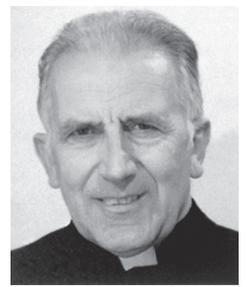




Echo of Medjugorje

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Fr. Angelo Mutti
founder Echo of Medjugorje

Message of 25 September 2012:

"Dear Children, When you look at the wealth of colours in nature, which the Most High has given you, open your heart and pray with gratitude for all the good that you have, and say: 'I've been created for eternity'; and yearn for heavenly things because God loves you with immeasurable love. This is why He also gave me to you, to tell you: 'Only in God is your peace and your hope found, my children'. Thank you for responding to my call."

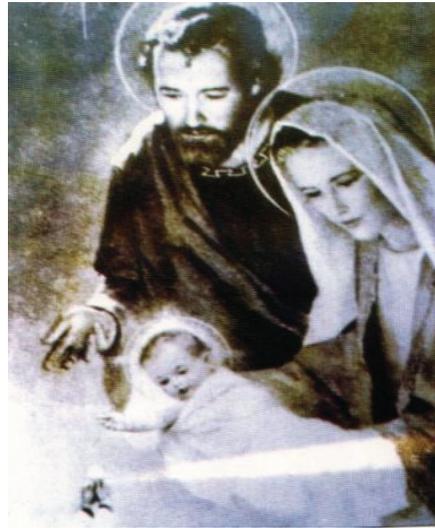
Created for Eternity

With the very first lines of the Bible it is clear that God's "logic" is very different from the logic of "here and now" so in vogue in the world today. The creation of the world was done with order and time, and at the end of every "day" God blesses what He sees as being "good". Man, too, is a creature of God, but he stands apart from the others because he is made in God's image, and because God gave man the duty of taking care of creation. That man is a steward does not mean he can lord over creation, but rather that he cultivate and safekeep it (Gen 2:15), because his dominion over creation is not arbitrary. To prescind from this God-given condition leads sooner or later to corruption, distortion and vile exploitation.

Being more aware of the need to safekeep creation is a good sign, but it ought also awaken the conscience and lead one's thoughts to the Creator, and to conversion. "When you look at the wealth of colours in nature, which the Most High has given you, open your heart and pray with gratitude for all the good that you have," our Blessed Mother urges us today. It is important that our hearts be open so we don't miss the opportunities of grace.

Our Mother also reminds us of the importance of being grateful; to pray for all the good we receive which perhaps goes unobserved. It is important to underline that prayer is a sign of gratitude and respect for He who loves us. It is also a necessity, for it is in prayer that we can discern God's will. Prayer is, indeed, the way of communication with God our Creator.

This message also tells us: "Pray with gratitude for all the good that you have, and say: 'I've been created for eternity'; and yearn for heavenly things because God loves you with immeasurable love." Contemplating nature is a positive thing, but nature is not sufficient in itself. Earthly things pass by and they are important in the amount that they direct our gazes to heavenly things; in the amount that they help us see how much we are loved by God. §



Message, 2 October 2012 (Mirjana):

"Dear Children, I call you and come amongst you because I need you. I need apostles with a pure heart. I pray - and you should also pray - that the Holy Spirit may enable and lead you, that he may illuminate you and fill you with love and humility. Pray that he may fill you with grace and mercy. Only then will you understand me, my children. Only then will you understand my sorrow for those who haven't known God's love. Then you will be able to help me. You will be my light-bearers of God's love. You will illuminate the way for those who have been given eyes but do not want to see. I desire for all of my children to see my Son. I desire for all of my children to experience his Kingdom. Again I call you and implore you to pray for those whom my Son has called. Thank you."

Apostles with Pure Hearts!

Mary intends touching our hearts, not for the sake of sentimentalism, but because the heart and not reason is able to receive the first principles of Truth. **It takes a pure heart** to be in communion with God, and for us to give His Love to others. Mary urges us to pray with her to the Holy Spirit so the graces of love, humility and mercy might enable us to be led; and in understanding Mary's sorrow to be motivated to help her bring God's love to others.

