

ECHO OF MARY

Queen of peace

Our Lady's message of 25 Sept. 1995

Dear children, Today I invite you to fall in love with the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. Adore It in your parishes, my children, and in doing so you will be united with the entire world. Jesus will become your friend and you will not speak of Him as you would of someone you barely know.

Unity with Him will be a joy for you and you will become witnesses of the love that Jesus has for each of His creatures. My children, when you adore Jesus, you are close to me too. Thank you for responding to my call.

"Fall in love with Jesus Adore Him, become Witnesses of His love"

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is not something new for the children of the Queen of Peace: Adore continuously the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. I am always present when you adore Him. During Adoration you receive great graces. (15 March '84) Today Our Lady is saying much more. She is saying to fall in love with the Blessed Sacrament. That's fall in love in the true sense of the word; it's a heart that yearns and aches when far from its loved one.

A person in love doesn't say: I'll see you when I have time, but rather: I can't wait to see you again, while anxiously looking forward to the next date. Jesus is even more anxious to see us again because His delight is staying with the sons of men (Prv 8:31): I in you and you in me! He is not too demanding because His presence is a gift, an offering of love, a ray of every good and a solution to all problems. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit. Jesus' desire to stay with his children is ever more pressing given the increase of sin and indifference towards His real Presence in many churches where the tabernacle is enveloped by glacial solitude.

The loving and passionate Heart of Jesus is asking to be loved back so He can fill souls with graces and divine love, thereby giving life to a Church which is neither hot nor cold.

Then Jesus will become your friend and you will not speak of Him as you would of someone you barely know. When we experience Jesus' presence, like and even more than the disciples of Galilee, we will speak of Him with our hearts and others will see that He is alive in us. Then our joy will be great and we will become witnesses of Jesus' love for each of His creatures. They will see His mercy and love in us which we receive from the Eucharistic Presence.

Mary's words are not directed only to individuals, but to communities and in particular to parishes which

represent the mystery of unity: cells of the Church. It is in the parishes that Jesus unites His children to make them grow. Being united to Him is being united to the entire world, because in Him we find all men - His sons - and we feel part of this oneness, brothers of every man, ready to share in the problems and suffering of all.

Loving Eucharistic Jesus is not an egoistic experience, for He makes us more sensitive to other's problems and we are prompted to ask for His intervention. It was the materialistic and rationalistic secularism, concerned only of the social and psychological aspects of man, that brought aridity to our churches. In the place of piety and communion, it put a vague solidarity to do only with earthly interests. "Through those who adore Jesus, He, the foundation of unity, will destroy all divisions, He will grant us peace, He will re-establish His rule in the world and no power will be able to resist prayer of the heart and the Holy Rosary recited before the Blessed Sacrament." (see page 4, column 2)

Our reply to Mary's loving invitation can be none other than to rush to the tabernacle, like the deer that yearns for running streams. From our hearts will come the desire to adore Him also in other hearts and the desire to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed in our parishes for Adoration.

Fr. Angelo

"THE HUMBLE ROSARY BEADS the mighty chain that will imprison the dominator of this dark world"

"The Rosary is my prayer. It is the prayer that I came from Heaven to ask for, because it is the weapon which you must use in these times of the great battle and it is the sign of my certain victory. My victory is had when Satan, with his powerful army of evil spirits, will be closed up in his realm of darkness and death from where he will never come out again to harm the world. For this, an Angel must descend from heaven. He will be given the key of the Abyss and a chain with which to tie up the ancient serpent, Satan, and all his followers (Revelation 20:1-2). The Angel is a spirit sent by God to carry out a special mission. I am the Queen of the Angels since it is also in my plan to be sent by the Lord to carry out the greatest and most important of missions [which is] to defeat Satan. In fact, right from the beginning I was announced as She Who is the enemy of the serpent, She Who fights against him, She Who in the end will crush his head. 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers. Her offspring will crush your head while you strike at its heel' (Gn 3:15). My offspring is Christ. Through Him, Who realized the Redemption and freed you from slavery to Satan, my complete victory is accomplished. Thus the key has been entrusted to me; the key which opens and closes the door to the Abyss.

The Key is a symbol of power of a person who is the lord and master, the owner of a place. In this sense the one who owns the key of creation is the Incarnate Word, none other, because through Him everything was done and thus Jesus Christ is the master and the King of the whole universe, that is, heaven, earth and the abyss.

The chain, with which the great Dragon must be bound, is formed by the prayer done with me and through me. This prayer is the prayer of the Holy Rosary. In fact, the job of a chain is to first impede movement, then to imprison and lastly to make vain every movement of the person chained up. The chain of the Holy Rosary has, above all, the task of limiting the action of my Adversary. Each

Rosary you recite with me has the effect of restricting the Evil One's action, of removing souls from his evil influence and of giving greater strength to the spreading of good in the lives of many of my children. The chain of the Holy Rosary also has the effect of imprisoning Satan, that is, of making his action useless and of decreasing and weakening always more the strength of his diabolic power. For this, each Rosary that is recited well is a hard blow to the power of evil, it is a part of his realm that is demolished, destroyed. All the evil spirits are driven into the pool of fire and sulphur, the door of which is closed by me with the key of Christ's power; and thus they will never be able to come out into the world again to harm souls.

Can you understand now, my beloved sons, why in these last times of battle between me, the Woman clothed with the sun, and the great Dragon, I ask you to multiply, everywhere, prayer meetings with the recitation of the Holy Rosary, the meditation of my word and your consecration to my Immaculate Heart? With these you give your Heavenly Mother the chance to intervene and bind Satan, so that I may fulfil my mission of crushing his head, that is, to defeat him forever, closing him up in his abyss of fire and sulphur.

The humble and fragile cord of the Holy Rosary is the strong chain with which I will imprison my Adversary, who is the dark dominator of the world, the enemy of God and of His faithful servants. Then, once again, the arrogance and pride of Satan will be defeated by the power of the little ones, the humble, the poor.

As I announce to you today that this great victory of mine, which will mean your certain liberation, is near at hand, I grant you the comfort of my motherly presence among you, and I bless you." (Marian Movement of Priests)

Month of the Rosary: Pray "for Mary's intentions" - Praying the Rosary is surrendering oneself to Mary's prayer so that the reason for Jesus' birth, death and resurrection (the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries) is fulfilled. This means praying for Her intentions, for that which She sees as truly necessary. By meditating on the mysteries, we contemplate how God wants our lives and the world to be transformed in Jesus' life. With the Hail Mary's we honour the greatness of our Mother and see and trust in the power of Her supplication before God on our behalf.

