



ECHO OF MARY Queen of peace

170 July-August 2003

Our Lady's message, 25 May 2003:

"Dear Children! Also today I call you to prayer. Renew your personal prayer, and in particular, pray to the Holy Spirit so that He might help you pray with the heart. I intercede for you all, my Children, and I call you all to conversion. If you convert, all those around you will also be renewed and prayer will be a joy for them. Thank you for responding to my call."

OTHERS ARE RENEWED BY OUR CONVERSION

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel (Mk 1:15) is what Jesus proclaimed in Galilee. With the coming of Jesus into the world all is accomplished (Jn 19:30), the salvation long awaited by the chosen people is there, suspended between heaven and earth, within the grasp of all who wish to draw from it by looking up on the One whom they have pierced (Jn 19:37). Reconciliation between God and man, between Creator and creature is no longer a hope but a fact fulfilled in Christ. There is nought else to wait for; all has been accomplished. All that lacks is our readiness to enter into the kingdom prepared for us (Mt 25:34). The gate is Jesus Himself: I am the gate; anyone who enters through me will be safe (Jn 10:9). The gate is narrow and the road that leads to it is hard; but it leads to life" (Mt. 7:14). Beyond Jesus there is no salvation, no life.

Mary leads us down this path; her call is one to conversion. The journey of conversion is

one of adhesion to God in Christ, which means to conform to the Son Jesus. This journey can't be closed up in time or in a system of codes, or rules, or ethical or religious standards. This journey is scanned by life, sustained by the Sacraments and in particular by confession which is also known as the sacrament of conversion and is the first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1423 & 1989). Let us renew our personal prayer - as Mary invites us to do - and let us pray to the Holy Spirit that He might help us pray with the heart. Personal prayer is essential, for it expresses our personal relationship with God. Thus, it must be real, alive, sincere, and profound, so that our relationship with Him might also be alive and salvific. It should be a channel which takes our filial sentiments to God, and allows His vital lymph to reach us (Jn 15:4-5). We must pray with the heart, Mary says so often, but this isn't easy, and so on the eve of Pentecost, Mary urges us to ask for the help of the Holy Spirit. Mary intercedes for us all, so if we accept her call we can be certain that she will obtain the grace of prayer with the heart from the Holy Spirit.

If you convert, all those around you will also be renewed - but we must witness with our life, not with words. If Jesus is alive in us, His presence is felt by those who come into contact with us; His Love reaches out to them in a way that is much more real and effective than lots of inspiring talks on God. When the Lord is in us He makes us new, but He doesn't just renew us, for He also renews all those around us. And this is a good thing to keep in mind when we are concerned about the Christian formation of our children, or when we're teaching or evangelizing, and in every moment of the day so that our witness is authentic and not scandalous. If others are renewed, prayer will be a joy for them. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you (Jn 15:11-12). No one should think that he is excluded from this joy. There is no suffering, no difficulty, no blame that can exclude anyone from possessing the Lord's joy. Only our own free will to refuse it can exclude us. Brothers and sisters, acknowledge your regality and enter into the Kingdom prepared for you! Peace and joy in Jesus and Mary.

Nuccio Quattrocchi

Our Lady's message, 25 June 2003:

Dear Children, with great joy I call you also today to live my messages. I am with you and I thank you for putting into practice the things I tell you. I invite you to live my messages even more, with renewed enthusiasm and joy. May prayer be a part of your everyday life. Thank you for responding to my call.

LIVE MY MESSAGES

"With great joy I call you to live my messages," says Mary. But what is the essence of the messages She gives at Medjugorje? Our Blessed Mother came to teach us to surrender to God, and that the way to Him runs along tracks called prayer and fasting. Though the way is clearly traced out, it is accomplished as we journey along it step after step. On our part we have to be ready to respond freely and with responsibility. Surrender to God is the way of holiness, and only the Holy Spirit can help us undertake this journey. Hence, Mary's gratitude: "I am with you and I thank you for putting into practice the things I tell you", not only moves us, but fills us with joy. The journey is much harder than what we think; and though we aren't always satisfied, and don't really know how far we've advanced, Mary praises us today. Do we need anything else?! Surrender is also letting oneself be carried by the Holy Spirit, without stopping to take accounts or to compare oneself with others. Don't we learn this from the parable of the vineyard labourers? (Mt 20:1-16)

So surrender to God, and rest in Him with complete and unconditioned trust. You will experience, day after day, how sweet the Lord's yoke is and how light your burden is when you let Him carry it with you (Mt 11:28-30). Surrender and come to know the Love of God; taste how sweet it is and you will discover that the solace to be found in Him is much more than finding the solution to a problem or two. In the Lord we are given to drink the water which quenches every thirst (Jn 4:14).

Surrender to God is accepting His will, acknowledging that His will coincides with His mercy and that in Him we'll find our peace if we set out to find it. Thy will be done, O Father, on earth as it is in heaven. The fruit of surrender is the indwelling of the Spirit. When He is in us, He prays, witnesses and acts for us. Our part is to say with Mary (Lk 1:38) and with Jesus (Lk 22:42), Here I am and Fiat. But for our response to be ever more modelled on the response of Jesus and Mary we need to advance along the way of prayer and fasting. This is what Mary has asked of us so many times. Prayer is a living contact with God; it is remaining in His presence and living in communion with Him, as the Apostles and first disciples did, as our Pope does, as the Saints of every day and age have done and continue to do. Praying formulas isn't sufficient, nor is lifting our thoughts to God, if we are not in communion with the Church, and not in God's grace. May prayer be a part of your everyday life, Mary urges. How then could our everyday life not include Holy Mass?

Fasting is a sober life-style: sobriety in our eating habits, language, judgements, and in whatever we consume. Fasting is abstaining from abuse and oppressive ways, from abuse of power and dishonesty, and from the contemplation of self. Fasting is to thirst for justice; to unburden our hearts of all that blocks the Light. Fasting is to loose the bonds of wickedness, to share your bread with the hungry, to shelter the homeless poor, to clothe the naked (Is 58:6-7). So let's live out Mary's messages, and witness to them with our lives, with renewed enthusiasm and joy. Mary can already see the fruits, but if we look

carefully we too will see the signs of Mary's work that She is doing in and through us. Yes, Father: wholly Thine, in Jesus and Mary! N.Q.

