

Voice Medjugorje

Prayer Groups Newspaper

April 2008



Message of Our Lady, Queen of Peace on March 25, 2008

*"Dear children!
I call you to work on your personal conversion. You are still far from meeting with God in your heart. Therefore, spend all the more time in prayer and Adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, for Him to change you and to put into your hearts a living faith and a desire for eternal life. Everything is passing, little children, only God is not passing. I am with you and I encourage you with love. Thank you for having responded to my call."*

Message of Our Lady on April 2, 2008 to Mirjana

Our Lady appeared to the visionary Mirjana Soldo at 9 AM this morning at the Cenacolo Community in Medjugorje. Our Lady gave the following message:

"Dear children!

Also today, as I am with you in the great love of God, I desire to ask you: Are you with me? Is your heart open for me? Do you permit me to purify and prepare it for my Son? My children, you are chosen because, in your time, the great grace of God descended on earth. Do not hesitate to accept it. Thank you. "

After the apparition, Mirjana said, "Our Lady blessed all of us and all religious articles. And while she was leaving, behind her in the blueness, I was able to see a wonderful, warm light."

Message from the annual apparition of Our Lady to Mirjana Dragicevic-Soldo on *March 18, 2008*



The visionary Mirjana Dragicevic-Soldo had daily apparitions from June 24th 1981 to December 25th 1982. During the last daily apparition, Our Lady gave her the 10th secret, and told her that she would appear to her once a year, on the 18th of March. It has been this way through the years.

This year several thousand pilgrims gathered to pray the Rosary at the Cenacolo Community in Medjugorje. The apparition lasted from 14:01 to 14:08.

Mirjana transmitted the following: I have never seen Our Lady address us in this manner. She extended her hands towards us and with her hands extended in this way, she said:

"Dear children, today I extend my hands towards you. Do not be afraid to accept them. They desire to give you love and peace and to help you in salvation. Therefore, my children, receive them. Fill my heart with joy and I will lead you towards holiness. The way on which I lead you is difficult and full of temptations and falls. I will be with you and my hands will hold you. Be persevering so that, at the end of the way, we can all together, in joy and love, hold the hands of my Son. Come with me; fear not. Thank you. "

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REFLECTIONS ON THE MESSAGES FOR PRAYER GROUPS

Work on your personal conversion

Even after the end of Lent, Our Lady invites us to conversion. Although the Lenten time is over, the need of our personal conversion never ends. We can say that our entire life is "the time period", in which we need daily motion and conversion. We shouldn't despair or speculate over it. We can never say "I found God and now I don't need to search for him". Beauty of the Christian life is in the persistent search for God and everyday's following of Christ.

Our Lady comes to us from our Heavenly Father's Glory. Her Immaculate Heart is the heaven itself and above all heavens. Holy Spirit declares about this heaven: "Yahweh has leaned down from the heights of his sanctuary, has looked down from heaven to earth" (Ps 102,20). God didn't remain in the heights, but came down on the earth and became a man to redeem us. From the glory and

beauty that our hearts are longing for comes down on the earth also Our Mother. Her Immaculate Heart knows our hearts and therefore she tell us: *"You are still far from meeting with God in your heart."* She knows that it is possible and that we need it.

That is the reason why she draws our attention to the Resurrected Christ who is alive and present in the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist. In her previous messages she encouraged us and said: *"Unceasingly adore the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I am always present when the faithful are adoring. (March 15, 1984). ...Today I invite you to fall in love with the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Adore Him, little children, in your Parishes and in this way you will be united with the entire world. Jesus will become your friend and you will not talk of Him like someone whom you barely know. Unity with Him will be a joy for you and you will become witnesses to the love of Jesus that He has for every creature. Little children, when you adore Jesus you are also close to me. (September 25, 1995)*

Our Heavenly Mother knows in fullness how precious and great gift is the Holy Eucharist. Also she offered on the altar of her heart sacrifice of God's glory that her Son Jesus offered on the Calvary. Our Lady brings this God's sacrifice perpetually in heaven and in every holy mass that is every day served all around the world. She does that with all her heart, soul and will, because she is totally united with her Son. Our Lady desires that we would also be united with Jesus as she is; that we would love Jesus just as she does. Therefore she tells us: *"Spend all the more time in prayer and Adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, for Him to change you and to put into your hearts a living faith and a desire for eternal life."*

To adore Jesus means to be with Him, to receive his loving gaze. It means to remain with Him in silence, prayer, and singing. We should realize that the Most Blessed Holy Sacrament is the person, Jesus, who left Himself to us. Time we spent with the one we love is always precious whether we talk or remain silent. That is why the adoration is the best prayer in which we can meet God.