Primacy of Bishop of Rome

While there is a general acceptance of Christ, of the Gospel and prayer, there is not of the "absurd Catholic pretence that the Bishop of Rome is the successor of Peter!" This mainly doctrinal aspect is the bomb which exploded in many "reformers." We see it as rather indicative that Luther left as his testament the following words: "Moc unum me mortuo servate: odium in pontificem romanum." (After my death preserve only one thing: hatred for the Roman Pontiff.) This is an indication that the discriminating point of all apostolic action is communion with the Roman See. The Catholic Church has preserved the ministry of the Successor of the Apostle Peter, the Bishop of Rome, whom God established as her 'perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity' and whom the Spirit sustains in order that he may enable all the others to share in this essential good. (88) If Christ prays for Peter and sustains him in his faith (cf. Lk 22:31-32) and if the keys were given to him (Mt 16:17-19) we should not regard this as secondary.

It is God who sustains also Peter's weakness in His superabundant mercy, but it is not a question of power or control in a worldly sense where people compete for the control. Similar reasoning places the Church on the same level as a business! The authority proper to Peter's ministry is completely at the

service of God's merciful plan and it must be always seen in this perspective. So: Peter's Successor knows that he must be a sign of mercy. His is a ministry of mercy. In fact: the Church of God is called by Christ to manifest to a world ensnared by its sins and evil designs that, despite everything, God in his mercy can convert hearts to unity and enable them to enter into communion with him. (93) To do this, the Pope has the duty to admonish, to caution and to declare at times that this or that opinion being circulated is irreconcilable with the unity of faith. When circumstances require it, he speaks in the name of all the Pastors in communion with him. He can also - under very specific conditions clearly laid down by the First Vatican Council - declare *ex cathedra* that a certain doctrine belongs to the deposit of faith. By thus bearing witness to the truth, he serves unity. (94)

In brief, the encyclical is a lesson on the mystery of unity and communion in the Church. Could not the real but imperfect communion existing between us persuade Church leaders and their theologians to engage with me in a patient and fraternal dialogue on this subject, a dialogue in which, leaving useless controversies behind, we could listen to one another, keeping before us only the will of Christ for his Church and allowing ourselves to be deeply moved by his plea "that they may all be one..." (Jn 17:21)? (96)

If we wanted to distinguish between the Pope's vision and that of others we can say this: that intellectuals and theologians whose hearts are "open" to the world talk of respect and comprehension between the Churches (note the plural) while the Pope calls everyone to the unity of the one Church (singular). The first type of ecumenism produces a faded, levelled mass of christianities. The second case calls for the unity of hearts, the great dream of Christ's presence among men.

Marco

Pope to the youth of EurHope Be Christ's hands and heart to build a common home

From all over Europe 300,000 young people invaded Loreto to be with the Pope (9-10 Sept.). They came with banners, rucksacks, sleeping bags and smiling faces in a rainbow-coloured procession. The square in front of the Basilica of the Holy House was as a crossroads for people from the old continent. To the black Madonna the young people entrusted their prayers and hopes and then made their way to the esplanade of Montorso where the prayer vigil for peace began at 8.30 pm.

It was a meeting with a difference. Thanks to modern technology of television and radio links, young people from the symbolic cities of Belfast, Paris, Santiago de Compostela, Dresden, Vilnius and Sarajevo were able to be actively present at the meeting with their testimony of suffering and hope. Particularly moving was the sight of the young twin sisters singing in the choir of Saravejo as tears rolled down their cheeks. Truly, the heart of Europe was alive and pulsating in that amphitheatre.

The Pope told the young people of EurHope: "From Loreto this evening we have made a wonderful pilgrimage from the Atlantic to the Urals... wherever there are young people in search of a 'common home.' I say to all, this is your house, the House of Christ and Mary, the House of God and man!

Young people of Europe marching towards the year 2000, come into this House and build a different world together, a world where the civilization of love dominates! You are in the springtime of life, and like trees in blossom, called to be laden with fruit. Do not forget what your roots are. The tree that wants

to grow and bear fruit must draw nourishment from good soil. The Gospel is the soil in which to sink the roots of your future! Christ meets you in the Gospel. Discover His friendship and appreciate it, invite Him to be your companion on your daily journey. He alone has words of eternal life."

After making a mention of Europe's recent history, with its travails, martyrs and hopes the Pope said: "Reject senseless and violent ideologies: keep your distance from any form of exaggerated nationalism and intolerance. It is up to you to defend the fertile 'Gospel culture' where Christ, 'alive yesterday, today and forever,' makes Himself the concrete response to the essential questions of man's anguished heart... But for this we need the courage and daring of true believers, ready to resist every temptation and determined to become the fearless artisans of justice and peace... Be yourselves the living responses of Christ and write original pages of the new evangelization for our time.

EurHope: Europe and Hope. A beautiful but remarkably demanding insight requiring you to be men and women of hope: persons who believe in the God of life and love, and proclaim with firm confidence that man has a future. You are the youthful face of Europe. The future of the continent, as of the whole world, belongs to you if you are able to follow the way Christ shows you. The secret is the same as always: it is Christ who died and rose for the world's salvation. It is Christ's Cross. The Pope this evening entrusts this ancient and ever new secret to you... Be His hands and His heart for your brothers and sisters: His heart for loving and praying, His hands for working, building and serving.

I commend you to Mary. Welcome Her in your home, today and forever! Here in the Shrine of Loreto, for seven centuries Our Lady has continued silently to watch and act, as She did in the House of Nazareth. Her style is that of humility, fidelity, service. Make it your own! Imitating Her you will experience the joy and peace which are a gift of the Holy Spirit. Together with Her, you will courage-ously be able to set about building the Europe of hope, faithful to its own roots, the land of acceptance, solidarity and peace for all."

Sunday, 10th - After Mass and before the Angelus, the Pope spoke again to the thousands of European youth who had spent the night beneath the stars and the full moon. "From you arises a cry of peace. I ask you to continue to raise it loudly and insistently, so that it drowns out the crash of arms and touches the hearts of all those who are responsible for the violence staining Europe and the world with blood. I ask it of you, young women, in particular: be 'teachers of peace,' with all your being and in all your actions."

A lovely surprise - The Italians were the most numerous, then the Poles (12,000), the Spanish (8,000) and the Germans, French, Czechs, Croatians, Slovaks, Hungarians, etc. The groups of young Orthodox people from Romania, Bulgaria and Russia were a lovely surprise. At the Angelus the young Bulgarians sang and the Romanians presented an offering of flowers. The Pope thanked the Orthodox Patriarchs of Russia, Romania, Serbia and Greece for having sent five bishops to officially represent their communities. This is certainly the fruit of the Pope's aperture because for years the Orthodox Church had not been attending the Pope's meetings.

The Pope invited all the young people to "build a great European house," suggesting they re-read the document *Gaudium et spes* to "find the light to discern your vocation as men and women called to live in this both marvellous and dramatic era, as artisans of brotherhood and builders of peace."

