peace is threatened in many parts of the world. I am sure you are all aware that just recently some regions of Yugoslavia, like Slovenia, Croatia and Kosovo, have become stages for war. Bosnia and Herzegovina also risk being involved, and Medjugorje is part of this region. For some weeks now in the Croatian Republic blood is being spilt, fear is becoming widespread and innocent citizens are being persecuted. Their houses are being destroyed by bombs. More than 100 people have already lost their lives, and more than 1000 have been injured. Tens of thousands have been forced to leave their homes.

We are asking you, dear friends, to be united with us in a more intense prayer for peace for Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and for all those other places where human rights and freedom are being repressed. Even though we firmly believe in the efficiency of prayer and the intercession of the Queen of Peace, we also feel it our duty to look for other means or paths that can help in any way this peaceless situation.

Therefore dear friends, who are devoted to the Queen of Peace, we also ask you to make your voices, your prestige, be heard by your governments and politicians so that all the means in their possession may be used to put a stop to this foolish spilling of blood as soon as possible, and that they help in finding a pacific way out of the institutional and political crisis that has come to divide peoples and sovereign states - whose only desire is to be united to the democratic advancement of Europe and the developed world.

Just talking about peace and negotiations is not enough. Decisive and positive help is needed in stopping blood being spilt, and to ensure peace, freedom and democracy.

We would like to express our gratitude for the help that you will give us through your prayers. We are convinced that you will be even more generous and fervent in helping us with your prayers and support, so that the peace that Our Lady incessantly calls us to here at Medjugorje, may once again be felt by us and the whole world. We greet each one of you and we will remember you all to the Queen of Peace! Medjugorje, August 1991. The priests, visionaries and parishioners of Medjugorje. (Signatures follow.) (Translated from Croatian by Fr. B Hechich.)

Fr. Jozo: To you, leaders of the people, get freedom for these people, defend the country chosen by Mary. Do not be afraid to come here.

Echo too can help Our Lady spread the truth, because it is a small instrument that reaches all corners of the earth... There are some political parties that call themselves Christian, and they do not

want to understand, their politics does not agree with the people... How much time do they need, these people that have the world in their hands, to learn that just like one gives bread to the hungry, one has to give freedom to these 'insignificant' people? They have to protect and fight for the peace and freedom of this little nation. Being free and autonomous is not a privilege for important people - being a large nation with 100 million, or 60 million people like Italy, does not automatically give one the right to be free and the others not because they are too small and insignificant.

I would like all those Christians that come here from all parts of the world, to pray so that the hearts of the big men will open up to the call of a minority group. This war is not only a difficult trial for us, but it should be a reason for the big men to search their consciences, these men who were unable to protect this country chosen by Our Lady.

From Medjugorje, I beg you: console this land that is suffering - parents that have lost their children, families without homes, without bread, people who are escaping from their own homes (there are already 20,000 Croatian refugees in Istria - Ed.). Destruction and misery have taken hold of our country.

On the 10th anniversary (25 June), Our Lady said: "I want to give you many graces." There were so many people, like never before, and Satan became very angry and placed the thoughts of war in the hearts of men and your governments told the people to come back home. Medjugorje was abandoned by everyone in an instant. (Immediately after the meeting at Czestochowa, the devil in his anger stirred up the fire in Russia.) Help this nation that was chosen by Our Lady. Do not be afraid to come here. Our Lady did not say to run away, but to fight together with the Rosary. There is no war here - here there is only peace.

(Fr. Jozo - 1 August 1991)

The world will not see peace if it does not turn away from sin.

Peace and war, both on the 10th anniversary. On the 25th June, Slovenia and Croatia proclaimed independence, and the day after the war began. The same things can be found in men's hearts... and the same situation is found all over the world - the world will not know peace if it does not convert to God. Even if we can resolve political problems, other problems will crop up... I would like to stress the importance of the call to offer oneself totally to God, to live totally for God, so that we can take this Light to the hearts of men, because the real problems rise from there. The conversion of men's hearts to God is the only way that will lead to peace. We must be brave in announcing this message.

Like we can see here in Medjugorje, the presence of Our Lady is of no importance if the people do not respond and convert. In the same way, Our Lady in the Church, or in the world, is of no importance either, without a real conversion. The only thing that humanity can and should lean upon is God. If all mankind converts, God would give us His peace, otherwise these trials will continue. Those who will be on the road to God will be purified, but those who will not be on the road to God will be in big trouble. We see that all these problems and trials are signs for us to be more courageous. Like the Gospel says: "when you see these things, lift your head because the times are near." Be happy to meet the Lord, be happy for all those things that the Lord has prepared...

(Fr. Tomislav Vlastic' - 30 July 1991)

THE SOLUTION TO THE CROATIAN TRAGEDY

is contained in the messages of the Queen of Peace Mary's intervention in the Russian events

For some time now we have all been concerned about the tragic situation in Croatia. The problems are age-old problems, so entangled that a way out doesn't seem humanly possible. They rise from the fact that Croats live together with large minority groups of aggressive Serbs living in Croatian territory. These Serbs are backed up by their motherland (Serbia), who would like to place Croatia under Serbian rule.

The use of weapons to oppose the oppressors who are by far superior, and who do not want to hear reason, would end up in a massacre. The use of weapons is not the solution proposed by Our Lady. **The solution can only be found in God**, and it must be obtained from Him. "He hears the cry of the humble and He saves them." Israel, oppressed by enemies, called on the Lord, the priests and the people did penance and God freed them from their enemies. **The real liberation, however, is this: be able to live together with true love.** The Christians, therefore, should have to continually show their love towards their enemies - or as the Bible says: heap red-hot coals on their heads.

So we have two possibilities: either close one's heart to the

messages of the Blessed Mother and accept all the inevitable, negative consequences, or **open one's heart to God's way** and tempt new ways, both in social and political terms. It means being courageous and going beyond that simple human reasoning and trusting the messages of She Who knows the hearts of men. The entire international community, of course, would have to contribute. People have tried, but the sinful structures that make up our society and that look at the other nations as opposing powers or nations to conquer, instead of brothers of the same family, impede man from understanding the other's problems. The logic of this society is based on equality of power. Even a solution imposed upon them from above would only end up in leaving behind them that age-old hate that cannot find human solutions.

The problem is finding a way to live together, but this cannot be done without man being converted. When the barbarians invaded the country, they were gradually taken up and made civil by the church of the time. Saints were able to stop devastators, like Pope Leo I who persuaded Attila not to attack Rome, like St. Francis who tamed the wolf at Gubbio. The answer to these present aggressors is not in using weapons produced by the world, but in using weapons indicated to us by Our Lady: a complete surrender to God.