IN THE YEAR OF THE ROSARY: POPE WOJTYLA'S "JEWELS"

He could have celebrated his incredible 25 years of Pontificate with a solemn document, a synthesis of his teachings, or an encyclical on important social themes or problems which assail today's world. Instead, the Holy Father opened up his heart to us, and we can't but admire its wealth of profound Eucharistic piety, devotion to Our Lady, and his poetic and contemplative soul. It's not easy for us Latins to comprehend the Pope's poetic mind, given the difference in culture, but on the other hand, it is easier for us to understand his Eucharistic and Marian spirituality. Pope Wojtyla is endowed with a solid formation; he's one of those "timeless" priests with a strong Christological sense attached to his life as priest and pastor; and who also has deep respect for the mystery of Jesus as priest and victim, and for his bond with the Blessed Virgin Mary, his Mother and Coredemptrix. In the Encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, the Pope recalls the Holy Mass he celebrated in the Upper Room at Jerusalem during the Jubilee Year and he tells of his amazement before the "Mystery of the faith" - which is the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection. But it is also the mystery of the Church, the life of which depends on the Eucharist. Hence, we could call it the "Eucharistic Mystery" through which the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ is renewed. This is the amazement the Pope would like to communicate to all believers, as a concrete form of contemplation of Christ's face mentioned in the conclusive document of the Jubilee. That is to say: contemplation of Christ's face in company with Mary and through the eyes of Mary. This is what JP II teaches by proposing the recitation of the Rosary to all, and by proclaiming the "Year of the Rosary." The Pope also recalls his Eucharistic celebrations as a young priest in Poland, and as the Pontiff at St. Peter's. He also recalls those celebrated up in the mountains, in the sport stadiums and in city squares, saying that no matter where he has celebrated he has always had the feeling that he has celebrated at the "world's altar" with a sense of "universal," even "cosmic" involvement.

"The Eucharist unites heaven and earth. It embraces and permeates all creation. The Son of God became man in order to restore all creation, in one supreme act of praise, to the One who made it from nothing. He, the Eternal High Priest who by the blood of his Cross entered the eternal sanctuary, thus gives back to the Creator and Father all creation redeemed. He does so through the priestly ministry of the Church, to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity. Truly this is the *mysterium fidei* which is accomplished in the Eucharist: the world which came forth from the hands of God the Creator now returns to him redeemed by Christ." (EdE, 8) Our hope is that the Pope's words might cause a renewed "attentive consideration" for the Eucharistic Mystery in the hearts of all, but particularly of priests, just as the Encyclical *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* has kindled renewed love for the Virgin Mary and for the recitation of the Holy Rosary. To read this document is to enter into the

heart of the Holy Father, and into his way of praying. It's almost an open window onto his personal relationship with Jesus and His sweet Mother. Rather than give us a list of reflections, the Pope seems concerned with recommending the recitation of the Holy Rosary, and he does it in a way that a loving father would explain to the most perplexed of his children the reason for this concern. That is, Mary doesn't take away Jesus' place, the Rosary is very much a Christological prayer, besides being a Marian one, and it doesn't hinder the Liturgy, but completes it.

We see this clearly in the original and creative approach of the Pope. With the new Mysteries of Light, the Rosary is no longer a prayer of "popular piety" looked down upon by some, but has become the mystical prayer of the "poor" who, through the Rosary, journey lovingly to Jesus and Mary and are united to them. If the liturgical reform of Vatican Council II met with a lot of resistance, no one, on the other hand, has protested over the reform of the Rosary. The Pope has urged many others - pastors and the faithful alike - to take it and revitalize and enrich this prayer which is at everybody's reach. The result has been many publications on the Rosary which go to say that the words of this man of God and beloved son of the Blessed Virgin are indeed heeded, particularly by the little people, and that these words bear fruit within their hearts. It may be hard following behind this great man in his flight towards the Sun, but it's easy enough to follow him when he's teaching on the prayer of the humble. Thank you Holy Father!

Fr. Nicolino Mori

AT THE SCHOOL OF MARY, "WOMAN OF THE EUCHARIST"

The chapter which John Paul II dedicates to Our Lady in his Encyclical on the Eucharist is so wonderful and so true that we feel obliged to publish it in its whole for the benefit of those who won't have the chance to read this document. The gaze of Mary, "Woman of the Eucharist," invites us to take her as our model, and to become "living Eucharists" so we can be united to the Lord Jesus as His Mother was. Our lives will then entirely become "a Magnificat". "If we wish to rediscover in all its richness the profound relationship between the Church and the Eucharist, we cannot neglect Mary, Mother and model of the Church. In my Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae, I pointed to the Blessed Virgin Mary as our teacher in contemplating Christ's face, and among the mysteries of light I included the institution of the Eucharist. Mary can guide us towards this most holy sacrament, because she herself has a profound relationship with it. At first glance, the Gospel is silent on this subject. The account of the institution of the Eucharist on the night of Holy Thursday makes no mention of Mary. Yet we know that she was present among the Apostles who prayed "with one accord" (Acts 1:14) in the first community which gathered after the Ascension in expectation of Pentecost.

Certainly Mary must have been present at the Eucharistic celebrations of the first generation of Christians, who were devoted to "the breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42). But in

addition to her sharing in the Eucharistic banquet, an indirect picture of Mary's relationship with the Eucharist can be had, beginning with her interior disposition. Mary is a "woman of the Eucharist" in her whole life. The Church, which looks to Mary as a model, is also called to imitate her in her relationship with this most holy mystery. *Mysterium fidei!* If the Eucharist is a mystery of faith which so greatly transcends our understanding as to call for sheer abandonment to the word of God, then there can be no one like Mary to act as our support and guide in acquiring this disposition. In repeating what Christ did at the Last Supper in obedience to his command: "Do this in memory of me!", we also accept Mary's invitation to obey him without hesitation: "Do whatever he tells you" (Jn 2:5). With the same maternal concern which she showed at the wedding feast of Cana, Mary seems to say to us: "Do not waver; trust in the words of my Son. If he was able to change water into wine, he can also turn bread and wine into his body and blood, and through this mystery bestow on believers the living memorial of his passover, thus becoming the 'bread of life'".