As Fr. Slavko would advise, let us pray a Rosary, **then re-read and reflect on the message**, to see what in it is said for me, keeping it at hand so we can read it again throughout the month so that, like a gentle rain, it seeps down into our minds and hearts, and our "yes" to Jesus can blossom, and our will be assimilated into His. *Thy Will be Done!* **Mary calls and awaits each of us**, worthy or not. We only need believe and say: *Here I am, Lord. I desire doing your will. Help me to be worthy.* And let us pray with ever greater awareness, humility and faith; remembering also our pastors! §

Message of 25 October 2012:

"Dear Children, Today I call you to pray for my intentions. Renew fasting and prayer because Satan is cunning and attracts many hearts to sin and perdition. I call you, my children, to holiness and to live in grace. Adore my Son so that He may fill you with His peace and love for which you yearn. Thank you for responding to my call."

A Call to Holiness and Grace

While the lack of basic needs for survival is driving masses, even entire peoples, to the frontiers of our "wealthy" nations and while we are suffering from the precariousness of our economic systems - a true giant of clay feet - what has Mary got to say?

All these years and not a mention of the economic crisis... Does this discredit the apparitions? Not at all. It is enough we understand Mary's way of helping us. We cannot be saved by economic laws, or by political projects. There is need of a radical change of life, of a personal and universal conversion to God and to His kingdom of peace and love.

This, in fact, is what Mary has been calling us to for the past thirty years. Her words are not new. They are antique! It is the same Word who took the flesh of man; the same Word who was present when the world was formed. And the Word came to us through the body of a Woman. It is this Woman whose duty it is to keep the Word alive in man. (cfr. 1 Cor 15:28)

This is Mary's work at Medjugorje. Today she calls us to collaborate with her by **praying for her intentions**. But are we - proud and hard of heart - able to heed the call? Do we believe in Satan? Yet, his works are much more evident today than they ever were, and his plan is unchanged: which is to **attract many hearts to sin and perdition**.

But Mary offers us the remedy: **Renew fasting and prayer!** These are powerful antidotes against Satan, but they must be accompanied by holiness and a life of grace. So let us follow our Blessed Mother's advice, and Adore her Son (go to Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament), so that He can fill us with His peace and love. §

(Comments to messages by Nuccio Quattrocchi)



Bishops representing the Universal Church gathered in Rome last 7th October for their XII Synod to discuss the new evangelization within the context of the **Year of the Faith**. Also present were representatives of new movements and lay associations, aroused by the Holy Spirit for the 'edification of the Community' (1 Co 14:12). One of these was the "**Nuovi Orizzonti**" (New Horizons) Community which was founded by Chiara Amirante, who is also present with a house in Medjugorje.

Cardinal Donal Wuerl from Washington spoke eloquently on the **role of new communities and movements** in the new evangelization, and on the importance of their relationship to the local Church. However, let's first take a look at what he had to say in his opening speech as the Synod's Relator-General: "The Holy Father thought it would be most important to reflect on what has happened to the culture in Western Europe (in this Synod). **It's almost as if a tsunami of secularism** washed across Western Europe, and when it receded it took with it all of those foundational concepts: family, marriage, right and wrong, common good, objective order. That's where the call for a new evangelization arose."

In fact, **with regards to post Vatican Council II, Cardinal Wuerl said**, "There is this very poor conceptualization (of it) that goes all the way back the 60's and 70's." It was expected, he said, that "catechizing be without content," and that the "experience" and "idea" was to be communicated that God loves us, and that we love God." It was an attempt to disregard doctrine and content and concentrate instead on feeling. The problem was that "it wasn't rooted in the Creed", and that "we need both," he underlined.

After the language-group discussions, **Cardinal Timothy Dolan** of New York paid tribute to the **expertise and wisdom of the lay men and women** and the lay religious, and explained why their voice is important at the Bishops' Synod. "These are the folks in the front line: they stand up front in classrooms teaching catechetics, giving instructions to people who want to become Catholics, these are the people explaining and defending the faith. **We need to listen to them, because their experience in the new evangelization is a treasure.**"

The Bishops in general said they were touched by testimonies given by some of

the lay associations. In particular, the **Patriarch of Venice, Msgr. Antonio Moraglia**, praised the **New Horizons Community of Rome** (Nuovi Orizzonti), founded by Chiara Amirante. Before the foundation of her community, Chiara spent her spare time reaching out to the street people of Rome. **Her community is present also in Medjugorje** to help young girls in difficulty, and more recently to offer hospitality and formation on a larger scale. Interviewed by Zenit, **Chiara spoke** of the most meaningful things that emerged from the Synod. She said: ".... Modern man illudes himself that he can replace God. But perhaps he has forgotten that every society that has tried to banish God often degenerates into a true and proper hell. There is an urgent need for people who will allow themselves to be touched deep down by the good news and to testify with great strength that the Lord of Creation has come to live in our midst to reveal to us His immense Love and to respond to the deepest questions of our hearts. He is the way upon which we can find fullness of joy, peace, inner freedom and Life!"