Then it is God that does the best part of everything. **God ensnared those Russians that wanted to overthrow the Government** and they ended up digging a grave for themselves and for that monster called Communism after 70 years of terror. **It is not difficult to see the hand of God in these events.** And His plan moves on to stage two: "Russia will convert," and, "in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph."

The turn of events in Russia could play a determining role in making positive moves in Croatia, like in various Russian Republics which are becoming independent. We have to admit that God has the world in His hands. Man makes the moves, but God is the conductor. The only solution then for Yugoslavia, and the rest of the world, is that of the Queen of Peace Who came to teach all of us how to live in peace. Fr.A.

THE COURSE OF MEDJUGORJE IT WAS AN AUGUST OF MANY GRACES For those who had dared.

Those people who had dared to be imprudent, not caring about their flesh, or being scared off by the talk of weapons, were sure to have done the right thing when counting the many graces that were showered upon them. On the other hand there was no warfare near Medjugorje, nor on the Dalmatian coast where many people pass through to go to Medjugorje.

Our Lady had rewarded those who had dared. There's always a risk in loving someone. Some were reminded of the ancient pilgrims who, before going to St. James at Compostella, were obliged to write their will, because of the many dangers involved in such a journey. All those people, however, who had gone to Medjugorje for the various celebrations in the month of August (and who had to make their own way there, as there were no buses going) had declared that they came across no problem whatsoever.

They were rewarded - with **six people being miraculously healed**, and a pouring down of graces. The father confessors and many other people were witnesses to sincere conversions and inner healings felt by a great number of people. Our Lady had thus confirmed Her presence in such a delicate moment. Fr. Jozo said (1 August 1991): "I can testify that Our Lady said on Her anniversary: 'I want to give you many graces.' Above all, however, Our Lady said to the youth present at the festival: 'I wish to bless all of you young people who have come here to fill me with so much joy.'"

At great personal cost, 1300 people attended YOUTH 2000

The eve of the festival was grey and uncertain, but the youth arrived from all over the place, even if in lesser numbers than for last year's festival; and certainly not because they didn't want to attend, but because the various travel agencies had refused to accompany anyone to Yugoslavia. **The power of Mary's call is therefore enhanced even more.**

There were about 200 **English-speaking** youth present, whereas last year they represented the majority. It is to note, however, that the British Foreign Office had advised against visiting Yugoslavia. On the first day of the Festival, the **Italian** language was not among the translations, as there were only about 20 Italians present. However, it quickly became the major language with 200 people arriving from Sardinia and a further 100 arriving from various other parts of Italy, and thus becoming the largest group present. Many other groups who had planned to come, but were then uncertain because of the uneasy situation in Yugoslavia, had opted for Czestochowa only.

There was a group of **200 Hungarians and Romanians** who

stood out for their seriousness and dedication. They prayed and fasted throughout the whole journey. They consisted of novices, seminarians, social workers, students, doctors, nurses and unemployed between the ages of 18 and 30. It was a condition that none were to be married and they had to be aware of the difficulties of the journey. They had borrowed and scraped together enough money to pay for the hire of the coaches only. The Providence saw to the rest. The Yugoslav Tourist Centre allowed them to stay in the campsite. After all, had they not come to Medjugorje to answer our Heavenly Mother's call? **The English organizers of Youth 2000** have paid for most of the expenses - **let's help them!** A bus from Bucharest organized by our translator Anca Dragos tried to enter Yugoslavia at the Serbian frontier twice, but unsuccessfully. One can imagine how disappointed they would have been. There were those of us who had not wanted to eat when they found out, in sympathy with the immense sorrow of their fellow countrymen. We prayed for them: "may twice as much grace be granted to them," and in fact, Anca wrote to tell us how Mary had given them the strength to bear such a grave sacrifice .. with the promise to go as soon as possible. There were only about 100 **Croatians**, which is easily understood, given the state of their country. There were 200 **Germans and 150 French Canadians.**

The day began in the enormous tent with Eucharistic **adoration** guided by Fr. Tomislav - so wonderful in guiding prayer. The chorus was most effective in helping the youth invoke the Lord. Those wonderful songs are still echoing in our ears - such as the interminable invocation to the Holy Spirit "Veni Sancte Spiritus" which stressed the complete opening up of hearts to receive everything from God, because, "without your grace, man has nothing." And then there was "Laudate Dominum," "O Emmanuel," "Dona nobis pacem," "Hosannah."

At 9.00 a.m. the fathers took it in turn to speak to the youth. On Thursday the 1st August, the **meditation** was held by Fr. Ivan Dugandzic' who spoke about Our Lady, Teacher of the Word of God. On Friday, Fr. Slavko prepared the youth for confession. On Saturday, Fr. Jozo spoke about how prayer is new every day, just like the light. On Monday Fr. Tomislav spoke about Mary Who brings us peace. At the end of each meditation, the various linguistic groups got together to greater meditate upon the theme that had been presented.

International Mass was held for all those present in the evenings at 7.00 p.m., and likewise, adoration for the public was held in the evenings at 10.30 p.m. and guided by Fr. Slavko. On Sunday afternoon there was a **song festival** in honour of Our Lady, and presented by various linguistic groups. The chorus was directed by a young Irishman, **Robbie Hurley**, who showed a lot of dedication in his work, without any sign of exhibitionism, and with real devotion. But then again, they did prepare themselves with 3 days of prayer under the guidance of Fr. Tomislav. There was someone in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament 24 hours a day. A roster was organized for the many volunteers who were serious and showed great fervour in fulfilling their "duty." Some, who had also attended last year's festival, made the following observation: that last year's festival which had been conducted by one father only, was perhaps of greater help in that there was more practical experience and this helped in finding one's particular walk in life. Not, of course, that one could doubt the authority and inspired words of the wonderful fathers at Medjugorje. It is Our Lady that works in our hearts, after all. And She also shows us, with experience, what is best, and that we cannot use God's charisms as we wish. A.M.

What a wonderful night on Krizevac'

The highlight of those days during the festival, so full of grace, was **Our Lady's birthday**. On the 5th August She appeared on Krizevac'. Ivan told how She was very, very happy, and that She remained for a long time with Her hands extended out over all of us. She said that we must pray with joy: "My dear children, I am happy and I want you to be happy with me." She thanked the many people who had climbed the mountain - there really were so many. All the time that Our Lady was present (about seven minutes), there was an absolute silence. Then She left, saying: "Remain in God's peace, my dear children."