In a certain sense Mary lived her Eucharistic faith even before the institution of the Eucharist, by the very fact that she offered her virginal womb for the Incarnation of God's Word. The Eucharist, while commemorating the passion and resurrection, is also in continuity with the incarnation. At the Annunciation Mary conceived the Son of God in the physical reality of his body and blood, thus anticipating within herself what to some degree happens sacramentally in every believer who receives, under the signs of bread and wine, the Lord's body and blood. As a result, there is a profound analogy between the Fiat which Mary said in reply to the angel, and the Amen which every believer says when receiving the body of the Lord. Mary was asked to believe that the One whom she conceived "through the Holy Spirit" was "the Son of God" (Lk :30-35). In continuity with the Virgin's faith, in the Eucharistic mystery we are asked to believe that the same Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary, becomes present in his full humanity and divinity under the signs of bread and wine. "Blessed is she who believed" (Lk 1:45). Mary also anticipated, in the mystery of the incarnation, the Church's Eucharistic faith. When, at the Visitation, she bore in her womb the Word made flesh, she became in some way a "tabernacle" - the first "tabernacle" in history - in which the Son of God, still invisible to our human gaze, allowed himself to be adored by Elizabeth, radiating his light as it were through the eyes and the voice of Mary. And is not the enraptured gaze of Mary as she contemplated the face of the newborn Christ and cradled him in her arms that unparalleled model of love which should inspire us every time we receive Eucharistic communion? Mary, throughout her life at Christ's side and not only on Calvary, made her own the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist. When she brought the child Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem "to present him to the Lord" (Lk 2:22), she heard the aged Simeon announce that the child would be a "sign of contradiction" and that a sword would also pierce her own heart (cf. Lk 2:34-35). The tragedy of her Son's crucifixion was thus foretold, and in some sense Mary's Stabat Mater at the foot of the Cross was foreshadowed. In her daily preparation for Calvary, Mary experienced a kind of "anticipated Eucharist" - one might say a "spiritual communion" - of desire and of oblation, which would culminate in her union with her Son in his passion, and then find expression after Easter by her partaking in

the Eucharist which the Apostles celebrated as the memorial of that passion. What must Mary have felt as she heard from the mouth of Peter, John, James and the other Apostles the words spoken at the Last Supper: "This is my body which is given for you" (Lk 22:19)? The body given up for us and made present under sacramental signs was the same body which she had conceived in her womb! For Mary, receiving the Eucharist must have somehow meant welcoming once more into her womb that heart which had beat in unison with hers and reliving what she had experienced at the foot of the Cross. "Do this in remembrance of me" (Lk 22:19). In the "memorial" of Calvary all that Christ accomplished by his passion and his death is present. Consequently all that Christ did with regard to his Mother for our sake is also present. To her he gave the beloved disciple and, in him, each of us: "Behold, your Son!". To each of us he also says: "Behold your mother!" (cf. Jn 19: 26-27).

Experiencing the memorial of Christ's death in the Eucharist also means continually receiving this gift. It means accepting - like John - the one who is given to us anew as our Mother. It also means taking on a commitment to be conformed to Christ, putting ourselves at the school of his Mother and allowing her to accompany us. Mary is present, with the Church and as the Mother of the Church, at each of our celebrations of the Eucharist. If the Church and the Eucharist are inseparably united, the same ought to be said of Mary and the Eucharist. This is one reason why, since ancient times, the commemoration of Mary has always been part of the Eucharistic celebrations of the Churches of East and West. In the Eucharist the Church is completely united to Christ and his sacrifice, and makes her own the spirit of Mary. This truth can be understood more deeply by re-reading the Magnificat in a Eucharistic key. The Eucharist, like the Canticle of Mary, is first and foremost praise and thanksgiving. When Mary exclaims: "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour", she already bears Jesus in her womb. She praises God "through" Jesus, but she also praises him "in" Jesus and "with" Jesus. This is itself the true "Eucharistic attitude". At the same time Mary recalls the wonders worked by God in salvation history in fulfilment of the promise once made to the fathers (cf. Lk 1:55), and proclaims the wonder that surpasses them all, the redemptive incarnation. Lastly, the Magnificat reflects the eschatological tension of the Eucharist. Every time the Son of God comes again to us in the "poverty" of the sacramental signs of bread and wine, the seeds of that new history wherein the mighty are "put down from their thrones" and "those of low degree are exalted" (cf. Lk 1:52), take root in the world. Mary sings of the "new heavens" and the "new earth" which find in the Eucharist their anticipation and in some sense their programme and plan. The Magnificat expresses Mary's spirituality, and there is nothing greater than this spirituality for helping us to experience the mystery of the Eucharist. The Eucharist has been given to us so that our life, like that of Mary, may become completely a Magnificat!" (53-58) John Paul II

NEW LIGHTS IN NATIONS DARKENED BY ATHEISM:

Ukraine: Rosary helped us

If one should want to erect a monument in Ukraine dedicated to those who saved the Christian faith during the bloody Communist persecution, it would have to be one of "an old woman with Rosary beads in her hands," wrote Bishop M. Trofimiak. He also said: "I can't imagine my mother without her beads; or the faithful of that terribly difficult time without the Rosary. Indeed I can't imagine how the rebirth of our Church in Ukraine could have come about without the Rosary."

These days not just old women recite the Rosary, for a whole generation of the "children of the martyrs" has understood the value of the Rosary. Precisely in Ukraine the power of the Rosary has become tangible. Sr. Emilia Vandyc writes: The "Hail Marys" transformed the gulags into "monasteries" of prayer; and Fr. Zenovij Koltun, who survived the persecution, affirms: "The Rosary recited together was the wellspring for our spiritual life. I always had on me a simple piece of string with knots - that no one could recognize and report - wherever I went: at home, at work and about. My brother, with just a pencil or pen made Rosary beads out of paper."

Albania: Daughter of Resurrection

John Paul II has indissolubly tied Albania to the truth of the Resurrection. For this reason, on the 25th April ten years ago, he chose the Sunday after Easter for his historical pilgrimage during which he ordained new Bishops to succeed those who had been killed during the persecution.

Afghanistan: Eucharist has returned

Kabul - For the first time after nearly 10 years a Mass has been celebrated at the Italian Embassy recently re-opened in Kabul. Catholic soldiers from the Italian, French and British contingencies, foreign journalists and staff from the Italian and French Embassies participated in the liturgy held last 27 January in the gardens of the Embassy.

Pope: missionaries in love with God

The Pope has said that "new evangelizers" should be "people who are experts and are in love with God." He recalled the teachings of Paul VI to stress that "the world demands evangelizers who will speak to them of a God whom they can recognize, who is familiar to them, as if they could see the Invisible."