"That the world may breathe with the two lung of the East and the West... The new Europe must rediscover its Christian roots. The plan of freedom to which Christ has called us must resound with new strength. Only the freedom for which Christ set us free can become a source of equality and fraternity."

"The young people have rejuvenated the Pope," he concluded.

The Pope: use feminine genius actively in life of Church and in politics

The Pope has been making extra effort to highlight the position of women in Church life and in politics. On the 3rd September he said that "also Jesus involved women in the cause of His kingdom; indeed, he wanted them to be the first witnesses and heralds of His Resurrection. There are many women who have distinguished themselves in the Church's history by their holiness and hardworking ingenuity. The Church is increasingly aware of the need for enhancing their role... Without discrimination women should be participants in the life of the Church.

It is a question of making full use of the ample room for a lay and feminine presence recognized by the Church's law, for example, theological teaching, forms of liturgical ministry permitted, pastoral and administrative councils, Diocesan Synods and curias and ecclesiastical tribunals, many pastoral activities, including the new forms of participation in the care of parishes when there is a shortage of clergy, except for those tasks that belong properly to the priest. Who can imagine the great advantages to pastoral care and the new beauty that the Church's face will assume, when the feminine genius is fully involved in the various areas of her life?"

On the 27th August, the Holy Father said: "I would like to stress the importance of a greater involvement of women in public life. A long tradition has seen mostly men involved in politics. Politics can only benefit from the complementary gifts of men and women. Of course it would be naïve to expect "miracles" from this alone. It is especially true that for women no less than for men, the quality of politics is measured by the authenticity of the values which inspire them... How great, for example, is the role they can play on behalf of peace, precisely by being involved in politics, where the fate of humanity is largely decided..."

In Beijing: Holy See with impoverished countries to fight for true promotion of women

The Fourth World Conference on Women was recently held in Beijing (4-15 Sept.). To the Holy See's Delegation, headed by Mrs Mary Ann Glendon, the Pope said prior to its commencement: "Know how to see good wherever it may emerge, but repel all that is contrary to God's plan and thus contrary to man's dignity. Be messengers of peace. In particular I ask you women to be teachers of peace with all your being and your work."

A letter by the Pope to the 450 million Catholic men was solemnly handed over to the Delegation. In the letter John Paul II invites men to "a conversion of heart and to putting into practice a positive vision of women." The Pope asks them to "become ever more aware of the disadvantages that women, and especially girls, are exposed to and to consider the cases where men's behaviour and lack of sensitivity or responsibility may be at the root of this disadvantage..."

Mrs Glendon pointed out that there were many problems. "Many problems mean many challenges," the Pope remarked and added that he would pray for the successful outcome of the Conference.

A wasted occasion - outcome of Conference not totally satisfying. The Holy See associated itself with the consensus only partially. "The Conference will not succeed in uniting the world if it attempts to impose, particularly on developing countries, a Western product which does not even represent the hopes and needs of the majority of Western women." It is disturbing that at the Beijing Conference some formulations contained in previous UN documents did not receive consensus (the word 'family' being

replaced with 'families' so as to include singles and homosexuals; the exclusion of parent's responsibility within the family).

Regarding the preparatory process of the Conference Dr. Navarro-Valls said: "In the document the word 'dignity' (of women) is found inexplicably in brackets... Without a clear understanding of the meaning of human dignity, discrimination will never be avoided. Physical violence against women includes not only rape, war, genital mutilation, forced prostitution and arranged marriages, but also forced contraception, sterilization and abortion... Nor is woman fully informed about the effects of medicines or medical techniques."

At the concluding ceremony of the Conference, Mrs Glendon said: "Surely this international gathering could have done more for women and girls than to leave them alone with their rights! Surely we must do more for the girl child in poor nations than give lip service to providing access to education, health and social services while carefully avoiding any concrete commitment... A document that respects women's dignity should address the health of the whole woman. A document that respects women's intelligence should devote at least as much attention to literacy as to fertility."

On abortion, Mrs Glendon said: "Before being something to blame on the woman, there are occasions when guilt needs to be attributed to men and to the complicity of the general social environment. All who are genuinely committed to the advancement of women can and must offer a woman or a girl who is pregnant, frightened and alone a better alternative than the destruction of her own unborn child. Concerned women must take the lead in the fight against societal practices which facilitate the irresponsibility of men while stigmatizing women, and against a vast industry that extracts its profits from the very bodies of women, while at the same time purporting to be their liberators."

The Holy See tried its best to get developed countries to cancel or at least reduce, by the year 2000, the public debt, to facilitate the promotion of educational programmes. Little more than vague commitments for future solutions were made though.

The Vatican paper spoke of a "wasted occasion because time spent on impeding feminism left little chance to clarify the points on women's dignity. Equality, development and peace, which were the Conference's objectives, remain a long way off still..."

How Mary defeats the devil

Bishop Milingo, the exorcist, was in Medjugorje recently (reported in Echo 122). Since many suffer from satanic disturbances, his presence was truly providential. He was asked: "In your opinion, where is it that Satan works with greater force in today's world?" He replied: "In these 23 years of ministry I have seen that Satan works particularly hard to destroy the families. In Australia I saw there were organized groups, like the Adorers of the devil, who work for him and concentrate their energy on destroying families. I witnessed this. Things are even worse in Europe where so many organizations work at destroying marriages. Take the parliament for example - who respects marriage? Laws are against marriage." Msgr. Milingo calls Our Lady 'the most powerful exorcist in the world,' appointed by God Himself. He recommends that lay people should take disturbed persons to a church and pray the Rosary with them before a statue of Our Lady, or to a church when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed and get him/her to look at Jesus in the Eucharist. "At first, they will refuse and close their eyes," he says, "but if they do, they will be saved."

(Sr. Emmanuel)

It is the time of mercy

Fr. Tomislav was recently in Asti (at the John Bosco Institute near Turin) for a two-day prayer meeting. The first day was dedicated to the religious and priests, the theme being: "The Priest and the signs of the times." The participants were invited to reflect on the priestly figure as a guide to help souls discern the events that the Spirit moves in them and in the Church. "The apocalyptic times," said Fr. Tomislav, "are not the times of a disastrous end, as is often interpreted. They are, rather, the times of the beginning, of the coming of God's Kingdom, of the new heavens and new earth." In line with this, Fr. Tomislav invited the participants to enter into the mystery of their own consecration, priestly and prophetic, to become sure and steady guides for the faithful.