Blessed Virgin Mary in her messages encouraged and prepared many hearts to meet Jesus in adoration. During the time of adoration, many experienced Jesus' immeasurable Love that saves, heals and changes. Adoration is the extent of Holy mass. The treasure that He left us in the Holy mass is He Himself presents it the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist. Jesus has risen and lives also today! He is the Immanuel, which means 'God-is-with-us'. If we have enough love for Jesus and our heart is open for Him then we will also find time for Him. We deprive ourselves when we find excuses of not having enough time for Him. We can surely say that a person finds time for he or she likes and prefers.



We are in a big danger that our prayer will become godless. That means a prayer without God. It means that we seek God only when suddenly something bad happens in our lives then we remember of God. But God is not "first aid" or "fire squad" that is close to us only when we are in trouble. He wants to be with us in every moment of our lives, in joy and in sorrow.

Frustrated, discouraged by our problems and doubts we often feel empty and lonely; we live in fear and anxiety. This world lacks living the presence of God and we may feel unbalanced and without support if we don't fight for precious moments spent with God. In the spiritual emptiness of our own life we need to spend time to adore Jesus. We need to acknowledge and tell Him that he is the One who is the first in our lives. We need to listen to Him, to rest with Him, to create a space within us for Him - this is the urgent need of today's Christian. Only in the times of adoration we can get to know God, to accept Him with love and to work together with Him. This live encounter with Jesus in adoration draws us closer to the truth, love, peace and light.

Let us pray: Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of Peace, the words from your messages that you bring us are coming from your purest motherly Heart that loves us. Our Lady, help us to receive your words seriously into our lives. May they bring us closer to your heart so that we could be united with Jesus. Teach us how to pray and help us that our prayer would not be restricted, little, self centered. Help us to embrace the whole world with our prayers. Let our hearts be through the prayer extended and become like your loving heart. May your heart, Mother Mary, purify our hearts from everything that makes you and your Son sad. May we receive through your intercession grace of total surrender to God's will in belief of His love that was sacrificed on the cross for us so that we could be redeemed and saved. Let our hearts be never tired of walking in the faith like you never get tired of walking with us.



Fr. Ljubo Kurtović

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*Our Prayer Group will meet on Saturday, April 5th, 2008.
In this time we pray for the gift of belief and sincere surrender
to God.*

Where to obtain joy of love? In the Holy Eucharist. Jesus became the bread of life so as to give us the life. If we want to grow in love we have to come back to Eucharist, come back to adoration.

(Bl. Mother Theresa of Calcutta)

Trust all things to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Help of Christians and you will see what miracles are. (St. John Bosco)

Who wouldn't rejoice looking at the sun? Even greater is our joy when we through the eyes of our heart get to know Christ, the Sun of Holiness.

(St. Serafim of Sarova)

We must visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament a hundred thousand times a day. (St. Francis de Sales)

A day without prayer is the same as sky without sun, as garden without flowers. (Pope John XXIII.)

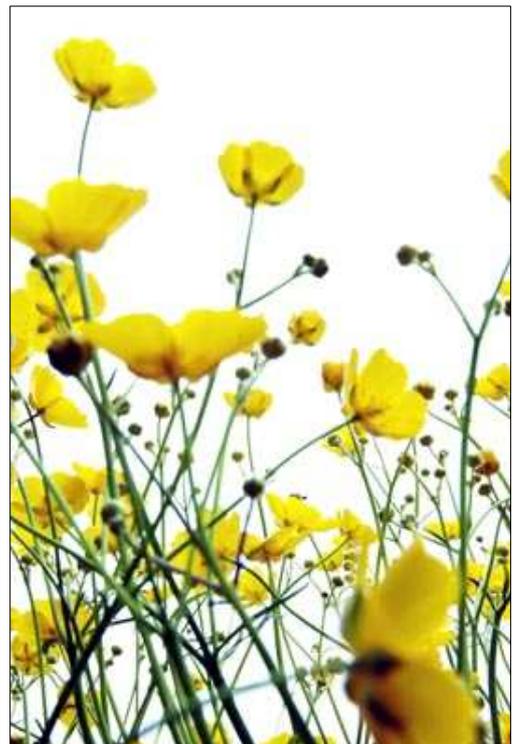
To pray means to listen to God, to talk to God, and to be calm in His presence. Prayer asks what it is that he likes; it is more adoration and giving thanks than asking. For the Lord knows what we need.