... BUT SOME DARK AREAS STILL PERSIST:

Kazakhstan: Alexis II's harsh reaction

The Orthodox Patriarch of Moscow reacted harshly to the decision to raise to the rank of

diocese the two apostolic administrations of Kazakhstan, saying that he considered it as taking the ecumenical dialogue with the Church of Russia a step backwards. The Patriarch says that the measure taken by the Vatican is unacceptable, since the Patriarch considers Kazakhstan as part of his canonical territory. He sees it as "another serious blow to the relationship between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches." Top authorities in the Russian Church accuse the Vatican of making the decision "without previously consulting the Orthodox hierarchy."

(From various press agencies)

ST AGNES OF PRAGUE, FROM QUEEN TO A POOR LITTLE LAMB

In an era marked by the desire to dominate; when ambition and thirst for power and money, and man's egoism and narcissism is so great that he is destroying his own world, we welcome this breath of fresh air which comes from the story of a saint who abased herself so she could serve others. Her merit is highly increased by the fact that she was a noble woman and would have otherwise enjoyed a life of comfort and wealth. When someone from the so-called upper class prefers poverty and humble service it comes to confirm that vocations are a calling from God, and that He grants such souls the necessary grace to renounce to self and follow the One who "puts down princes from their thrones and exalts the lowly" (Lk 1:52). A look at the life of this Franciscan saint, Agnes of Prague (1211-1282), gives us clearer insight into the secrets of a heart that strips itself of regality to become a bride of the King of the Universe and be robed in poor cloth. To the eyes of God, though, these robes are precious because they are woven with virtue, prayer, sacrifice and love. Through the writings of another saint, who was also of noble blood, we get to know a little about Agnes. This other saint is Clare of Assisi who had the joy of welcoming this Bohemian princess into her community, and for whom Clare nurtured special love and esteem.

"To Agnes, most venerable lady and sister in Christ, deserving of love before all other mortals, blood-sister of the illustrious king of Bohemia, but now sister and spouse of the most high King of the heavens, Clare, most humble and unworthy handmaid of Christ and servant of the Poor Ladies, sends her prayer for the joys of salvation in him who is the Author of Salvation and for everything better that can be desired." It is with these words so full of love, respect and friendship that St. Clare of Assisi wrote to St. Agnes of Prague, abbess of the monastery she herself founded in the capital of Bohemia. Agnes was the daughter of the king in a time when marriages amongst nobility were arranged. Agnes, too, was promised to the son of a duke of Poland when she was only three years old, but he died soon after. Of course, this engagement was annulled. Then the young princess was sent to Vienna because of a new engagement arranged by her father and to further her education. However, in the meantime she came to know of Francis of Assisi who had been preaching and proposing a life after that of the "poor and crucified Christ." Agnes' life in the Austrian castle was a convergence of two different styles which contrasted a great

deal: the worldliness of the court and her daily dedication to Holy Mass and prayer, almsgiving and her visits to the poor and sick.

On this subject St. Clare wrote to Agnes: "As I hear of the fame of Your holy conduct and irreproachable life, which is known not only to me but to the entire world, I greatly rejoice and exult in the Lord. I am not alone in rejoicing at such great news, but [I am joined by] all who serve and seek to serve Jesus Christ. For, though You, more than others, could have enjoyed the magnificence and honour and dignity of the world, and could have been married to the illustrious Caesar with splendour befitting You and His Excellency, You have rejected all these things and have chosen with Your whole heart and soul a life of holy poverty and destitution. Thus You took a spouse of a nobler lineage, Who will keep Your virginity ever unspotted and unsullied, the Lord Jesus Christ." After the second marriage had been annulled for political reasons, Agnes returned to Prague to submit herself once again to her father's will. After yet another proposal of marriage - this time by the Roman Emperor - Agnes wrote to the Pope to tell him of her desire to be consecrated to the only true Spouse, Jesus Christ. The Pontiff agreed to help and protect her so that neither kings nor emperors would be offended by her refusal.

She was 21 when she first crossed the threshold of the Poor Clare monastery where she lived a life of austerity, dense with prayer and love for the poor and the suffering. It was these virtues which eventually united her to her Spouse. In the fourth letter to Agnes, Clare wrote to her "princess sister": "But now, as I write to your love, I rejoice and exult for you in the joy of the Spirit, spouse of Christ, because .. you have been in an astonishing way espoused to the immaculate Lamb, who, having assumed responsibility for all the vanities of this world, takes away the sins of the world." There couldn't have been more appropriate words by Mother Clare, for Agnes' entire life was one of docility and obedience, like that of a lamb - of the Lamb who had offered His own life.

The strength of the Sacrificial Lamb which she felt within herself, and her desire to offer herself for the sake of others was more powerful than the world of politics and wealth. It was this strength that enabled her (whilst never leaving the monastery) to stop a war that was threatening her country, caused by deep dissension between two kings - her father and her brother. She asked them to come to her and with the peace and meekness of a lamb she managed to reconcile them. The Sacrificial Lamb was in her, starting from her very name which in Latin (Agnus) means lamb. St. Clare knew of these virtues and she wrote to encourage and support her: "The vision of him is the splendour of everlasting glory, The radiance of everlasting light, and a mirror without tarnish. Look into this mirror every day, O queen, spouse of Jesus Christ. Continually examine your face in it. Moreover, in this mirror shine blessed poverty, holy humility, and charity beyond words, as you will be able, with God's grace, to contemplate throughout the entire mirror. One thing is necessary: to belong solely to Him to whom you have offered yourself as a holy and pleasing sacrifice."

Stefania Consoli

NEWS FROM THE BLESSED LAND: ON THE VIGIL OF THE ANNIVERSARY

The sun had just set behind the rocky hills and many were already making their way up the top of Podbrdo: slowly and silently climbing upwards, careful not to get in each other's way. It was the vigil of a great feast day in Medjugorje. Yes, because the 25th June is an important date for all those who believe in the coming of the Queen of Peace amidst her children. Already early in the morning of the 24th several hundred pilgrims were making their way to the place in Podbrdo where the group of children first saw Our Lady holding baby Jesus in her arms precisely 22 years previously. The 24th is the day the Church celebrates John the Baptist, the forerunner. And as the forerunner, he precedes and announces great arrivals. So also at Medjugorje God wanted to entrust this task of announcing the great event of our Blessed Mother's arrival into a world so needy of peace precisely to John the Baptist, for it was the 24th when Mary first appeared. However, Our Lady herself asked that the celebration of the Anniversary be held on the 25th, almost as though to confirm Scripture: "I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare the way before you" (Lk 7:27). Some were going up on their own, others in groups, and in various languages the Hail Marys rose to God from hearts full of hope, expectation and trepidation. There were pilgrims here from all over the world to celebrate their Mother and to experience, in turn, Mary's warm embrace which she lovingly grants to those who surrender themselves to Her.