On the second day, though the weather was not good, 3,500 people filled the two big churches of the Shrine (a giant screen provided vision in one). The theme was: I have not come to judge but to save. "The Liturgy of the Word in this period presents to us God the Father, generous and merciful, Who looks out for His children, to draw them to Him and pour onto them His gifts of love. Let us also set out to find the Father's Face, and uncover it and allow Him to transform our faces into mercy for the others, into constant forgiveness and unconditioned love..." The participants listened attentively, letting themselves be gently guided by the prayer and adoration. The Salesian fathers were available all day long for confession.

Despite the number of people, the atmosphere was one of quiet meditation and it showed how over the years Mary's children have matured because of their acceptance of Her invitation to a conversion of heart. And here on this mount, Mary was calling Her children to build their lives on John Bosco's "three great loves": the Immaculate, the Eucharist and the Pope. These 'three loves' also guide us on the way to holiness where God our Father is waiting to take us in His arms.

Stefania

Discover the Father's loving face Show It to the world

The day after the conference in Asti Fr. Tomislav spoke to an attentive crowd of people which filled the church of Villanova, where Echo is produced.

Mary woke up the faith in many souls with Her apparitions, he pointed out, but he chose to talk to us about our prayer. "What is prayer," he asked. "It is re-discovering God's Face so that life may blossom and become happiness. That's life on a personal level, within your marriage, your family, and society. All our human problems depend on the fact that we have forgotten God's Face, that we do not know It. Just think how happy the saints were even though they suffered persecution..."

Did we come here perhaps with the idea of asking the Lord for a special grace to resolve a problem? The right time to discover how great God is and how much He loves us is precisely when we are weak, when we are sinners, when we can't find the way...

You know the parable of the lost sheep. God is love and He searches for man precisely when he is lost, in the place where he failed. That is where God looks! He leaves everything to find us, to show us His love. A woman loses her pearl and stops all other tasks to find it. God does the same with us, but we are much

more than a pearl for Him: you are worth more than many sparrows.

Also in the parable of the prodigal son we see that his father first embraced him and gave him more than he'd dreamed before listening to his confession. God does the same with each of us when we have sinned, or in moments of weakness. God's love is a type of live tension, it is dynamic and much greater than any human love. A mother's love for her child is but a pale shadow of God's love for us. Finding God in prayer, opening ourselves to Him means being healed, being saved. Looking for God's Face is fundamental. What did Mary teach us in Medj.? She showed us Her face. What did She want for its parishioners? That my face be expressed on yours, that the world see my Immaculate Heart in your hearts and the wealth that God has prepared for souls. I give you everything: take it, do not refuse it.

Prayer, which is the quest for God's Face, is our basic need, just the way a plant needs water and sun to make it grow, blossom and bear fruit. We Christians often spend time to go in search of various things we need, but there is a benefit in finding God: we bear fruit, because God is glorified in us.

If we are busy following our plans we cannot reveal God to the world, or to our-selves, or our spouses, or our parents or our children. Children cannot reveal Him to their parents, nor friends to their friends, nor Christians to our society. So then, how can God's blessing come to us, how can life be peaceful? This is not a theory. You spouses can manifest God to each other through your love and manners, etc., just as you can also manifest falseness. Think, you parents, that right from conception your child is able to feel your love because he has a soul and that soul perceives the contents of his parents' soul. You can give God to your children through the way you educate them, you can bring blessings to your business.

You've heard talk about evil spells. Do they exist? Of course they do. Many spouses destroy themselves with the hatred in their hearts. Members of a family cause sicknesses to one another because of the hatred in their hearts for each other. If you love with God's love, if you manifest God to each other, you will bring God's blessing to one another and to everything you do because you permit God to conduct your life. Praying is the need to discover God, it is letting God's life live in us again. Our mission is to manifest God to the others. The Gospel teaches us to be merciful.

If mercy flows within you, then you can give it to others. The first Christians were noted for their charity, but it was fruit of their prayer and fasts. Man today is willing to give his money, but the real wealth that we could give to others, which would be a continuous blessing, is God. Criticism, gossip, bitterness: feelings common in people who pray, but who: 'say their prayers,' not 'pray.' Therefore, mercy does not flow within them.

Jesus gave His life for us; He showed us a mercy that goes beyond all boundaries of human wickedness. Through us God's mercy can flow out onto the others. Prayer reaches out to the good and the evil; it becomes like a shower of blessings descending on the families, the Church, mankind; and it bears fruit. Our task is to give God's life to the others: to those close to us and around us. This is a Christian's highest aim; in doing this, communion among us would become a reality, and marriages would be strengthened - likewise with families, parishes, communities. If only we would take Our Lady's messages seriously! Our Lady is a perfect image of the Church and we too are called to be so. If Our Lady says we can stop wars with prayer, it has nothing to do with magic. Understand that when the shower of God's love descends through us onto the others, God's love puts out the war in people's hearts. When God's mercy is alive in each of us then the power of God's love becomes manifest on the earth. This is God's plan. All the rest that regards the apparitions, such as when, where, how, leads us away from the truth.

The right way is to find the fullness of life, then we would have no further need to convince sinners or atheists, for they would see God in us and through us. This is our call. Those who pray profoundly find that an unlimited space opens before them.

If you go in search of God rather than things, then you will no longer be disturbed by things. Neither bitterness nor hatred will make its way easily into you. Even when Jesus was carrying the cross there was

no bitterness in Him; there was only life. Mary calls us, not to say prayers, but to pray, so that we may quickly enter into life and thus manifest God's life to one another, and to the whole world. Make known through your example that this is fundamental for man.

Don't let faith in Italy be set aside because everyone is caught up in politics and oriental theories. Bring about this task of manifesting God, let the world know that He is in you, that He desires nothing but our happiness, as individuals, as spouses, as families, at work. If you live in God, everything becomes a continuous blessing."

Fr. Jozo with the Italian Bishops and faithful

Fr. Jozo visited many northern Italian cities in June. Everywhere, thousands gathered and opened their hearts to the Queen of Peace. People of all ages came, and remained in the various churches even up to 5 and 6 hours. Their fervour was edifying.

In his homilies Fr. Jozo underlined how the man of today is extremely poor: he has everything, but lacks everything. In his presentation of Mary's messages he clearly stated that without prayer, man is unable to find the right way. Prayer must be his first priority in his daily life so he can find himself and begin to talk to God his Creator, far from Whom there is only darkness, desert and sadness.

"With prayer, you can do everything. Is your matrimony at risk? Pray, and all will go right. Is your son a drug addict, has he lost the way? Pray, and you will see him healed. If you think another child is too much, pray, and you will receive the grace to accept him. Do you feel void and discouraged? Pray, and you will once again find trust in life. Do you feel egoistic, envious and jealous? Pray, and the Lord will melt the problems and the sins and make you a new person and a witness to His love. Do not be afraid of prayer. Take up your Rosary beads and trust the Lord. Call and listen to Our Lady and begin the journey on the way of conversion with Her.