Many remained the whole night and prayed and sang. Some slept in sleeping bags, all around the Cross at the top of the mountain. At about 3.30 a.m. many groups of both parishioners and pilgrims starting climbing the mountain. They prayed the rosary on the way up with Fr. Petar. Then at 5.00 a.m. Fr. Slavko arrived with the other priests. By then there was an immense crowd of people on top of Krizevac'. **Holy Mass** started at about 6.30 a.m., at sunrise. Fr. Tomislav said in his homily how, like the sun, we have emerged from the darkness of sin to become filled with the light of God. "You are here in front of the Cross, but a Cross which lacks Jesus. Jesus, however, is in the Eucharist to make the Cross and

the Resurrection be active in us. In the hardest of moments let us not forget that Jesus is with us and He transforms our sacrifices and sorrows into joy and Resurrection. Let us not lose the hope that helps, saves and takes us to heaven." The homily was said in Croatian, and then translated into the various languages, including Hungarian. **Three very large bread forms** were then presented to the altar. One of them was presented by a disabled person who had been carried up the mountain on someone else's back. In eating the bread, we would have symbolically shared in the sufferances of all mankind. Fr. Leonard concluded by thanking all those present: "You came to the oasis of peace, while our country is at war. If peace can multiply in people's hearts, then there will be peace for the nations. Help us with your prayers."

(Josko Perkovic')

A SECRET: enter Her Immaculate Heart and consecrate ourselves to Our Blessed mother, to adore God.

Here is a summary of the prayer meeting guided by Fr. Tomislav (First Saturday - 3 August) "(...) In Her apparitions, Mary expressed Her desire that our consecration to Her be a continuous one; and She gave us a formula for the consecration. She would like us to be in Her Heart - the only fertile place on this earth for the Word of God. Many mystics of our time say that it will be impossible to live outside Her Immaculate Heart. My experience is also this: that it is impossible to live outside Mary's Immaculate Heart. I wish to give you spiritual wisdom: enter the Immaculate Heart and listen to the Word of God in us.

When the prayer group met, Our Lady asked for at least 15 - 20 minutes to stay with Her in Her Heart. Then She would ask us to spend the day with Her and in Her. In the prayer that I will say shortly, we will try to surrender our souls to Our Lady, to surrender our hearts, our bodies. Now sit down and be comfortable so that you will not be distracted - it is important to be comfortable. The Bible stresses the importance of sitting down in front of the Lord.

Oh Mary, I surrender up unto You, my nervous system, my brain and all my thoughts that will enter my spirit. I want my thoughts to disappear, so that the thoughts of the Holy Spirit may enter my spirit. I consecrate my eyes to You. I want Your goodness in my eyes, Your love. I consecrate my ears to You, I want them to be open only to the Holy Spirit to listen to God they way You listened to Him. I consecrate my mouth to You so that it will pronounce only the Word of the Lord; my face so that it will become the splendour of God's Glory... my arms, my hands so that they will do only what God wants... my feet so that they will walk on the path to God. I consecrate to You also my breath that I can feel within me. Concentrate on this breath and feel it within you. This breath is embracing me and it enters into what I call the mystery of my life. I want Your consecration to completely penetrate me. I will stay in silence with this desire. (Silence for a while, then a song: Ave Maria.)

You are full of Grace, the Lord is with You, and You are within me. The fruit of Your womb within me is blessed. I want You to be in my heart. (Ave Maria) Holy Mother of God, inside of me, You are giving birth to God. Inside of me, You live only for Jesus. Pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Pray for me, always, because I am weak and a sinner. Pray for me also when I am lost. I put everything I have in Your heart. Don't abandon me, not even when I want to run away from You (Ave Maria). Lord God, send Your Holy Spirit down upon me, make me faithful to the prayer of this morning. May Your Spirit guide me, always forward. May He be the spirit of my soul, like it is for the Virgin Mary. (Let's all sing: O Adoramus Te ...)

Monday 5 August: (...) You are worthy of every praise, of our adoration. You created me and everything I have is a gift from You. You came to the earth only for me, You went on the Cross to save me, You gave Your life to be able to give it to me. You transformed Yourself in bread to fill me. When I open myself up to You, I open myself up to life, I receive life. That is why my heart is happy, because I am able to see this. (O Adoramus Te ...). You need me, and I recognize You as You are, so that You may give me what You are. I do not ask for anything: I only need to adore You and I have everything... (O Adoramus Te...) Call me today to adore You together with Mary, so that I may be close to You. You are the master of all situations. I recognize You as Lord and Master for all mankind. I want to adore You for all mankind, because I am carrying the whole world within me. Give me the grace that I may love the whole world with Your Love, so that You will have the whole world in me.

I beg You, my Lord, may all the rays of the sun that kiss the men be Your praise and bring Your praise to the world; that all the drops of water that fall and the winds that blow be Your praise and carry the blessings of all men. Make it so that I may hear You everywhere I go, adore You, love you, thank you, Lord, everywhere I go. (O Adoramus Te...) Now let's get up and sing a song that is appropriate to what we have been saying: Gloria in excelsis Deo.

**HEALINGS: SIGNS FROM HEAVEN -
a sign of encouragement to those on the straight and
narrow path**

Just like in the Gospel, the healings of our present day are signs that continue to manifest the power of Jesus "who came to heal all those who are under the power of Satan." (Acts 10.) They are a sign of encouragement to the disciples on the narrow path that Jesus Himself followed; and the same path that Mary proposes to us again - a path that heaven seems to approve with these continuous signs.

A birthday present: Rosetta walks!

"My name is Rosetta Trogu. I'm 40 years old and married to Antonio Cabras. I come from Capoterra (Cagliari, in Sardinia). We have 2 children: Cecilia who is about to get married, and Franco. I have been suffering from rheumatoid arthritis for 17 years. My knees have been stiff for the last 4 and only with immense pain am I able to bend them. I cannot do any work as at home I have to stay in a horizontal position all day long." That's how Rosetta described herself to her fellow travellers from Cagliari and guided by Fr. Pietro (Peter) Villasanta, parish priest at S.Tarcisio Pirri.

On the 5th August, after only one hour that Rosetta had been healed, we went to visit her at the boarding house where she was staying. This is what she said: "I was lying down in my room and my friend Gabriella was with me. We were chatting about various things and Gabriella said to me: "I'm sure that Our Lady will heal you," and she said it in such a convincing way. Then I sat up on the bed and she started massaging me, but because it was hurting me she said to me: "Try not to think about it. Imagine that it is Our Lady doing it to you and stay relaxed." Half an hour later she said: "That's enough for now. We'll do more tomorrow. Now get up and walk."