Our Lady embraces our hearts, our wounds, our sufferings, our joys and our concerns. She embraces us in our entirety because we belong to her, for she received us from her own Son at the foot of the Cross. Since then, she has never missed an appointment with us, we, her children in need of tenderness and redemption. In contemplative silence on the place of the Apparition one almost had the impression of Our Lady's presence; as if the hill were Our Lady's womb heavy with Child, and she were ready to generate Jesus for those willing to accept Him. How often do we arrive at Medjugorje overloaded with requests, and plans, and intentions? Yet, this is not how Mary would like us to be. She knows what we need; and all we truly need is her Jesus, who is fullness, salvation and infinite wisdom. Truly, He knows how to re-order our lives according to the Father's loving plan. I so desired crying out to everyone on that hot morning of June: empty yourselves of your burdens and your worries; leave aside your prayers even though they might be good. Simply open your hearts to Mary, enter into her Heart where you will find the life of God and you will receive abundantly from Him. And all the rest will be given you." S.C.

PEACE MARCH:

On the eve of the 22nd anniversary of Our Lady's apparitions, the 11th edition of the Peace March was held. Starting from the Franciscan convent of Humac, about 3,000

pilgrims walked to Medjugorje. The Peace March first began thanks to pilgrims and friends of Medjugorje when the country's civil war was at its worst (1992). Though the war is well and truly over, in her messages Mary reminds us that we have "wars in our hearts". This 13 km peace march is a response to the restlessness, violence and hatred in the world, and a sign of encouragement towards peace and reconciliation. The March was led by Fr. Ljubo Kurtovic.

CELEBRATING IN THE PARISH:

Over the last 22 years the messages of peace by Our Lady have spread to the world thanks to the pilgrims, thereby making the world the parish of Medjugorje. This was indeed confirmed by the presence of the more than 80,000 faithful who were in Medjugorje for the anniversary. It would be practically impossible to publish the list of nations represented; however, there were representatives from all five continents. Exceptionally numerous were the local pilgrims, many of whom arrived on foot.

The linguistic groups were so many that Holy Mass was celebrated on the mornings of the 24th and 25th in 16 different languages. The Anniversary Mass on the evening was celebrated by Fr. Miro Sego with 180 priests concelebrating, and 35,000 faithful attending.

IVANKA'S ANNUAL APPARITION:

As promised, Our Lady appeared to the visionary, Ivanka Ivankovic, on the anniversary date. Ivanka was at home for the occasion with her husband and three children. Mary gave her the following message: "Dear Children, do not fear, I am always with you. Open your hearts that love and peace might enter them. Pray for peace, for peace, for peace." Our Lady was joyous and spoke at length to Ivanka about Her life.

FR. LJUDEVIT RUPCIC DIES ON DAY OF ANNIVERSARY:

He was committed to Our Lady and to Medjugorje with his whole heart and soul, writing books and articles about the apparitions. From the very beginning, as a priest and a professor, he observed intensely all that was happening at Medjugorje. He had defended the Mother of God's presence in the land of Herzegovina so courageously and so well, that God honoured him by calling him on the day of the Anniversary: an eloquent gesture on God's part. Professor of Theology, he had been imprisoned several times under the Communist regime of former Yugoslavia. He also translated the New Testament from the original Greek into Croatian. We of the Echo have also quoted from some of his writings and we shall continue to do so because of his strong and convincing defence of Medjugorje.

(from: the Press Bulletin)

VISITED BY OUR LADY OF THE MAGNIFICAT

"Why is this granted me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" With these words St. Elizabeth greeted the young Mary who was expecting Jesus and had gone to visit her aging relative. But perhaps she also meant: "Why is it granted me that the Full of Grace - the Bearer of Grace - should come to my home and share this Grace with me?" Words of old, but also new; for we too are visited by the Virgin of Nazareth at Medjugorje each day. Thus, thanks to the privilege of welcoming Her and accepting the gifts that She brings to us, we too can pronounce Elizabeth's same words.

"This is a time of grace." Mary says to us over and over again in her messages. And perhaps she also wants to say to us: - This is a time in which I bring you the living Jesus; He is the dispenser of all graces. Accept Him; accept me, just as Elizabeth did in her time. If you do, a song of praise to magnify the Lord will spring forth from your hearts because you will have seen the "great things" that He does in your lives (cf. Lk 1:49), such as all the times He "has shown strength from his arm" to lift you up when you fall, and how He has "filled you with good things" each time you have thirsted for love, justice, truth, equality. of how He has defended your rights, "putting down the mighty from their thrones," and of how He has seen in you "the lowliness of His servants." So how can we not perceive these words that Mary whispers to our heart each time we open them up to Her in prayer and remain in attentive silence! How could we not exult for the new life which enters us when we accept Mary into our lives each day with all its apparently insignificant things made rich by our intimate and confident relationship with our Blessed Mother!

In Mary, God "sees the lowliness" of those who have become "His servants"; that is to say those children of hers who are ready to serve and to offer their lives to God for the world's salvation. As such, we too attract the gaze of the Almighty, and He is moved by the sight of us trying to dominate our pride and to overcome the narrow confines of our egoism so that we can serve our brethren. Those who meet us will be moved to say "happy are you who believed in the fulfilment of the Lord's words" (cf. Lk 1:45) and have been filled by Grace for the benefit of us all, and: thank you because you didn't keep it for yourselves but you donated it so that also our lives might become a magnificat!

Stefania Consoli

WHY DOES OUR LADY COME TO US?

On the 22nd anniversary of the Queen of Peace's presence amongst us in Medjugorje I

think it important that we ask ourselves the reason for this lengthy permanence of Hers. Understanding this will help us understand the journey she is asking us to undertake. Mary is Mother, and her teaching methods are motherly. In the early years of the apparitions people were terribly curious and especially sought external miracles, but Mary herself warned us against this attitude which only distracts us from the profound spiritual journey she desires for us.