Whatever your life may have been, whatever sin you may have committed, do not be afraid to return to the Lord like the prodigal son who was met by the merciful arms of a father who never ceased waiting for him. Make a good, full confession; you will make your Lord happy and you will experience the joy of pardon. Your Mother will help you take that first step. Have courage! Then you will discover the gift of the Eucharist, of the Sunday Mass; you will feed on the Body and Blood of Christ: nourishment that allows you to face every trial with peace in your hearts. Keep the Bible in your homes and give it the place it deserves. Read a passage from it every day, perhaps the one from the Mass of the day, and the Word will bring light to your life..."

In Cuneo, Bishop Aliprandi stayed behind for a friendly talk with Fr. Jozo, and some priests made the decision to visit Medjugorje. In Mondovì the youthful Bishop, Msgr. Masseroni expressed his desire that Medjugorje be quickly recognized by the Church as a great spiritual centre and he invited Fr. Jozo to return soon for a prayer meeting with all the priests, religious and faithful. In Ivrea, Msgr. Bettazzi gave Fr. Jozo a warm welcome. The Bishop said he's been to Medjugorje three times. He too has already booked for another prayer meeting in the near future, and gave Fr. Jozo a generous donation towards the orphanage.

In Turin, Fr. Jozo met with hundreds of nuns and volunteers from the Cottolongo hospital for the seriously handicapped where the miracle of Providence is renewed each day. He also visited some of the wards where the "incurables" are cared for and told them that "God waits for those who have no one who

waits for them."

From the Shrine of Our Lady of Health, filled to capacity, he uttered a long prayer of liberation over the city of Turin and concluded: "This is not a cursed city, but a blessed city." Matteo Rossi

News from the blessed land

A Thousand children present Bosnia's wounds to the Pope

Vicka speaks of war that does not end

On Wednesday 30 August a thousand children, all blond, alighted from buses coming from Mostar, Travnik and Bugojno: Bosnia's slaughter houses. One of the little children saw seven of his friends die. They were playing in the courtyard when mortar shells hit them. Three little ones, all brothers, clung tightly to their father on crutches. He rapped on one of his legs, as if to say: it is wooden. "Each of these little ones has lost someone in the war," said Sr. Josipa Kordic who accompanied them to see the Pope. Among them are also some women who were raped during ethnic cleansing operations.

Sr. Josipa is Croatian and is dressed in the white habit of the Missionaries of the Wounded Families, a congregation founded by her together with her sister Cornelia and inspired by Our Lady in Medjugorje. They were Franciscan nuns before. Many young women have asked to join them. They offer assistance to Muslims and Croatians alike.

When the Pope appeared they all waved little yellow and white flags to greet him. The Pope said: "To all those who weep for the tragic loss of their loved ones, to the prisoners, the exiled, the broken families... let us pray that love and forgiveness may win." Love and forgiveness? The women cried, the men rubbed their eyes and the little children looked at the man in white who spoke their language.

In the crowd was Maurizio Blondet, a journalist who has been reporting on the war in Bosnia for Avvenire. He noticed Vicka the visionary and asked her the same question he put to her three years ago: "When will the war end?"

"Once we asked Our Lady but She did not reply," Vicka said as she smiled. "She was worried, rather, that this war may never finish." (The hatred in people's hearts. - Ed.)

"Our Lady Herself fears that the war may not end?" Blondet asked. "No, not afraid, but worried. Worried for us. She has been with us for fourteen years, to save us, and we are still so far away from what She is asking. With so much hatred in people's hearts, how do you think the war can end?" said Vicka.

"Now here you are in front of the Pope," Blondet remarked. "Yes," replied Vicka, "there are women here who have lost their husbands, children who have lost their fathers. For this reason we have come to him. He is our Father. We love him and he loves us. We want him to bless us." Vicka said. "Also the Muslims?" "God makes no difference, so how can we?" Blondet continued: "But Muslims and Croatians tore each other to bits." Vicka smiles as she concludes: "Peace in one's heart is like ice on a wound."

Vicka meets with Pope - Vicka was enthusiastic about her visit to Rome. "He didn't look so tired as when I saw him last March. He blessed us and I told him what we are doing for the orphans. He took my face in his hands and caressed me, all the time smiling so radiantly." No special declaration, just a joyful meeting of hearts. (Sr. Emmanuel)

The Feast of the Cross

In 1933, a jubilee year of the Redemption, a big cement cross was erected on top of Mount Krizevac, dominating the valley below it, as a sign of thanksgiving for what God had done for His people. Since then Mass is celebrated up there before a large crowd every year on the Sunday after the 8th Sept., close to the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. With Our Lady's apparitions, Krizevac has become a place of prayer for thousands of people who do the climb often bare footed. Many discover God after the climb! (Press Bulletin)

Also this year the feast of the Cross drew great crowds. Many arrived on foot from their villages, like the pilgrims in Fatima. [Despite the fact that many countries advised against going there because of the war, many did come. It is said that 50,000 people were present on Krizevac for the 11 am Mass celebrated by Fra Mirko Filipovic.]

Foreign pilgrims were certainly edified by the faith of the thousands of Croatian pilgrims: men, women and children, who made their way to the Cross of their Saviour.

In 1984 Our Lady told the parishioners: The Cross was part of God's plan when you began building it; and She has often asked them to go and pray at the foot of it.

On the eve of this feast day Our Lady invited us to go to the evening apparition to Vicka. It lasted 18 minutes. She said: Dear children, I invite you to pray the glorious mysteries before the Cross - in your families or in the community - for my intentions.

On the eve of the Assumption day, Our Lady appeared to Ivan (on Krizevac in the evening) full of joy, accompanied by three angels. After having blessed each of those present She said: Dear children, be untiring in your prayer. Pray, pray, pray! (Sr. Emmanuel)

*** Fr. Slavko in Britain with Ivan** - On 26 August he was in the Church of the Holy Spirit in London for a prayer meeting. He also took part in the Way of the Cross with Catholic and Anglican priests who usually meet every first Friday to meditate on Christ's Passion. On 29 August he attended the annual prayer meeting held in the grounds of the Carmelite Monastery in Aylesford. 9,000 attended. Ivan then departed for the USA to be with his wife for the birth of their first child. His plans are to take his family on his next tour and be back in Medjugorje for Spring.