And I got up from the bed. I started walking. "Gabriella," I said, "I can bend my knees! I can bend my knees!" We hugged each other and cried out of immense joy. I knew that before then, the pain was terrible whenever I tried to move my stiff legs. This morning I went into the chapel where the apparitions took place to place a gold chain around Our Lady's neck. I was helped to climb up onto a chair, and clinging onto Our Lady I said: "Oh My Lady, heal me." Then at lunch time we all wished Our Lady a happy birthday."

A priest from Milan, together with a group of young people who had just finished doing spiritual exercises, were the first to enter Rosetta's room. Their impression of Rosetta was that of a humble person, someone unable to deceive others. They saw simplicity and wonder in her. And we saw the same things in Rosetta, who was surrounded by her friends and fellow travellers - simple people, old fashioned, but spiritually joyful. Before we left they sang the long Ave Maria, Sardinian style, for us.

"What does your husband think?" She replies: "He was the one who wanted me to come in the first place, while I was very uncertain about coming here. He said to me: "I would like to see you healed; and then I will believe too that Our Lady does miracles." I had been to many hospitals, in Bologna, Turin, Rome and others, but no-one could help me... Another girl from Sardinia, Alessandra, 14 years old, came here about a month ago. She was partially paralyzed but returned home without her crutches. (We have no other details - Ed.) I have been coming here for 3 years and I wasn't sure about coming this time, but Antonio told me to come, "otherwise you'll be nervous all year long." So I came. I telephoned him to tell him I had been healed. He was astounded." At the end of the evening Mass, Rosetta was asked to go to the altar to give thanks to God before the entire assembly.

The next evening, a **missionary priest from Zaire**, Fr. John Beaudery, 77 years old, was asked to give thanks to God and Mary before the assembly. During the apparition of the 6th August, he recovered his sight and his hearing. He would have gone to hospital after his return from Medjugorje to undergo an operation on his eyes, and he even threw away his hearing aid since he didn't need it any more!
A.M.

Susan doesn't need her wheelchair anymore.

It happened after the 10th-anniversary apparition. Twenty-two years old, American, Susan Whitmore from Connecticut arrived in Medjugorje in a wheelchair. Now she can leave Medjugorje on her own two feet and happily tells her story:

"The doctors discovered the inflammation of my brain when I was 18 years old. I had encephalitis. The terrible pains impeded me from walking, and I found it very difficult to understand what was happening around me. I couldn't express what I meant and I was very confused. When I started off on this journey I wasn't feeling at

all well and I also found the political situation of Yugoslavia to be very tense.

On Monday the 1st July we went to Tihalijna to meet Fr. Jozo Zovko. When he blessed us, I felt a shocking, unsoportable pain in my head and I was also certain that Fr. Jozo could feel it too. Then I was suddenly invaded by a warmth .. a peace .. a joy ... The day after, because of the pains I was feeling, I couldn't go to Tihalijna, but I received a blessing by Fr. Jozo anyway in the church at Medjugorje... Once again I could feel that strange warmth while I was praying the Rosary. Then I went back to my room in my wheelchair - I was extremely tired.

On Wednesday the 3rd July, we returned to Tihalijna. I was feeling stronger, but I still had difficulty in talking. Fr. Jozo laid his hands over me - I was shaking, unsteady, and my heart felt like it was going to jump out of my chest. Then, all of a sudden, I felt well. I have no more headaches. Without any help I was able to climb the hill of apparitions."

On the return journey Susan's wheelchair went lost, and the travel agency lent her another one "just in case," but it did not have any tyres on the wheels. It was therefore useless. Susan prayed to Our Lady: "It's up to You to take me back home, because we haven't got any tyres." Susan went home on her own two feet - completely healed. (From "Vecernjl List" - evening edition 13 July 1991)

Rosetta and Susan after being healed.

Our Blessed Mother gave us Her consolation also for the feast of Her glorious **Assumption**. On the eve of the feast day, a **Dutch nun** who works in Africa and who suffers a grave form of asthma and carries a pacemaker in her heart, had wanted at all costs to come to Medjugorje. Her superior mother gave her permission even though she was against it, saying that she would have only come to Medjugorje to die. In fact, the nun could walk with only great difficulty. After the Mass, she started walking, and has stopped taking all medicines. Now she can eat, sleep and work like everyone else.

A man gave testimony to having been healed - he in fact had been suffering terrible pains for years, and now they have gone. Both have promised to send us the documents to testify to their healings.

NEWS FROM MEDJUGORJE: Many people present for the feast of the **Assumption** (15 August). The recital of the Rosary on the hill had been organized for the 12th, 13th and 14th August as preparation for the feast day. Many participated.

New posts for Medjugorje priests: The decisions were made by their superiors, and they began their new positions on the 19th August. Fr. Leonard Orec' becomes parish priest at Citluk, while Fr. Ivan Landeka (the tall one with a moustache) became the superior father at Medjugorje. Fr. Jozo leaves Tihalijna and goes to Siroki Brieg, about 30 km away from Medj, where the biggest Marian sanctuary of Herzegovina is found. Fr. Dobroslav goes to Zagabria. Fr. Slavko and Fr. Petar remain in Medjugorje.

Apparition to Ivanka on 25 June: it lasted 7 minutes and among other things, Our Lady spoke to her about the sixth secret, explaining the first part. We know that Our Lady has spoken a lot to Ivanka in the past about the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through Ivanka, Our Lady has asked more fervent prayer.

We wish a quick recovery to Vicka, who underwent an operation after the anniversary. Vicka always says that she is well, and that the only thing that displeases her is that she cannot receive the pilgrims.

LATEST NEWS: Fr. Slavko announced the message from Fulda in Germany where he was taking part in a meeting with 4000 people. The day before he was in London for a prayer meeting with 5000 people. After a number of meetings planned for Stuttgart, he will take part in a meeting for priests in Austria. Cardinal Ratzinger will also be present.

Mr. ANDREOTTI, Italian Premier, visits MEDJ.

Mr. Giulio Andreotti, Democratic Christian and President of the Italian Cabinet and top personality in the EEC, had wished to visit Medjugorje before going to Dubrovnik where he was to meet with

heads of state of Yugoslavia's neighbouring countries.

On the 26th July, the military aircraft landed at Mostar. From here Mr. Andreotti went to Medjugorje and remained for about two hours. Despite the fact that it was meant to be a private visit he was met by Premiers of the republic Bosnia and Herzegovina and the President of Croatia, Mr. Franjo Tudjman, sent his counsellor, Mr. Bozdar Petrac for the occasion.