I think the scope of Mary's apparitions in Medjugorje is to help us place God at the centre of our lives, i.e. to convert to Him. If we understand this, we will discover that Medjugorje is above all a journey that leads to God; a journey which we are being called to experience within our hearts and souls. The sole scope of the Parish of Medjugorje, of the apparitions, and of the visionaries is to help us enter into a relationship of friendship with our Lord Jesus, which grows thanks to the Sacraments and the Church. One of the greatest difficulties I encounter when I present Medjugorje to priests is that many of them fear that this experience might become "parallel" to the Church. But nothing could be more wrong. In fact, Mary's messages invite us to become active members of our Parishes (message 31 Oct. 1985), for it is only in the Christian Community that we find the Eucharist, and the Council teaches us that it is "fount and apex" both for the Church and for our personal spiritual journey. If we try to journey along the path indicated by Mary, instead of speaking lots about Medjugorje, and if we witness to it with our lives, many of the problems involved with the acceptance of this phenomena would disappear. Fruits are a more efficacious witness than words, and Mary desires that we be living witnesses of her presence (message 20 Sept. 1985).

Even if 22 years have passed, the risk of dispersion still lurks round the corner; but God teaches us through the daily events of Medjugorje which have changed a great deal since the beginning. For example, these days Our Lady appears to the visionaries in their homes, and pilgrims are rarely present for this. Many are displeased about this, but I believe that it is part of a precise plan by Mary who desires teaching us that all of us must accept her in our heart, rather than see her with our eyes. The visionary Vicka said that if we open our heart at the moment of the apparition Our Lady will come to us in a special way wherever we happen to be (not just at Medjugorje). All we need do is accept her into our heart.

Prayer is thus becoming the fundamental experience of the pilgrims to Medjugorje, which is what Our Lady desires. Why? Only if each pilgrim makes a profound encounter with God, through his prayer guided by Mary, can his life - in all its day-to-day aspects - become a true witness to the presence of the Queen of Peace. Thus, over the years our Blessed Mother has led us to live her messages in our hearts with greater depth, and She continues to urge us to seek her presence in our normal, everyday lives. For if she lives within our hearts she will be able to use us as her instruments and she will lead us ever closer to God. This way also the Church will be able to accept in full the grace of Mary's presence, and will thus be renewed in God's love.

Manuel Reato

PRAYER GROUP is Birthplace of TRINITARIAN LIFE

We continue the publication of FR. TOMISLAV's testimony on the formation of a prayer group, according to the suggestions Our Lady gave to Jelena Vasilj and Marijana Vasilj (not related) for the benefit of the group which She herself guided at Medjugorje.

(Part 2)

THE PARISH CHURCH

When on Krizevac a person's soul experiences a sense of weightlessness; it blossoms and flies upwards. The experience of offering oneself together with Jesus is the same experience of lifting oneself up to the Father and of entering into a living relationship with Him. This opens one's horizons in all directions, leaving the soul free to breathe (to breathe in faith, hope and love), and leaving it free to experience resurrection. It is precisely what the disciples experienced when they, with the Blessed Virgin, started on their way to the Upper Room. It was here that the Holy Spirit descended upon them (Acts 2), making of them the first Christian community. This happens for each of us.

In the Church the Holy Spirit leads us to fullness. "I still have many things to say to you, but they would be too much for you now. But when the Spirit of truth comes he will lead you to the complete truth, since he will not be speaking as from himself but will say only what he has learnt; and he will tell you of the things to come. He will glorify me, since all he tells you will be taken from what is mine. Everything the Father has is mine; that is why I said: All he tells you will be taken from what is mine." (Jn 16:12-15)

In the Church, Christians take part in the Trinitarian life; they live in communion, they listen to the Word of God; they participate in the sacraments to become a redeemed people. "Dear Children, God desires making you holy; He therefore calls you, through me, to total surrender. May Holy Mass be life for you! Try to understand that the Church is the house of God; it is the place where I call you out of desire to show you the way which leads to God. Come and pray! Don't observe the others, and don't criticize them. Instead, may your life be a witness to the way of holiness. Churches are places worthy of respect; they are consecrated because God, Who became man, abides in them day and night.

Therefore, my Children, believe, and pray to the Father to give you greater faith, and then ask for what you need. I am with you and I rejoice for your conversion. I protect you with my motherly mantle. Thank you for responding to my call!" It is right that the faithful, after offering the sacrifice of praise, should continue to journey onwards, ever certain of and surrendered to God's graciousness. (Mt 6:24-34)

VORTEX OF GOD'S LIFE

Once out of the church the faithful bless God; and with Him they bless everything and everyone. They go back home, and back to their daily lives, but their inner journey of faith continues to advance towards God. Life in God can never be stagnant, for it is a part of the perpetual motion belonging to creation, redemption and sanctification, which is the work of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. All those who desire undertaking a journey of prayer become part of this motion. But when a person, or group, or a movement stops, it comes to a standstill, it gets weighed down, and loses its fecundity. This brings death to a soul even if the person continues in the practice of religious rites and devotions.

To go back home means also to depart for one's mission. "Dear Children, I invite you to complete surrender to God. Pray, my Children, that Satan may not sway you about like branches in the wind. Be steadfast in God. I desire that through you the world might come to know the God of joy. Witness with your lives to the divine joy. Don't be anxious or worried; God will help you and He will show you the way. I desire that you love everyone with my love - both bad people and good people. It is the only way for love to reign in the world" (message: 25 May 1988).

Those who journey on the way of prayer need to depart again and again. Our Lady expresses this concept extremely well in the same message of 25 May 1988: "Dear Children, you are mine. I love you, and I desire that you surrender yourselves to me so that I can lead you to God. Pray constantly so that Satan is unable to take advantage of you. Pray, that you might understand that you are mine. I bless you with the blessing of joy. Thank you for responding to my call!"

SECOND PRAYER SCHEME

This scheme is drawn up according to the experience of the prayer group led by Jelena and Marijana. Both experienced inner locutions, through which Mary spoke to the group and showed them how to journey to God, and how to be open to the Holy Spirit. In the end, Jesus spoke too; and all came to its conclusion in his relationship with His Father. This scheme is identical to the one above. The difference is that here we indicate the concrete elements of the faith journey experienced by the group during the prayer meetings. The fundamental element that unites the two schemes is Mary Immaculate. With her motherly love and her openness to the Holy Spirit, She leads souls to Jesus so they can be raised to the Father.