Card. Raymond Burke (who is currently the Cardinal Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura) spoke of his **reason for hope**, giving just one example: "I was given a lot of hope by the **intervention of a 23 year old catechist from the diocese of Rome**, who spoke very concretely of the desire for the celebration of the sacred liturgy to be truly a reflection of the reality of heaven descending to earth, of Christ's action on our behalf. He also talked about what he said was the desire of young people in general that priests to be really priests, not buddies, but spiritual fathers. That gives me a lot of hope, just as the renewed emphasis on the regular celebration of the sacrament of penance in our lives, and of a catechesis that touches the foundations of our faith, by the bishops, also touched me and gives me a lot of hope."

Also Card. Wuerl sees room for joy and hope and confidence: "I think one of the characteristics of an evangelist - and an evangelist is a disciple who wants to share the faith - is **joy**. Christ IS risen. He IS with us. He's provided us with Gospel and way through life. We **should** be filled with joy. Now, that doesn't mean that life is going to be easy, and it doesn't mean that we're not going to have challenges, tasks, all kinds of things we need to do. But we can face life knowing it makes sense. There's a purpose to all of this. There's a goodness in God being with us, and in our responding to God. And we should be able to see in the people around us, in the world around us, in the challenges of each day: reason, reason to be joyful. God is with us. God speaks to us, and all we have to do is respond, be open to that."

We conclude with the prayer from the Message to the People of God, from the XII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops: "**The figure of Mary guides us on our journey.** This journey, as Benedict XVI told us, might seem to us a journey through the desert; we know that as we go we need to bring with us the essential: the company of Jesus, the truth of his word, the eucharistic bread that nourishes us, the fraternity of the ecclesial communion, a surge of charity. It is a **well spring** that makes the desert bloom. And, as in the desert night the stars are brighter, so in the sky of our journey shines brightly the light of Mary, Star of the new evangelization, to whom we confidently entrust ourselves."

Credits: S+L TV Toronto for the interviews of the American cardinals.



"PRAYER IS NOT TIME WASTED"

... it does not take away time from our activities, even apostolic activities, but exactly the opposite is true: only if we are able to have a faithful, constant and trusting life of prayer will God himself give us the ability and strength to live happily and serenely, to surmount difficulties and to witness courageously to him."

B.XVI, General Audience 29-08-12.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Implications of the Faith in One God (ref. nos. 222-227)

Believing in God, the only One, and loving him with all our being **has enormous consequences** for our whole life.

It means coming to know God's greatness and majesty ...

It means living in thanksgiving ...

It means knowing the unity and true dignity of all men ...

It means making good use of created things ...

It means **trusting God in every circumstance**, even in adversity.

A prayer of St. Teresa of Jesus (Teresa of Avila) wonderfully expresses this trust:

Let nothing trouble you

Let nothing frighten you

Everything passes

God never changes

Patience obtains all

Whoever has God wants for nothing

God alone is enough.

A Special Gift for Priests

For the past six or so years Our Lady has repeatedly asked us, especially through her messages to Mirjana on the 2nd of the month, to *pray for our pastors*, and to *not judge them*. The number of times she has asked this over the years is quite impressive. Most times Our Lady says to pray for them, or *not to forget to pray for them*, while other times she has asked us to *pray and also fast for them*.

On other occasions our Blessed Mother has reminded us **how important their blessing is** to us, and as though to inscribe their importance on our hearts and minds she has told us several times that not only are they important, but that **they are necessary**: "My children, you cannot go on without your pastors. May they be in your prayers every day!" (2 May 2012). "My children, without their guidance and the strength you receive through their blessing you cannot go on!" (2 June 2012). "Pray for your pastors, because nothing of all this is possible without them." (2 November 2012). "I will triumph with them!" (October 2010).

It might happen that we are at times tempted to judge, but Our Lady warns us against that. *"Do as I do, and pray for your pastors. I warn you again: do not judge them! because my Son has chosen them!"* (2 July 2012). "May your lips be sealed against making any judgement (of your pastors)" (2 August 2012). And should we fall into the error of judging them, let us remember that **they were called by our Lord**; so to judge them would be to judge Him. "I call you again, and I remind you to pray for those whom my Son has chosen!" (2 Oct. 2012). They were *"chosen by my Son and given to us as a gift."*

In her **personal witness Mirjana has said** on several occasions to different language groups how she sees the importance of priests (beyond the obvious and utmost one of bringing us Christ in the Sacraments!) in their being as **"bridges" necessary to the triumph** of Mary's Immaculate Heart. Indeed, Our Lady has said that it is with them that she will triumph! Therefore, let us remember to hold our tongues and truly pray for them.