Mr. Andreotti prayed as they do in Medjugorje Upon his arrival he met with Fr. Jozo, the visionaries Marija and Ivan and father superior Leonard Orec'. After, he went to the church where there were already numerous people praying. Everyone sang the Medjugorje hymn while Mr. Andreotti, on his knees before the Tabernacle, remained in silent prayer. Then, together with Marija, Ivan and Fr. Leonard Orec', he went into the small chapel to the right of the altar where the apparitions used to take place. Marija explained to him what the meaning of the message regarding prayer was and he asked them to pray the Creed and the seven times Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory with him. Once they left the church, Mr. Andreotti asked to be able to pray in private for a while and he was thus accompanied to the Chapel of Adoration where there were already numerous other people praying before the Blessed Sacrament.

In the Presbytery, Fr. Leonard told the distinguished guest the story related to the sanctuary of the Queen of Peace and Mr. Andreotti was then asked to leave a declaration for the Croatian population. He replied: "I believe that the major aim in any and all political aid by Italians and the European Community should be in helping the people of Yugoslavia find peace and reciprocal esteem; and in respecting the desires of each single republic. The most important means in doing this is prayer. That is why I have come to Medjugorje, and as a Catholic, I am convinced that the help of God is particularly needed in finding inner peace."

He was asked, "What does Medjugorje mean to you?" "I know many Italians who have been coming to Medjugorje for years and I must say that the spiritual good that these people have been bringing home is certainly of great significance for the whole world. This has to be a divine sign." (From "Glas Koncila", 4 August 1991 - Translation and summary by Fr. Josko Perkovic')

Mr Andreotti with Fr. Jozo and Ivan in the background.

ABOUT THE VISIONARIES **People talk about them, some are worried about them,** **and some criticize them. Let's set things straight.**

The six nice children from Medjugorje have grown up. At the time of the first apparition, they were aged between 11 and 17; now they are all ten years older. They were poor and unknown, persecuted by the police and looked upon with suspicion by ecclesiastical authorities. Things have now changed a great deal. The first two visionaries, Ivanka and Mirjana, are both married, to the disappointment of some. The others are all more or less spoken about, except for Vicka, who always manages to keep control over any situation with her disarming smile.

In no. 84 of Echo, René Laurentin pointed out the risks that these children are running into. They are now protagonists, they are photographed, and asked after as if they were stars. They are invited to go abroad, put up in the best hotels and weighed down with gifts. Once poor and unknown, they are now the centre of attention. They have admirers and there are those who have fallen in love with them. Jakov left his humble post in the parish shop because an agency offered him a job for three times as much money. Are they being tempted by the easy life, so different from the austere messages of the Blessed Virgin? We must be very careful to distinguish that which is of general interest, from that which regards personal problems.

1. Right from the beginning Our Lady said that She had chosen those six children because that's what She wanted, and not because they were better than the others. The apparitions and the public messages, if authentic, are charisms freely granted by God, for the good of all mankind. They do not depend on the holiness or non of the

people chosen to receive them. The Scriptures tell us that God can make use also of ... a donkey (Nb 22.30)

2. In the early years when Fr. Tomislav used to guide the young visionaries with a stern hand, he was often heard saying: "the children are just like all other children, they have their faults and are subject to sinning. They have put their trust in me and I try my best to guide them." It was possible to see them crying, at different times, during the apparitions - and they would confess that Our Lady had reprimanded them.

It would be silly of us to pretend that they become saints all of a sudden and it would be misleading to think that they could live for ten years under continuous spiritual tension without their moments of relaxation and amusement. It would also be terribly wrong to expect them to enter a convent, like St. Bernadette. First of all, a person has to sanctify oneself in whichever state of life one may be in. And after all, everyone is free to choose.

The five children who saw Our Lady at Beauraing (Belgium, 1933) are all married, to the disappointment of the fellow townspeople. The lives of Melania and Massimino, the two children who saw Our Lady at La Salette in France (1846), was certainly not led in the best of ways - Massimino died as an alcoholic. The life of a visionary is certainly not easy.

3. Personal sanctification is a problem that regards the individual, since the Lord granted us the gift of freedom. We are all called to holiness, and if we think that the visionaries of Medjugorje are not holy enough, then let's start wondering about ourselves. Of course, the more gifts one receives, the more responsibility one has. I repeat, however, that charisms are granted for the others, not for the individual, and it doesn't mean that just because someone has received charisms that they are saints. The Gospel tells us that even miracle workers may go to hell: "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name .. ?" But Jesus will reply, "Away from me you evil men." (Mt 7.22-23) This is a personal problem.

4. What we are interested in, however, is another problem: if the visionaries should fall out, would this influence the final judgement of the Medjugorje events? It must be very clear that I am talking about something hypothetical, because, thanks to God, none of the visionaries have yet fallen out. Well, in such a case, the judgement could not change, because any future behaviour cannot cancel the charismatic experiences of the past. The children were studied and tested like never before for any other apparition. It has been seen that they are sincere and that science cannot explain what happens to them during an apparition. This cannot be cancelled anymore.

5. The apparitions have been continuing for ten years. Do all of them have the same value? No. Even if the ecclesiastical authorities declared themselves to be favourable of Medjugorje, they would still be the problem of discerning the messages. There is no doubt that the first messages (the most significant and characteristic ones) are of much greater importance than the subsequent ones. Perhaps I can explain what I mean with an example: the ecclesiastical authorities had declared the six apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima in 1917 as being authentic. When Our Lady appeared to Lucy in Pontevedra (1925 - to ask for the devotion to Her Immaculate Heart and the practice of the 5 first Saturdays) and in Tuy (1929 - to ask for the consecration of Russia) the authorities accepted the contents of these apparitions, but they did not say anything about the apparitions themselves. Just like how they have not said anything about the many other apparitions had by Lucy, and that are certainly of a lesser importance with respect to those of 1917.

6. To conclude, we must understand the risks that the visionaries of Medjugorje run. Let us pray for them, so that they may always overcome the various difficulties and that they may always have a sure guide. In fact, when they were left without one, they seemed a little lost. Don't expect the impossible from them. Yes, we can expect that they become saints, but not according to our schemes. And let us always remember, that before we should worry about other peoples' sanctity, we should worry about our own.

Fr. Gabriel Amorth

Msgr. Franic' ON THE BISHOPS' DECLARATION

If the Pope can openly manifest his personal and favourable thoughts on the apparitions, then every good Christian can do the same.