The basic elements of this prayer group's experience (elements which Our Lady presented to the two young locutionists) are those which make up the Eucharistic celebration (the rite itself, its redeeming aspect, and its impact on a soul which attends daily Mass). Hence, we could call the faith journey undertaken by the group the "living Eucharist" given that it refers constantly to the celebration of the Eucharist which is the wellspring, the summit and the cardinal point of all spiritual movements.

DECIDE

It is important that prior to joining a group, or to forming a group, one should make a

decision. Decide what? There is need to decide for a life which is full, mature and integral - that can be attained only in God. Therefore, one has to decide to become holy, otherwise it is not possible that a person could attain the fullness of life. All Christians are called to this fullness of life (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, by John Paul II).

Without this fundamental decision, it is inevitable that the group (or community) should become nothing else but a gathering of people, a format; for when decision is lacking the state of belonging (to a group or to the Church) is distorted, and this impairs progress. Jelena Vasilj refers that Our Lady wanted those who joined the group to be willing to follow a journey that leads to God, and be willing to entrust themselves entirely to Her Immaculate Heart. Our Lady gave them a month to pray and reflect on Her request. Afterwards, She did not form the group immediately, but limited Herself to indicating the essential things required by a Christian to advance along his faith journey. These essential things are prayer, fasting, confession, Holy Mass and fraternity. In particular, Our Lady stressed the universal love of God (Lk 6, 12-38). A look at two brief messages helps us understand what Our Lady meant when She spoke of leading the group through prayer. The first is: "Prayer is conversation with God. In your every prayer you should hear God's voice. You cannot live without prayer. Prayer is life" (message of 30 Sept. 1984). The second is: "Prayer is necessary for you because afterwards things are clearer to you. To pray means to know what happiness is. Prayer is necessary to help you learn how to cry; how to blossom" (message of 22.11.84).

In another message Our Lady explains the dynamics involved in praying, and what it means for those who pray, and for God, for Our Lady, and for the Saints. Lack of decision and lack of participation and of dynamic fidelity in one's faith journey which leads to God makes His love vain, or puts limits on it. But when one's response is full it is united to God's love and this allows God to develop His plans for that person. In a message Our Lady said: "Have you ever stolen anything? Perhaps you have. While your conscience torments you, you multiply your justifications and you tell yourself: 'No. No, I don't want to acknowledge it.' How your sins burn within you! How bold your sins are! When a man kills another man, he burns within that sin, but he doesn't want to humble himself.

In the same manner I burn with love. I burn entirely with love. But no one wants it, no one, no one. I am inflamed completely by this love, but no one wants it. So it burns within me because no one wants it. I suffer because not even you want it. My burning will not cease till you convert. I will burn till you understand that I am your Mother. I am your Mother and I always will be. I will show you that I truly am." (message of 22 November 1984). I will not mention other messages which belong to the group's faith journey. Christians are given messages and promptings in abundance. The important thing is to continually decide, step after step; to enter into a complete relationship with God, one that involves all the levels of the soul and of one's very existence. On the basis of this decision both individuals and groups are able to advance along the journey towards God and reach their goal.

(to be continued)

I CONTEMPLATE JESUS IN MY SON

By Jelena Vasilj

All mothers anxiously await the moment when they can take their babies into their arms and hold them tight to their hearts. Also for Jelena the time to give birth has been fulfilled, and it is with great intensity that she now lives these first moments of life with the creature entrusted to her by God.

And also this time Jelena has desired sharing her deepest feelings with the readers of Echo, feelings which become prayer when she looks upon her son and sees in him the presence of the "Emmanuel," the "God with us", who becomes a child so He can be taken up into the arms of a woman. With great joy we received the immense gift of our son from the Lord on the 9th May last; he is our little Giovanni Paolo (John Paul). We had no idea what it would be to give birth, how painful it would be or how much joy it would bring. And now that he is born we are both amazed and filled with awe. Aware that mankind has been living this mystery of birth since the world's creation, it makes us feel a part of it and we feel ever more united to the great human family. With trust we therefore accept the task of parenthood. God invites us to co-operate with Him in the creation of a person who will exist forever; of a person whom He loved before us, and whom He bought with the price of His own blood. Therefore he truly belongs to God. We have become the guardians of this little person since his conception, so it is our duty to take care of him and protect him, but never possess him.

This makes me think of Jesus' words: "whoever accepts one of these little ones accepts me." We feel as though we were in the grotto of Bethlehem, wrapped in the silence and solitude of the night, with the child Jesus in our arms and we contemplate his splendour. Pervaded by a sense of gratitude and awe - but not fear - we say: "Thank you Lord, welcome to our home! Your presence brings humanity and spirituality into our lives, especially because You ask us to contemplate You and this impedes us from becoming attached to material concerns, such as keeping the house in perfect order, because you don't even notice. All you care about is being in Papa e Mamma's embrace. Thank you because you blow over all the false images we bear within ourselves: you don't need "professional" parents; all you need is to listen to our voices. Thank you for the inner freedom you grant us: now we don't even have the time to fix up our hair in the mornings, because you are in a hurry to be loved.

Thank you for the humanity you bring to the world: never before had so many people at the supermarket desired talking to me, moved as they are by your presence. Thank you for

the night vigils we have to keep (once spent in prayer) where the presence of God is more easily felt. Thank you for allowing us to carry out our apostolate: in fact the poor that needs taking care of and being changed so many times in a day is you. Thank you Lord Jesus for coming amongst us today in the form of a beautiful baby. The great Dostoevsky wrote that beauty will save the world. All I say is that children can save the world from egoism.

PILGRIM VIRGIN CONTINUES ON HER MISSION

Msgr. Dominique Rey, Bishop of Tolone, was at the Shrine of Cotignac in France on the 1st of May last to bless 158 Pilgrim Virgin statues (108 were 90 cm high, and 50 were 45 cm high). The statues were of the Pilgrim Virgin, "Our Lady of France, Queen of Peace." The statues of Our Lady were then sent on mission to the parishes where vigils of prayer and evangelization around Mary, who leads us to Christ, would be organized in the homes of the families. It is the first time in France that so many statues have been sent out on mission; and it happened with the double protection of Joseph and Mary. This is because the Shrine of Cotignac is one of the rare places in the world where Joseph and Mary have both appeared (within a few decades of each other), and also because the blessing was given on the day of the feast of St. Joseph, at the beginning of the month of Mary and during the year dedicated to the Rosary. The Bishop asked the delegates of each parish to return next year to witness to the fruits of this pilgrimage. What if this magnificent initiative were to be promoted in other dioceses in France and other countries? The "Notre-Dame de France" association is able to supply pilgrim statues free of charge thanks to their many benefactors, and would be happy to hear from other Bishops or priests interested in launching similar initiatives.