Italian Jesuit priest, **Fr. Massimo Rastrelli** said in his recent book (*Medjugorje speranza del terzo millennio*) about priests who go to Medjugorje: "One of the most impressive things at Medjugorje is the **presence of priests** whom one can see by the dozens on any given day from all over the world. And even hundreds of priests can be seen on particular feast days. The priests I have met have come to Medjugorje of their own will, and are profoundly convinced of having gone through grace received. They



dedicate themselves to the ministry of confession; they join in the community prayer; they celebrate at the Liturgies, and they are moved by Mary's particular and tangible "presence".

They come away from Medjugorje with a desire in their hearts to witness and to comfort the brethren, together with a deepened sense of responsibility towards the Church. (...) We think it fair to say, therefore, that Medjugorje is a special gift for priests." §

Parish Priest at Medjugorje

The parish priest of Medjugorje, Fra Petar Vlastic recently died (R.I.P.). The parish is at present being run by locally born Fra Marinko Sakota. He hails from Citluk which is only 5 km away from Medjugorje. Fra Marinko is 44 years old and is said to speak fluent German and a good English. He was parish priest at Gradnici for seven years prior to arriving at Medjugorje in 2010 to serve as vice pastor. Fra Marinko is also the author of a biography on the life of Fr. Slavko Barbaric, entitled "Living with the Heart - the life and works of Fr. Slavko Barbaric", published in 2006 which also included many unedited photographs.

IVAN:

"Today we live in a tired and restless world, with broken families and broken morality," Medjugorje seer Ivan Dragicevic told an American audience at a meeting near Boston, Massachusetts, on 3rd November (2012).

"To counter it, the Virgin Mary calls priests to organize **adoration and veneration of the Cross**. Many of you have come here tired of this restless world. There are so many tired and broken families. There is no more faithfulness in marriages. There is a broken morality," he told the crowd.

"We have come here to pray for the evangelization of the world, for the evangelization of families, for the evangelization of young people," he said. "We have come here to the source, to have an encounter with Jesus. To encounter Him at the Holy Mass, **because the Mass is the source of life**.

He said that our Blessed Mother "wishes to lead us out of this darkness and onto a path of light. If there is no peace in families then there cannot be peace in the world."

To stress the importance of the family, Ivan told the crowd: **"Our family must be our chapel**. We must begin to pray in our families. We must renew our families spiritually." And Ivan quoted Mary when he reminded participants that Satan



wishes to destroy families especially, since families are the foundation of society and the Church, and that it is there (in families) that children first

learn to pray.

Ivan stressed Mary's call for priests to do organize **Eucharistic Adoration** and Adoration of the Cross in parishes, to inspire spiritual renewal. Prior to Mass, the visionary received an apparition, during which the Blessed Mother gave a message: *"Praised be Jesus, dear children! My dear children, today also in a special way I wish to call you to pray for families, for holiness in families. My dear children, pray today for families. Thank you for responding to my call."*

IVAN IN LEBANON

This past November, Ivan was in Lebanon for several days for prayer meetings, the first of which in Bkerke on the 15th, **attracted at least 12,000 people**. The meetings, as usual, were centred round the Eucharist, beginning with the Rosary, Holy Mass and Adoration.

On the 15th the Patriarch of the East also attended what is said to be his first time at a Medjugorje meeting with a visionary. He is Maronite Cardinal Beshara Boutros El-Rahi, Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, and he presided at the Mass and Eucharistic Adoration.

Ivan received an apparition at the usual time. It lasted about five minutes, during which the Blessed Virgin asked for prayers for peace.

Year of Faith
 Suggestions from Medjugorje

"Dear Children, Also today I call you to pray, pray, pray until prayer becomes life for you. My children, at this time I particularly pray before God to give you the gift of faith. Only in faith will you discover the joy of the gift of life that God has given you. Your heart will be joyful thinking of eternity. I am with you and I love you tenderly. Thank you for responding to my call." (25/11/05)

Prayer not only keeps faith alive, but it especially sustains and purifies it. **Prayer, faith and life are three aspects of a single reality**: Life in God. And it is to this reality that we are called!

Through prayer we can experience already in this life the joy of the gift of faith; and even though life might seem harsh, bitter, painful or vain, the answer is to persevere in prayer, and ask God to increase our faith. (Edit. Team)