In the 22.07.91 issue of Split's daily, "Slobodna Dalmacija," (which means free Dalmatia) there was an article by Msgr. Frane Franic', archbishop emeritus of Split. Msgr. Franic' was one of the most authoritative theologians of the Vatican Council, and he is still the president of the Theological Commission of the Yugoslav Episcopal Conference (JEC). The JEC has so far made two declarations regarding the Medjugorje events. The first time (12 Oct 84) the JEC declared that "official" pilgrimages to Medjugorje were not permitted. The second time (10 March 91) at Zara, the JEC said that, based on official research work done to date, the visions and

private revelations of Medjugorje could not be affirmed as being of supernatural origin. It goes without saying that in both cases, various interpretations appeared in the papers. On one part the sense of the declarations was broadened somewhat, whilst on the other, the writers tried to explain the declarations in their literal sense.

Private, if not public, consent. The Pope's personal opinion.

With regards to the first declaration, some interpretations said that all pilgrimages were forbidden, whilst others placed the accent on "official," and correctly stated that only the official, but not private, pilgrimages were forbidden.

The second declaration stated that the visions and private revelations at Medjugorje could not be affirmed as being of supernatural origin. It is important here to analyse the significance of the word "affirm" (ustvrditi) if we wish to know what the Bishops meant. Let us remember that the Bishops in this case represent judges and their voice is official. They speak in name of the Church, and in particular of the Church of Yugoslavia. What the Bishops want to tell us is that one cannot affirm "officially," but this doesn't mean that one cannot affirm "privately" that the visions and private revelations at Medjugorje are of supernatural origin; and which is what nearly all the pilgrims that have been to Medjugorje are affirming. To prove what I say, let me point out the following:

a) The JEC unanimously agrees to receive the pilgrims that come to Medjugorje and to ensure that all the Yugoslav bishops will provide liturgical and pastoral assistance, even though they are aware that all the pilgrims believe in the supernaturalness of the events.

b) A statement made in private by Pope John Paul II also backs up this argument. During lunch with the bishops of South Korea (who were on visit in the Vatican - Nov 90), the president of the Episcopal Conference of South Korea said to the Pope that part of the merit for Poland being freed from Communism was his. Pope John Paul II replied: "No, the merit is not mine, but of the Blessed Virgin, in line with Her affirmations at Fatima and Medjugorje..." And when a Korean bishop told the Pope about the statue of Our Lady in Korea that cries, the Pope said: "... and there are some bishops who don't believe, like in Yugoslavia..., but one must also consider the response of the faithful, the numerous conversions .. Everything conforms with the Gospel; all these things must be studied seriously" (From the Korean "Catholic weekly" - 11 Nov 90 -see also Echo 81, page 4) These words were not pronounced by the Pope officially (if they had been, it would be every Catholic's duty to believe), but they reflect a private and personal conviction.

Analysis of the document. Bishops are neutral.

If the Pope then may publicly pronounce his personal and affirmative thoughts regarding the Medjugorje events (and this was not the first time), then every good believer may do the same, with the implication, however, that they are ready to accept the final judgement of the Church. In the same way, for instance, we all say and write that Cardinal Stepinac' is a saint, even though he has not as yet been canonized.

I would like to remind the readers about the telegram sent by the Pope to Cardinal Kuharic', where the Holy Father entrusts the citizens of the beloved Croatian Republic to the intercession of the Queen of Peace (from Glas Koncila - 14 July 91).

This brief analysis undoubtedly shows up a few things:

- The bishops of Yugoslavia are aware of the important role they play regarding the events at Medjugorje. The Holy See has entrusted them with the collegial power of judgement, naturally under the supervision of the Holy See, concerning the supernaturalness of the events at Medjugorje.

- In both declarations, the bishops of the JEC showed a will to be fair - in remaining equally distant from approving and from rejecting the supernaturalness of said events.

- On the contrary, the adversaries of Medjugorje took advantage of both declarations to interpret them as a definite condemnation of the supernaturalness of said events, and especially with regards to the second declaration.

- We are certain that the second campaign will end up like the first one; and that is, that after a while, when the warfare comes to a stop, the number of pilgrims will continue to grow.

Two critical notes: From an objective analysis of the declarations, we can clearly see that they are the result of a compromise between the bishops. In fact, they did not all think the same way. There were some of them who would have wanted to condemn the supernaturalness of Our Lady's messages and prohibit all pilgrimages. The majority of the bishops, however, did not accept this proposal and the declarations were written up in a way that all of them could sign them. The declarations then contain some inaccuracies that can be easily manipulated, and which did unfortunately happen.

The Church has never directly approved private revelations as being authentic, but it has limited itself to examining the authenticity of said revelations, with the use of criteria that can demonstrate the probability of such authenticity. Some of these criteria are: the psychic status of the "visionaries," the religious and

moral growth of the visionaries and pilgrims, consonance of the private revelations with the public revelations contained in the Bible and Apostolic Tradition, ascertainment that there is nothing in the private revelations that contrasts with the universal doctrine of the Church. It is up to the theologians to study these criteria, which is what they are doing for the private revelations in Medj. Many studies of this type have been published in various books and magazines and are available world wide. By the way, the extraordinary healings in Medjugorje are still being studied. There are also many books available that talk about this argument. We are waiting for our theologians to make a declaration about all of these facts.

Our faith in the Queen of Peace. The messages of Medjugorje are now being heard amongst the sound of warfare. One can no longer say that Our Lady has spoken too much and that She has not told us anything new.

We are threatened by a third world war. Our Lady in Fatima used the conditional tense when She said: "if the world does not convert," and we can ask ourselves: has the world really converted since Our Lady appeared at Fatima?

We can say that all over the world, in these last seventy years, there have been numerous conversions and many prayer groups have formed, under inspiration of the messages given by Our Lady at Fatima and Medjugorje. Thanks to these prayer groups there has been a noticeable return to the Church. These facts have also been recognized by Pope John Paul II.

Furthermore, the millions of martyrs that have been killed in the last seventy years because of their faith are reason for hope that God will show His infinite mercy to this sinful humanity and grant us peace. That is why during this most difficult period, our faith in the Queen of Peace Who has appeared in Medjugorje, grows day by day.

The hope that our bishops will follow the example of the Pope also grows. May they also invoke the intercession of the Queen of Peace for their motherland Yugoslavia, tortured and bloodied, and for all the people of Yugoslavia and the rest of the world, because She is the Mother of all men, of all peoples, just as the Vatican Council II says (LG 54.69). (Frane Franic' - translation by Fr. B Hechich)

HE LEAVES BEHIND AN INDUSTRIAL EMPIRE to follow the Queen of Peace Freed through the grace of confession

Hubert Liebherr is the one and only heir to the world famous Liebherr company. I met him by chance at Marienfried (see Echo nos. 57 & 58), where Our Lady has appeared, and even though it is not recognized by the Church it is common to see bishops and prelates presiding over religious ceremonies there.