Contact: Notre-Dame de France,

48 avenue de Paris, F-91410 Dourdan, France.

Tel. 0033.1.4250.1965; fax 1.4250.6835;
email: olivier@mariedenazareth.com

OUR READERS WRITE:

Monica Rougier, Argentina: Dear Friends, it is with great joy and emotion that I receive

the Echo. I started receiving it after I first visited that blessed land. I'm sorry that I can't contribute with a donation at the moment, but I shall as soon as possible. I have a programme on Radio Santa Maria in the diocese of Zarate Campana which is dedicated to Mary. It's called "El molde de Dios" (God's mould), and your Echo helps me a great deal to spread the message of our Blessed Mother. I also helps in my discernment of her messages. I share the Echo with others in the prayer group. I greet you most affectionately in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Patricia Mattos Gutierrez, La Paz, Bolivia: Greetings all the way from Bolivia! I thank you most sincerely for the service you offer for the good and peace of many. The Echo carries heaven's scent with it; it does us so much good! My mother and friends love reading Echo as well and are very grateful for all the loving details they find in it. We love you as if you were close friends, even if we don't know you. May Our Lady bless you and guide you always.

Sr. Franca Airoidi, Chile: I wish to thank you for all the work, worry and efforts you put into spreading Mary's message. May the Lord and Our Lady bless you.

Hillary Marian Centre, W. Australia: Please accept our donation for the Echo of Medjugorje which we are grateful to receive. May Our Blessed Mother reward you for your wonderful work.

Obinna C. Anah, Nigeria: For two years I have been receiving Echo of Mary, and it has not only helped me but has changed my attitude. Thank you. Thank you also for the first Saturday Mass!

Tilly Vissers, New Zealand: Thank you very much for your wonderful, rich newsletter. It is so enlightening and a blessing comes from reading it.

Agnes Okovi, Uganda: Thanks for the Echo. It has been a great help in my spiritual journey, for in each of them there is always a part for me personally to direct me along the way. This is, I believe, from "my Mother." My heart longs for the Echo.

Giorgio Sernani, Argentina: Thank you for sendng me Echo. It is so dear to me. It gets better all the time. Those who receive it off me appreciate it very much. Ever onwards! towards the triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart!

Merle Taljaard, S. Africa: After an operation on my heart I had a dream in which I gave the Italian edition of Echo to some Italian people. It was with great surprise, then, that I found 2 copies of the Italian Echo in the parcel of English Echo that I regularly receive. I gave them to two of our parishioners who are Italian, and they were so thrilled. Please now send them to me regularly. I thank you for this "bread from heaven." Many

protestants also enjoy reading the Echo as well. God love and keep you.

Lucila Martinez Agudelo, Colombia: Best wishes for your wonderful publication. For me it is a letter of love straight from Our Blessed Mom who gives us the light we need to find the way, so that the plan God the Father Almighty has for each of us might be accomplished, and so that one day we will rejoice in His glory. Conversion knocked on our door one year ago when the first Echo found its way here. We embrace you. May the Lord Jesus continue to illuminate you through the intercession of the Queen of Peace.

Fr. Giuseppe Di Prinzio, sdb, Japan: My sincerest gratitude for the Echo you send me so regularly. It helps me to love Our Lady more, and in the preparation of my sermons. May the Lord and Our Lady bless us.

Fr. Saulius Bytautas, Lithuania: My warmest greetings to all the members of the Echo staff. May the Lord, who is love, bless you and keep you.

Antonella Tagliaro, Italy: I'm writing to ask to be part of the great Echo of Mary family. I came back from Medjugorje 15 days ago and I greatly desire remaining connected to that oasis of peace. I know Echo already, as I sometimes find copies of it. Now that I'm "spiritually grown," I'd like to subscribe to make sure I receive each edition.

Emile Tognizi, Benin, Africa: In the name of my parish, and particularly our young people and catechumens, I wish to thank you for the Echo and for all the good you do through it. We are very happy to receive it. May the Lord bless you and reward you one hundred fold.

Gj. Gurashi, Albania: How can I express my admiration and gratitude for the precious work of the Echo of Mary staff? Not only I, but the many readers of the Albanian edition wish to express their thanks. The messages and news of the blessed land give us hope for a better world. Since 1994 the Echo of Mary has been coming into our homes, and it "speaks" to us in our own language. I have kept nearly all the numbers. Your prestigious publication is read in groups and is shared with those who don't receive it. I hope and pray that the Queen of Peace might protect you with her motherly love and help you in our precious work.

Pope's Silver Jubilee - To show our love to JP II, why not mark the occasion of his silver jubilee on 16th October with Holy Mass being celebrated for his intentions in as many parts of the world as possible?

If possible, log on to www.jp2-jubilee.org to record that your parish has agreed to join in

this public act of love for our wonderful Pope. (Pat Ryan, Surrey)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

We are immensely grateful for all the donations which allow us to continue with the work of publication and distribution of the Echo. Large and small sums of money reach us from around the world. To these readers goes our thanks, and also the thanks of all Mary's little children who are unable to offer financial support. Thank you for being God's Providence. However, God's Providence is also the silent prayer of all those who are unable to help financially, but who spend time to pray that God might bless us with His grace. Prayer is a very valuable coin in God's eyes. A big thank you also to these.

And may God's blessing reach you all through the intercession of Mary Queen of Peace! And may She abide ever in our hearts. The Staff, Echo of Mary May the blessing of the Queen of Peace reach out to your hearts, the hearts of all those you love and all those around you!

The Echo Staff.

2 July 2003

We invite you all to join in our prayers which we offer up to God on the first Saturday of each month for the intentions of all our readers (whether specifically asked, or simply expressed within your hearts). Once a month Fr. Alberto will also celebrate a Holy Mass for the same intentions.

Echo is a free publication. Donations are gratefully accepted; without them we cannot continue to spread the Message to Mary's little children around the world.

Ways of donating:

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