(Pope John XXIII.)

Go to Redeemer and tell him that you want to love him! It is the best medicine against evil! (st. Francis de Sales)

Our Heavenly Father is so good that he not only hears the deepest prayers of those who speak to Him; He can also read in the hearts of people whose mouths remain unopened. (Pope John XXIII.)

What is contemplation? Living the life of Jesus. Thereby I want to say: to love Jesus so that we may live within Him and He may live within us. That is what contemplation means. In order to see God, we need to have our hearts pure: without envy, anger, quarrel, ungenerosity!... To contemplate means to allow Jesus to live within us his suffering, his love, his humbleness, to pray with us, to be among us and to lead through us the others towards the holiness. (Bl. Mother Theresa of Calcutta)



...How great is to serve the Lord and to be a priest of Jesus

My name is Maris, I've been a roman catholic priest for five years now. For the first time I got acquainted with Medjugorje in Belgium in 1996. I was given a small statue of Mother Mary with description 'Queen of Peace - Medjugorje' from one Christian community called 'Siloe'. The following year I enrolled in Priest Seminary in Riga and became a priest.

Nowadays I serve as priest in a small town of Cesvaine, in the centre of Latvia. I was sent here right after my ordination and soon I realized that this parish is dedicated to Immaculate Heart of Mary. As time passed by and I became familiar with my parishioners I found out that since the end of 90 -ties they make pilgrimages to Medjugorje. I've heard many testimonies of people who changed their lives there or were healed. Also baptized Christians who didn't live Christian life received Sacraments and started to live their faith every day.

I made my first pilgrimage to Medjugorje just to help my parishioners and to serve them as priest in many ways - to serve holy mass and confess the pilgrims. I was surprised that this place was much different from the sanctuaries I had already visited. In Medjugorje I found parish which was very much alive. Church was not visited only by pilgrims but also by local residents. In the centre of daily life was Holy mass. Pilgrims and local parishioners became one living and praying community - God's children in His Church.

At that time I have been a priest for some time and, as I understand now, I already got some kind of syndrome of the elder son from the parable of the prodigal son who slaved for his father and never once disobeyed any of his orders, but worldly matters so occupied him that he lost the status of beloved son. I was having ordinary sins to which I was giving no attention. It was hard for me to find time every day for prayer from the heart. I think that the element of worldly life started to dominate over the spiritual one.

My second visit of Medjugorje in the fall 2005 was for me something extraordinary. I was invited to attend spiritual seminar of *Prayer, fasting and silence*; I was to serve as a priest to two groups from Latvia and Lithuania. I remember that I came to Medjugorje without any preparation; I even had no idea of what this seminar is about. But, thanks to God, this seminar happened to be for me a real spiritual renewal. I want to say that during this seminar, for the first time in my life I fasted for such a long time. I even did not get a headache



as it usually happens when person fasts. In the evening program of the first day - during the rosary and then adoration - I felt as if God was setting my heart free from some heavy burden and my soul was rising higher and higher becoming increasingly lighter. Afterwards I started to feel love. I felt it during the following three days and I felt love to everyone. And the most important is that I experienced how great is to serve the Lord and to be a priest of Jesus. After three days this grace started to vanish, but I was able to feel it during the prayer of rosary on the fourth day. Then I returned to my usual dryness which was so well-known to me.

Medjugorje also changed my attitude towards Our Lady. I deeply experienced what is already said in the revelation of Church about Mother Mary. Till then She was for me the Holy one living in Heaven, but in Medjugorje I experienced her motherly love, especially during the next *Seminar for priests* in summer 2006. I think I even more realized and understood the role of Our Lady in my spiritual life and in the life of the Church. 'Mother, this is your son' - that is what I felt.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje was for me a real spiritual renewal and brought its fruit into my prayer life and priestly service. From all my heart I give thanks to Our Lady that she loves her children in the Church, that she loves me! Here in Medjugorje I could feel and experience her love that, as I understand, has been guiding me all my life.

father Maris, Latvia

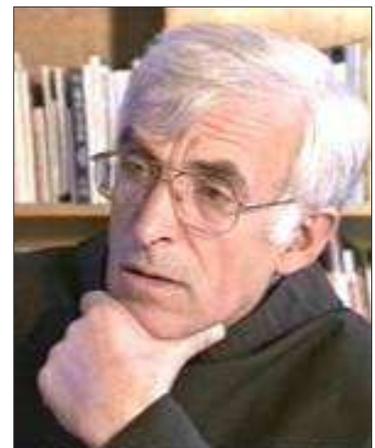
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Fr. Slavko Barbarić OFM „PRAY TOGETHER WITH A JOYFUL HEART “