He was born in 1950 at Memmingen to Catholic parents. He is the sixth-born child - the first five are all sisters. When he was 13 years old he was sent to a boarding school. He was too well off to think of God and he ended up becoming an atheist. He graduated in architectural engineering and started helping his father in the business in Germany and abroad.

In 1981 he had a car accident at a crossing. Both cars were destroyed, but both drivers were unhurt. Only two years later did he realize that there was a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes only 5 metres away from that crossing. An irresistible force drove him into the chapel - that was his first step back to God after so many years. Standing there before Our Lady of Lourdes, he understood that there was a relation between Her and his accident. His mother had spoken to him about Lourdes and Fatima and he subsequently bought a book about the apparitions at Fatima and discovered that the predictions concerning Russia had come true.

He returned to the chapel - had not the Blessed Virgin promised help to those who would confess, communicate and recite the Rosary on the first Saturday of 5 consecutive months? Hubert's business was in big trouble and to ask Our Lady's help he promised to do those 5 Saturdays in that chapel. At the time he didn't even remember how to recite the Lord's Prayer, but Mary helped him. He then decided to go to Fatima for the 70th anniversary. He returned to the chapel to ask for a sign, to know whether or not he should go. He got his sign and stayed in Fatima for 3 beautiful days in 1987.

During the voyage a friend talked to him about Medjugorje and he immediately felt very attracted by the place. As soon as he returned from Fatima, he flew to Medjugorje. Liebherr, the millionaire, expected to see miracles, and he felt embarrassed about praying in public, also because there were many Germans. Up on Krizevac he felt very sick and giddy, which was strange because he had always been well, but then he recalled a terrible thing that he had done in a church but had never dared to tell anyone, not even in confession. Outside the church at Medjugorje there were many people confessing, but he was too proud. Then there was a priest who set up his chair outside on the grounds surrounding the church. He put his card in front of him with "Deutsch" written on it. All of a sudden, Liebherr threw himself down on his knees and poured out his past. He felt relieved, as if a great weight had been removed from him. He

discovered the grace received through the sacrament called confession.

He and his friend went to Medjugorje again, and they wondered what to do to spread such a great gift to the others. In 1988, they started up a prayer group and organized meetings with slides and even a pilgrimage to Medjugorje in aeroplane.

His father reminded him about his responsibility in the business and told him that he had to put a stop to all this priest business. Hubert was hurt and went to the chapel to ask Mary what to do. He went to Medjugorje again and during that pilgrimage he realized that he wanted to leave everything behind him and follow God. He went back home. His father argued with him but then let him free. His protestant wife, however, was not happy with his choice. Had he not chosen the way of the Cross? His family even advised him to see a psychiatrist. No-one understood him, but Our Lady was leading him by the hand. Together with his friend, he organized a Medjugorje centre in Germany to spread the messages, and they have prayer meetings once a week. His now-deceased mother was very happy for his conversion. She had prayed so much. There are still some problems in the family, but they are improving. His advice for others in similar situations is to consecrate the family to Our Lady and not to worry as no-one will perish. We must be patient, however. If your sons converted straight away, perhaps you would pray less - Our Lady needs our prayers and sacrifices for many other families.

Mark Waterinckx

The gift of tongues repeats.

An Italian woman, G.H., who has lived for many years in Germany with her German husband, was returning from the hill of apparitions. She was tired, so she sat down to rest in someone's courtyard. A little while later she realized that she was at Marija's house, because of the great crowd that had gathered there. The visionary came out to speak to the crowd of people, remaining to talk for about half an hour.

The woman was happy to hear Marija speaking in Italian, and at the end she offered to translate the substance of what Marija had said to her husband who only spoke German. Her husband, however, did not reply. He looked thoughtful and tired so she did not insist.

Once the pilgrimage had come to an end, they returned to Germany. The wife had brought the subject up again and asked why he had not wanted her to translate for him. The husband, slightly surprised, replied, "But she spoke in German!" His wife thought that perhaps they were thinking of two different moments, but on carefully putting the pieces together, she realized that he really did hear Marija speak German while she was actually speaking Italian. The husband did not find anything strange in the event as he thought the group was a group of Germans.

The gift of tongues had characterized the apostles' first sermon on the day of Pentecost, when people from 15 nations could hear them speaking all in their own language. Saints too were endowed with this gift, and the same gift can be repeated today too. (From the Medjugorje Committee, Bolzano.)

A Croatian priest: "(...) Please send me a copy of Echo. I think that Echo will help me prepare myself for announcing the Gospel of Peace to this country that has been invaded by war, tears and blood.(...) I would like to be an apostle of the peace that Our Lady announces to us at Medjugorje - that the whole world may become one big family belonging to Mother Mary and our celestial Father - that we could finally become "one herd and one Pastor." (Fr J.Penava)

Consecration to Mary's Immaculate Heart, or living in Mary's Imm. Heart is a way of saying that with Her help we wish to protect the consecration of ourselves and all that we have and are to God. Mary is our Mother - Jesus entrusted all humanity to Her from the Cross.

We were consecrated to God with our baptism. With baptism, one renounces Satan, all his works and allurements. The allurements of the devil and today's world, however, are so great that we are unable to remain faithful to God without the help of a superior force. There are even men of the Church that are pious only in their looks (2 Tm 3.5), who don't realize that they are full of idols. They teach the easy way, so that they are popular with the world, and close their eyes to perverse sins such as abortion, adultery, homosexuality so that they will not be unpopular with the world. For they are full of words of the world, instead of words of God.

Mary is thus our help, our shield. She asks us to live with Her, pray with Her, work with Her, so that we will be safeguarded from the lies and deceiving tricks that Satan sets to trap us. (2 Th 2) Nobody can defend themselves in today's world from the slyness of Satan. Only Mary can defend us.

We can consecrate ourselves with any formula (eg. the one Our Lady gave to Jelena or the one by St. Louis De Montfort), as long as it is done with sincerity. Let's place our trust in Her and consecrate ourselves today!

TIME FOR THE SECRETS IS GETTING SHORT

Our Lady asks us for a special novena so that Her plans may be fully realized

Our Lady's message of the 25th August 1991:

"Dear children, Today too, I am inviting you to pray, more now than ever before, since when my plan has started being actuated. Satan is strong and he wants to upset my plans of peace and joy and make you think that my Son is not strong enough in His decisions.

Therefore dear children, I am inviting you to pray and fast more intensely than before. I would like you to offer up some sort of renunciation for the duration of nine days so that with your help everything that I want to realize according to the secrets that began in Fatima, may in fact be realized.