After his visit to Britain, Fr. Slavko went to Linz in Austria for a four-day meeting where 50 priests, 3 bishops and Cardinal Stickle participated. René Laurentin and other theologians were amongst the speakers. He was in Fulda in Germany on 3 September. One of the celebrants was the famous Archbishop, Msgr. Diba; he called the pilgrims "people who persevere and of whom God asks much." While in Fulda, Fr. Slavko attended a concert, the proceeds of which are to help rebuild the Franciscan church of Mostar which was destroyed by bombs. It is heart-warming to see how Our Lady has created prayer groups and helped so many children in their spiritual growth for the renewal of the Church. (Press Bulletin)

*** Fr. Jozo is back from his tour in Canada.** 12 meetings were organized for Mirjana's 18 day visit to the USA. She told women who do not desire children that maternity is the most beautiful thing a woman could experience, and to married couples who fear for their children's future she said: "Our Lady once said: 'The more children people have the better. One should rather fear not having children.' She knows what She is saying," pointed out Mirjana, "and I also know, though I cannot say." With regards to the secrets Our Lady has said: Do not fear, because those who take God as their Father and I as their Mother have nothing to fear! (Sr. Emmanuel)

*** Honours were conferred upon Mother Theresa of Calcutta by the President of Croatia for her 85th birthday.** Croatian Ambassador, Dr. Stambuk, asked her to remember his country in her prayers and he invited her to visit Zagreb and Medjugorje. He expressed his hope that she will continue for many

more years to serve the poor for the glory of God. Mother Theresa promised to visit Croatia before the year ends, health permitting, and said she would like to visit Bosnia and Medjugorje. (Press Bulletin)

Courageous Bishop says:

"Let us give recognition to Medj. Many bishops have come here; there is no danger"

Msgr. Kennedy is an Australian bishop who has been to Medjugorje three times, wearing all his insignia - which is why he didn't go unnoticed. The bishop with a gentle nature was happy to answer our questions. We asked him when he first heard of Medj. and when was the first time he came.

A. I heard about it in 1985 and though I never really thought about coming here, I kept myself informed about the apparitions. Now that I am here I am happy because it is a special experience. I decided to come here in 1990, but it wasn't till 1993 that I got here. Then I came again in 1994 and in 1995, and I hope to come also in 1996.

Q. What do you feel here?

A. I have a feeling of something grandiose and very serious. Each time I come the sensation is both different and better. I am certain that Our Lady is present, just as She was in Lourdes. It's not easy to experience this same peace that one feels here. You need to come here to know what it is.

Q. In your opinion, can Medjugorje influence world peace?

A. That depends on the people who have the privilege of coming here. Experiencing the message of peace in its place of origin has a powerful impact on a person, enabling him to better live it out when he returns home. It is a little more difficult for those who are limited to reading the messages or books. It depends on our example and on how much the message of peace has got its grip on us. When a change is seen in us there will be no need to talk about the message.

Q. Do you believe in the apparitions here?

A. Certainly. If I did not believe I would not have been so open about my position. Even if the Church has not given official recognition to these apparitions for me they are the same as those of Lourdes and Fatima.

Q. You are one of those rare bishops we see here in Medjugorje...

A. Many bishops have come - dressed as normal priests or even in civilian clothes. It seems that I am the only one who has had the courage to wear his bishops insignia around Medjugorje, even though it seems strange that a bishop should wear them in a place which is not part of his diocese. The reason is that I simply felt I had to do it, to show others what I think, that is, that the Church should give Medjugorje recognition as soon as possible.

Q. What will you tell your people once you return to Australia?

A. Above all I will tell them that they need not fear to come here. If they are afraid of the war, the bombs, I will tell them that nothing of the kind will happen here. Many lies have spread in the world in this regards, but in this territory there is no situation of danger. The Catholics in particular have to know this; they must come. You see, here in Medjugorje one breathes an air of supernatural peace and there is such an easy flow of friendship here in this little place "between the hills," which is what the name means.

Q. Do you have a word for our readers?

A. I would like to ask them to remain faithful and feel responsible for the events here. They should think about this war and where it comes from, because many do not believe... We must pray for the young people who go to war. Truth and justice will win because time is on your side. God will bring peace and wellbeing... (From Glas Mira)

*** Mexican toreador's testimony** - Manuel Capetillo De Flores visited Medjugorje at the end of July. "I'm 38 years old," he said, "and I come from a family of toreadors. The stories of bulls and my father's fights have filled my life. In 1981 I was promoted to toreador; I've fought 400 times - but now I'm a toreador with a new life." Asked why he came to Medjugorje, he said: "I heard about the apparitions in Mexico. This is my second visit. Last year I had a wonderfully deep experience on Podbrdo - it was a very cold night. A great peace invaded my heart and I was able to pray as I never have before. I asked God, with Mary's intercession, for an open heart. People all over the world know me, so I want to use my time now to be a toreador-apostle of Our Lady's message of peace. For me Medjugorje is like a great stadium where God, through Mary, fights against evil in and around us so we can be filled with His love and joy." (Press Bulletin)

Forced to finish useless war?

Fate has made a turn-about in the former Yugoslavia. It seemed that the crazy dream of the great Serbia would become reality, owing to their superior weaponry and terrorist tactics. These same once-haughty men who thought they'd be fighting an easy battle, are now the first in line to ask for a peace treaty to put an end to the war they're losing. Though left to themselves the Croats and Muslims resisted. Now, with new, modern weapons and taking advantage of the NATO air raid which forced the Serbs to pull out their heavy weapons from Sarajevo (by only 20 km), they took the offensive and re-claimed Krajina and 60% of the Bosnian territory (they had been left with 25%).

Exuberant from victory, they wanted to push as far as the strong-hold, Banja Luka, where 100,000 Serbs took refuge, but the Americans are pushing for peace talks. If the Bosnian Serbs keep on losing further ground there is a risk of the Russians intervening (allies of the Serbs). In their forthcoming elections, Russians could end up at the mercy of Communists and Nationalists, and because their economy depends on the Islamic countries and Yeltsin cannot afford to estrange them, peace is better made. But today's victors raised the price of peace at the recent peace talks between Serbs, Croats and Bosnians. Only God knows what will come of it.

The tragedy of the refugees

In the meantime, the worst-off continue to be the civilians. The UN High Commission for Refugees has it all in figures: a total of 3,700,000 refugees (2,700,000 in Bosnia, 563,000 in Serbia, 385,000 in Croatia) are waiting for the war to end so they can return - where possible - to their towns and homes, or settle wherever ethnic cleansing sent them, or who knows where. Till then they live under make-shift tents or amid the rubble of a bombed house, and lack everything! Old people, women and children who have left their homes, with nothing to cover them and nothing to eat - except for meagre provisions to be shared among thousands.

These apocalyptic episodes are the fruit of a culture where State identity is linked only to ethnic groups or races. It is easy to imagine how hatred, revenge and claims will increase once Bosnia has been split up, which all seem resigned to accepting. Yet man continues to believe he can create peace. What we see is his hurry to parade his so-called legitimate solutions to hide the shame for his failure to act and for his

lack of power before the cry of the poor and the desperate.