FRUITS OF A PRAYER LIFE AS PER OUR LADY'S MESSAGES

Prayer is a meeting with God, Who is the fount of life, peace, love, hope, and joy. It is a meeting with Him Who is the source of a new relationship with oneself, with others and with nature. God is the source of rest and internal strength in the battle against evil and sin and in the tireless effort for the good. That is why, in order to be able to evaluate one's prayer life, one must ask, "Are these fruits present in my life as a member of the faithful, or not?"

Some of the messages Our Lady gave during this time help us in this.



A Positive Experience of God's Creation

"Dear children!

Today, little children, I invite you, through prayer, to be with Jesus, so that through a personal experience of prayer you may be able to discover the beauty of God's creatures..." (July 25, 1998)

Everything is created through Jesus. This is what we pray in the Creed. In an encounter with Jesus it is completely normal to receive a new, positive outlook on, and relationship with, one's own life, the lives of others and all of creation. Everything God created through His Word is 'good'. When man was created, God said he was 'very good'. Whoever prays and encounters Jesus in prayer will always find something good in himself, in others and God's creation. This helps him to always live joyously and gratefully in surrender to God the Creator. In this way, such a person will always have a reason to be positive, so that problems and evil will not destroy him. He is always able to resist a negative attitude of the world, in which there is so much negativity and evil, and discover what is good and beautiful. Such a person will never doubt the meaning of his life, of his suffering, of his work or of his existence.

Someone who prays will never become a victim of judging or rejecting others, because he will always be aware that there is something good in the other person. Even if he has a reason to judge and to condemn others, he will always be mindful of the truth that even the worst person can become good. Such a person will have the strength to intercede on everyone's behalf. Even when he finds nothing good in the other person, he will keep in mind that they can be good.

We are all in a continuous danger of seeing only what is bad and not the good. Newspapers, television and radio assist us in this as they fill our ears and eyes with negative news. In turn, if we are not watchful and do not resist this attitude, what our ears and eyes are filled with will also be in our hearts and souls.

For example, it is good to look at what we have said about someone else to a friend. Did we bring out their good side or did we only speak about their bad characteristics?



We are in danger of forgetting the good and remembering the bad. In our personal and community prayer, in the family and in the prayer group, it is very important for us to pray for the healing of our memory. Bad things from our past can impose themselves in such a way so as to make us incapable of seeing what is good and beautiful today.

The newspaper "*Voice Medjugorje*" is a call, invitation for everyone who wishes to pray for intentions of Queen of Peace and for realization of Her plans. By witnessing in our lives we long to become Mary's Light to this world, to spread peace all around. On June 25, 2004 our Lady said: *"Dear children! Today also, joy is in my heart. I wish to thank you for making my plan possible to become reality. Each of you is important therefore, little children, pray and rejoice with me over every heart that has converted and become an instrument of peace in the world. Prayer groups are powerful, and through them I can see, little children, that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world. Thank you for having responded to my call."*

Our small newspaper is published monthly since December, 2004. The new issue is sent via email a few days after the Virgin Mary gives Her message on each 25th day of the month. Voice Medjugorje is published in Russian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Lithuanian language. Through our newspaper we unite in prayer with our brothers and sisters from prayer groups mostly from the eastern countries - Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldavia, Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Slovakia and Czech Republics.

Prayer groups meet according to the agreement made among the members, usually once a week, at their houses or at churches. Prayer meetings are conducted in modest and humble way and consist of praying rosary, meditation upon the text of the Bible and our Lady's message, sharing after the meditation, praying for the prayer intentions of the Queen of Peace, praying for the needs of neighbors, dedication to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

In our lives we attempt to follow the messages of Our Lady, which means:

- *to pray three rosaries a day*
- *to fast every Wednesday and Friday*
- *to attend Holy Masses, often receive Holy Communion and adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament*
- *to pray for the priests and Church*
- *to meet in prayer groups at least once a week, according to agreement of the members*

We usually meet in prayer on the first Saturday of each month. If possible, the prayer meetings are held on this day. At meetings, we pray three rosaries, attend Holy Mass, Adoration and read reflections from the newspaper Voice Medjugorje. We all pray for the intentions given in the newspaper, for the period of a whole month.

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