I am asking you dear children to understand the importance of my coming and the seriousness of the situation. I want to save everyone's souls and offer them to God.

Let us pray then, so that everything that I have started may be fully realized. Thank you for having responded to my call."

In this message Our Lady has summarized everything that She has ever said during Her apparitions. At the same time, She also makes it clear that there is a connection between Medjugorje and Fatima and She expressly says that Her projects contained in those secrets are being realized. Here we can easily see the allusions to Russia. This is important because it throws light on our present century.

The presence of Our Lady in the modern day events is quite clear! Those who have faith have not been left in the dark, but can see how Our Lady has heard all our prayers. It is important to understand the secrets of Fatima and to put into practice everything that She asks of us with regards to the secrets.

Our Lady then stresses two things: First - faith, trust in God. Satan is strong and is trying to upset God's plans. How? By weakening our faith and making us believe that he is stronger than Jesus. God's plan will be realized though, even if Satan has been granted much power. Our Lady has warned us that the more time goes on, the stronger Satan will be, as the moment of his total defeat will get closer. (Rv 12.12)

For this period Our Lady asks for our trust and perseverance through prayer and fasts; and in particular She has asked us to offer up some sort of renunciation, together with intense prayer, for the duration of nine days. It is most important that we start this novena and do it seriously. It has clearly been given to us as a concrete means of helping, and without it we would risk being vague after hearing Her words, and deaf and blind, especially with regards to fasting and renouncing. If, on the other hand, we put Our Lady's recommendations into practice, our eyes will open more and more.

The events in Yugoslavia are clearly asking us to take Our Lady's messages seriously, and especially this last message, and especially here where the situation is so grave. I can see Our Lady guiding the ranks of the elected in battle against Satan. It is a spiritual battle, with Her in front line, wanting to save the souls of all Her children, every single one of them, and offer them to the Lord.

Second - Our Lady has told us once again that it is extremely important that we open our hearts to understand the importance of Her coming and the seriousness of the situation. In this way, we will be able to continue advancing while trusting in Her. In yesterday's Gospel (Jn 6.60-70) Jesus points out how it is possible to keep on the path to God only if we have faith - like the apostles who continued to follow Jesus because they believed, whilst many others had abandoned Him.

Those people without faith cannot continue on this path because the further one goes, the darker it becomes. It is only possible to walk along this path when accompanied by faith, not by human logic. Now I would like to ask for the gift of faith for all the pilgrims and for all those who will read these lines.

Oh Lord God, send Your Holy Spirit to fill our hearts that we may look, listen and understand, and put into practice everything that Your Mother has told us. Enlighten all the heads of the Church, and in particular the Holy Father, so that they may understand the presence of Our Lady here in Medjugorje. Bless the bishops of Yugoslavia so that at least now, in such a serious moment, they may understand that Our Lady has appeared and wants to help us.

Oh Lord, grant Your Light to all the heads of state and political parties, and especially in war-stricken zones. Bless all the countries, especially this one which Your Mother has visited. Send Your Spirit to enlighten all the representatives of the Marian sanctuaries all over the world so that they may understand how all Our Lady's messages over the centuries are connected.

Bless all the people who feel the impulses of the Holy Spirit so that they may respond and, together with Our Lady, defeat Satan. And may the Lord Almighty God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, bless the entire world, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. **Fr. Tomislav Vlasic'**

"Pray now, more than ever before, because my plan has begun." What does this phrase mean? Does it refer to the events in Russia?

There are many good signs, but there are also many anguished situations, like Croatia ... I believe that Her projects have begun especially in those people that have prayed a lot. In Medjugorje itself, and in our region, many prayer groups started up after the last message. That is something really beautiful! I also think that this message will give us new incentive, and will give courage to the people to continue praying and believing in prayer...

Our Lady says that Satan wants to upset Her plans for peace and joy... One cannot reach peace and joy without suffering, whether it be on a personal level or national level. Each moment of suffering is long; and thus it is very easy to lose one's trust and courage, both on a personal level and on a social or community level. But this can't happen without Satan's influence, who wants to make us believe that God cannot do anything for us. Now that Our Lady has told us this, I believe that many hearts will be healed from that lack of courage in going ahead... and really believe in peace - first personal peace, then world peace...
(Fr. Slavko)

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A bad habit that we must avoid:

Our French translator and distributor, Colette Evrat writes: "Requests for the French Echo are on the increase (I now send out 15,000 copies). I also receive however, increasing requests to send copies of Echo to third parties, and in particular to priests, religious and bishops - with the writer usually hiding behind anonymity. I am sure that this cannot be pleasing to Our Lady, Who is all wisdom and prudence. She does not force anyone. She is the bearer of peace, not of contrariness."

Dear Colette, thank you for writing to let us know about this bad habit. We have repeatedly requested our readers not to do this (see Echo 59 & 76 in particular). It is more a form of propaganda than testimony, and the Gospel and Our Lady ask us to bear testimony with our lives. Forcing Echo on other people does not respect their freedom, nor does it respect the fact that no-one can go to the Father if it is not He to call them and if it is not their hour. It would also be too easy to convince others just by showing them a piece of paper. Our Blessed Mother asks us to present ourselves, changed, so that the others can see the truth and the effectiveness of the messages in us.

These anonymous people who want to convince others at all costs do not realize that they get the opposite effect. The others will not be convinced, but may end up hardening their hearts to Our Lady's call and will bear prejudices against all Medj.supporters, even those who do not force the messages on others. We repeat that we will not send Echo to third parties, even if we receive donations for the same, and whether the requests are signed or not. We do not know whether the third parties are happy to receive Echo. We will be happy to send extra copies to anyone who makes a request, and then they may personally deliver Echo to the people they care about. Fr.A.

We are happy to announce the birth of **Maria**. Her parents, Ornella and Mario Sfriso are the printers of Echo. Born after ten years of marriage, the many doctors and specialists had told them that it was impossible for them to have children. She is Mary's gift to the family that spread Her messages to the whole world through Echo. Once again we recommend to the Lord our helpers, Fr. Robert Cona of Verona who continues to work and suffer for the glory of Mary, and Sr. Margaret, whose complete recovery has been entrusted to Our Lady as an important sign for Echo.

Infinite thanks to all those who help and support us through their prayers, collaboration and donations. Echo is growing - and we are still waiting on Our Lady to send us a helper for the parish, to permit us to continue with Echo.

May **Our Lady's blessing**, in the memory of Her nativity and Her Sorrows, descend upon all those who, through reading Echo, will respond to Her most pressing call.