More than ever, it is urgent that we help these refugees. Even though the official sources talk only of convoys of aid coming from government-run organizations, we know that the majority of aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina comes from the friends of Medj. and other volunteers working in the name of Charity. May God continue to bless their silent and untiring efforts! You did this for Me!

CHAIN OF ADORATION - More and more people are organizing Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Let us offer also our presence to adore the King and Lord of all nations, and give joy to our Mother Whose Grace will radiate over us.

From Buenos Aires - I felt a personal call to conversion through reading the Echo, and a deeper commitment to serving my fellow men... Thank you for your heroic effort in producing this newsletter. For us who read it it is like a breath of fresh air in this Godless and suffocating world. (Catalina B. De Koleff)

From Lier, Belgium - It is impossible to describe how happy we are to receive Echo each month. We find it so encouraging, real nourishment for the soul... Heaven is with us. Keep on giving it to us because we and the world need you.

From Ireland - I always look forward to the Echo as it is uplifting spiritually and challenging. Keep up your great work. (Fr. P. Dunne)

From RSA- I get various newsletters. Out of them all, Echo is the most beautiful and most inspiring. I cannot imagine a month without the Echo. (Mrs. J. Paterson)

Miguel from Portugal says he notes conflicting information in the Echo. He says that Msgr. Hnilica's article (Echo 121, page 3) is not in keeping with our line of positive spirituality (and our opposition to catastrophic messages that some spread).

There is a difference between catastrophic messages and a Bishop's objective remarks. The Bishop in question is, furthermore, an apostle of Mary. Also Our Lady points out at times our negative behaviour, but always in an effort to correct us; for our own good. You say that we have created confusion, but tell us, does not the Bible create confusion with so much contradiction within its lines when it is not read with God's Spirit?! With prayer, the Holy Spirit will make you understand that like all Mary's children, you are called to take part in the work of redemption so that reparation is made for the evil in the world and God will be merciful with His children.

Drug problem began in family, another family got him out

The following is the testimony of another young man from the Comunità Cenacolo (Upper Room Community) at the Youth Festival in Medjugorje last August. He was asked about his life before he entered the Community. This is what he said:

Like most of the guys in the Community, I had problems in the family. A drug addict is what he is because of the family. For example, when I was born my parents built a restaurant. They didn't have time for me so I lived with my grandmother. I loved her and remained with her till I was twenty-two, but it hurt me to see my friends being accompanied by their father or mother, while I went with my

grandmother. I felt different. As time went by I also wished I had brothers, but I am an only son. A lot of us in the community are only sons. It's important to have someone to talk to.

I began taking drugs because I was alone and I did things without being seen, like smoking with my friends. I needed a father to talk to me about the things I did, if they were right or wrong. Since there was no dialogue in my family I used to talk to my friends of the same age who couldn't help me. My family gave me everything in a material sense, straight away, without waiting: first a bicycle, then the scooter, etc. I didn't learn to earn things and know when to wait for things, to save up for something I desired. So I was always dissatisfied. Eventually I was given a powerful motor bike, then a car and it was then that I started smoking pot. Then came the heroine.

In a way I am happy for what has happened. I see lots of young people who don't take drugs, yet they are burnt out. In the community I had the possibility to understand the real sense of life, even though to get here it took a bad experience which made me suffer greatly. So in a sense I am grateful to God for this. I get on better now with my parents too. At times I go home and sometimes they come here. Our relationship is freer. I have nothing to rebuke them for, because if they made mistakes it was done in good faith, to save me the troubles, the suffering they went through, but which was necessary for me to mature. Anyway, I would never change them for anyone else because I accept them and love them just the way they are. I wouldn't even want them to be different. I think what I have been through can be helpful for young people wanting to start a family. It's important to know how to love children, how to give up some of your time for them, rather than compensate with toys.

In the community I see it would be easier to give someone a tablet to make them sleep, but when someone enters and is going through a bad time one of us has to stay close to him and make him talk.

This is harder, but in the end that guy will feel loved. This is important to remember for a family.

My parents called themselves Christians and they prayed. But on Sundays my father came out from Mass the same as before: he went shooting or spent his time with his friends and very little time with my mother. Or he would come out and blaspheme. He was sad, and Mass made no difference to him. That is why I never felt like going to church. My father prayed but was the same as me, so praying or not praying was the same, I would say. The kids need to see that Mass changes their parents.

How to guarantee that kids won't take drugs? Let them grow up in an open family, one that opens their house to the beggar or stranger, or cares about the old lady down the street in need of help. They need to see that prayer transforms them.

We see this in many families. Some of the guys from the community who are now married (some with 3 kids) have come back. Their children find it easier to go down on their knees and pray because they see that their parents are good and think about others thanks to prayer.

Q. What can you say to a drug addict?

They need to be helped, but in the right manner. The first thing is that his family must stop providing for him if he refuses to go to a community. For a person to join a community he either has to have hit bottom or have no where to go. I was given a choice: either community or jail. Many enter because their families close their doors on them.

The best thing to do for a drug addict who asks you for money is to offer him food or introduce him to a community, but don't give him money. The same for the families. If they know their child is taking drugs they must have the courage to tell him: either you go to a community or we'll close the door on you. I know its terrible for a mother to think that her child is out in the streets maybe stealing or in jail. It's a difficult step to take, but a necessary one. Even if he goes to a community, but knows he could go home, he'd escape two days after because life in community is hard. There's no smoking, no drinking, no TV, no papers, no music! Drug addicts are scared of that because that's the stuff they live on. That's why no one can take that step alone. The guys need to be helped with prayer. They need someone to help make

the decision to enter.

Building up willpower

Another youth tells - I wasted so many years. I used to make fun of the guys who went to the parish youth centre. If only I could turn back the clock! The only true way is Christ's way. If there wasn't much dialogue between my parents and I, all the blame can't be put on them...

Drugs kill you, in all senses. It takes away your willpower, makes you unable to ask God for help, unable to renounce things.

Even before I started on drugs I had a car and a girl, but once home from the discotheque I was still unhappy. None of those things gave me joy, so I ended up trying drugs.

A person who learns to appreciate the simple things of life that God gives him, does not easily fall into the trap of drugs. I couldn't appreciate the car because I didn't earn it. If you want to keep out of drugs you need to learn to make sacrifices. I didn't understand. I didn't have the strength to react when I realized that instant pleasure dies straight away. In the beginning I wasn't able to renounce little things like a smoke, thus I didn't strengthen my character; so how could I say no to the heavy stuff? Kids need to learn to build up their willpower - then one day in need they'll be able to ask God for help.*

Silvio on Cross with Jesus at just 12 years of age

"I am very tall, I have black hair, brown eyes and long limbs. I'm slow at doing my homework, at writing, but I try my best. I love playing and if someone gets hurt I'll go and help them. If they're not badly hurt I'll keep on playing. If I see someone asking for alms and if I have something, I give it to him so he can live a better life. When I go to Mass I ask for the Lord's forgiveness through Confession and Communion. I try to be good with everyone, but at times it isn't easy..." This is Silvio's description of himself.

Silvio was born near Turin in 1967. He was thrilled to receive a typewriter for his tenth Christmas. His first letter said: "Dear Mummy, thank you for giving birth to me. Life is so wonderful! I am so happy to be alive!" In January 1978, the first symptoms of the disease: an insistent pain in his left leg. He was hospitalized for tests and diagnosed with bone cancer. From then on Silvio's story became a long and painful Calvary.

On his first of the seven trips to Paris for chemotherapy, when his father left his bedside in the evening, Silvio tried to hide his tears, frightened as he was to stay alone at night in the hospital: not well, a different language, and just 11 years old! He quickly made friends, though, with another boy from Turin, there for the same reason.

The sick man next to Silvio blasphemed continuously. At first Silvio cried, then desiring to make reparation, he began reciting out loud a Hail Mary for each blasphemy. One morning he told his father: "I'll never be able to make up for all his blasphemies. I'll still be saying Hail Mary's back home in Italy." Though his facial expression hinted at his suffering, he always smiled. He once told his parents: "Since when I saw Child Jesus in a dream I suffer less; I can put up with the pain out of love for Him." And to his mother one day he said: "Try to be better, pray more," to which she replied, "But Silvio, I do pray." "It is not enough, you have to pray more Mummy," Silvio told her.

In 1979, at the beginning of March, Silvio was unable to get up from his bed; the cancer was progressing

and Silvio was given morphine. "Mummy, how it hurts me! Do something to make me better. Tell the Father to come every day to give me Jesus, so we can receive extra strength." Then, in May, both his legs were totally paralyzed. He had to receive medication for the bleeding sores which covered his body, but the pain was atrocious. Then one of his legs broke. He was receiving up to eight injections of morphine per day. At night Silvio continued to recite the Rosary out loud, whilst meditating lengthily on the mysteries. If his mother offered to stay up and pray with him he would say: "No, Mummy, I need to stay alone with Jesus to talk to Him; there is so much to say. You rest, you're tired and you need to sleep." On the morning of 10 June Silvio woke up completely blind. "How awful it is not being able to see the sun, the light, the trees and the flowers, and you Mummy, and Daddy and Carlo (his little brother)." One day, as his mother was reading the story of Fatima to him, he said: "To Francisco and Jacinta Our Lady promised to take them to heaven. She didn't promise anything to me, but I feel Her very close to me. Mummy, if I die will I go to heaven?" And then: "When you die and you'll be suffering, think of how much I suffered Mummy... I am dying, the time is near. It is like dying a little at a time." On the afternoon of 26 July his left pupil burst. This required medication twice daily, causing him excruciating pain. His whole body was covered in sores and just the weight of the bedsheet made him tremble. On the night of 25 July he dreamt of Our Lady Who was calling him. He told his mother: "She had such a beautiful, sweet voice, almost like that of a child, but not quite so. I couldn't get to Her because of the rock that separated us." One day Silvio's mother told him it would have been better for her to be sick in his place, but he told her: "No, Mummy, I prefer to be the sick one because you can stay close to me and look after me. Had it been you, you wouldn't have had your mummy to look after you."

A family friend told how one day he asked Silvio to register a message for a new radio programme that he was launching and Silvio replied: "No, I can say nothing. A radio message can't go beyond Italian soil while a Hail Mary said here in my room reaches out to the whole world."

Silvio asked me one day: "Does Jesus ask for suffering for the salvation of souls?" I replied yes, and that such a service is asked only of those whom Jesus loves the most, those who are destined for heroic sainthood. Silvio did not say a word, but I knew that Jesus was using his suffering to save sinners and that Silvio was aware of it.

The end was near; the heat and perspiration aggravated the sores on his body and Silvio often repeated: "Lord Jesus, I suffer like when You carried the cross and were beaten. I am here in my bed, but I unite my suffering to Yours. Stay close to me Jesus!" To his mother he said: "Mummy, this is Calvary, but next comes crucifixion. I feel that it can't go on for much longer. What am I still doing here in this world? Mummy, be ready... I want to pray alone. Jesus is asking much suffering and prayer from me." On the 24th September 1979 Silvio died.

Silvio's father worked for Fiat in Turin and was a man of great faith. To the editor of the company magazine he wrote: "On the 1st July 1967 I was happy to announce the birth of our son Silvio. Now I ask you to write that after two years of atrocious suffering Silvio has returned to the Father's embrace.

Write that our boy Silvio was a wonderful child, always happy, smiling and generous with everyone. When he first fell ill, though he desired getting better so he could join in the games of his friends, he accepted everything without ever complaining. Tell everyone that our boy Silvio, now more than ever, is telling us to believe in the Lord, especially when the storm is at its worst because after the storm comes the quiet, and then our joy will be great. Tell those who don't believe; I want them to know that Silvio, who accepted to carry such a great cross with so much love, so much trust and obedience to God's plan, was but a boy of twelve. He was a little boy, but he knew how to live like a giant of a man."

(A. Bellezza Prinsi)

* **Shepherds of Christ - newsletter for Priests**, edited by Fr. Edward Carter, S.J., published bi-monthly.

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* **Why is there not a joy in our hearts that overflows?** - "It is difficult to measure our greatness seen with the eyes and heart of God. It is a greatness that should make joy overflow from us to the point of flooding all humanity. Instead we are like dried up rivers. Why? This is the disturbing question that the Conference of Palermo must ask itself and to which, with the help of the Holy Spirit, it must find an answer." (Msgr. Riboldi)

* **The Angels, from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:** The existence of angels is a truth of faith... From infancy to death human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession... The Church venerates the angels who help her on her earthly pilgrimage...

Grasp the Rosary; by now only the rosary can do miracles in the world and in your lives. (25 Jan. 1991)

* **Echo in the Holy Land** - available in various Shrines, such as at the Mount of Beatitudes, and in Bet Shemesh, where Fr. Dezzutto (a Salesian) distributes Echo in various languages to immigrants, Lutheran and Pentecostal centres, Bible societies and to some Anglican ministers.

To our readers! Our thanks to God for all of you, for the Providence which attends to all our needs. We look forward to hearing from you, to receiving your testimonies. Remember that the next issue will be in December (our secretary is getting married and will be absent) - please bear with us.

The chain of the Rosary will keep us united. May the Queen of the Saints bless us all in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Villanova, 2 October 1995

Be aware, my beloved, that I am your Mother