

**THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE**  
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[www.spiritofmedjugorje.org](http://www.spiritofmedjugorje.org)

**SUBSCRIPTION RATE - FREE WILL OFFERING - PLEASE SEE PAGE 8**

*If this is the first time you have received this newsletter, and you would like a "Beginner's Guide," please contact us for one.*



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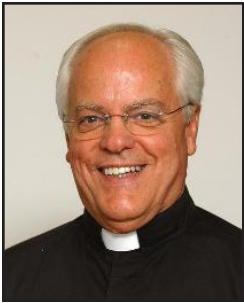
## **CURRENT MONTHLY MESSAGE OF MARCH 25, 2017**

**ON THE 25TH DAY OF EACH MONTH, THE BLESSED VIRGIN GIVES A MESSAGE TO THE VISIONARY, MARIJA, THAT IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE WORLD.**



*Since Easter is on April 16 this year, exactly half the month we spend in Lent and the Triduum, and the other half in the Easter Season. The crucifix above represents both the Passion and the Resurrection of Jesus. This crucifix was hand-carved by subscriber Dick Lichtscheidl. For the story about this crucifix, see page 7.*

“Dear children! In this time of grace, I am calling all of you to open your hearts to God’s mercy, to begin a new life through prayer, penance and a decision for holiness. This time of spring moves you to a new life, to a renewal, in your thoughts and hearts. Therefore, little children, I am with you to help you to say ‘yes’ to God and to God’s commandments with resoluteness. You are not alone; I am with you through the grace which the Most High gives me for you and your descendants. Thank you for having responded to my call.”



Fr. Bill Kiel

# Easter - Celebrate and Evangelize

By Fr. Bill Kiel

The celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus offers such an opportunity to evangelize fellow Catholics and Christians! Easter is a time to let others know the importance of the Resurrection and the role in our salvation. Jesus suffered and died for us and conquered death through His Resurrection. We are able to share in the Resurrection. Have you made that choice? If so, are you telling others about the choice *they* have in sharing eternity with Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

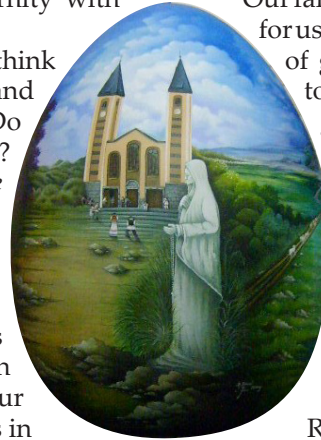
Many Catholics will attend Easter Mass only because they think Christmas and Easter are the two Masses that are important, and (tongue in cheek) the floral displays in church are magnificent! Do they understand the importance and wonderful prayers of the Mass?

Let us answer the plea to "...speak of my Son and of me to all those around you with your life; so that the world would be different; that simplicity and purity would return; that faith and hope would return." (3/2/17) How would you speak of Jesus with your life? Do people see you always striving to attain more of worldly things, rather than seeking a more simplified life dedicated to serving family members and others? Are you an example of living a life with prayer being an integral part of your life, growing in purity of heart? Do you live your faith by trying to live God's will? Do you see hope in all situations in your life, even those that seem so hopeless to many Catholics?

During the Easter season, try to engage the weak and lukewarm Catholics in conversation concerning the importance of Jesus' Resurrection. Also, participate in the Easter Vigil liturgy; it is one of the most beautiful and meaningful expressions of our Catholic faith. Encourage others to participate; invite them to accompany you to church. The more you participate in Holy Week and Easter liturgies, you will come to understand the role of Jesus in our Catholic

faith. The more you understand, the more you will want others to share the deeper beauty of the Catholic faith. The love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit will be evidenced through the sacraments of Confession, Holy Eucharist, Baptism and Confirmation.

Our faith is filled with opportunities for us to receive such an abundance of graces! We have the choice to participate and receive graces, or we can choose not to participate. Why would we not participate? "Pray, pray, pray with the heart... Pray that everyone would come to know my Son, so that the world would change, that the world would be saved." (3/2/17)



Medjugorje Easter Egg  
(May 2011)

Easter celebrates the Resurrection of the Son of God. Help others come to know about Jesus and to know Jesus personally. Celebrate the Easter season! Let us pray: *Mary our Mother, help us to open our hearts in prayer and be bold in letting others know your Son, Jesus.*

## Our Lady's Message to Mirjana on March 2, 2017

Dear children, With motherly love I am coming to help you to have more love and that means more faith. I am coming to help you to live with love the words of my Son, so that the world would be different. Therefore, apostles of my love, I am gathering you around myself. Look at me with the heart, speak to me as to a mother about your pains, sufferings and your joys. Ask me to pray to my Son for you. My Son is merciful and just. My motherly heart would desire for you also to be like that. My motherly heart would desire that you, apostles of my love, speak of my Son and of me to all those around you with your life; so that the world would be different; that simplicity and purity would return; that faith and hope would return. Therefore, my children, pray, pray, pray with the heart, pray with love, pray with good works. Pray that everyone would come to know my Son, so that the world would change, that the world would be saved. With love live the words of my Son. Do not judge, instead love one another so that my heart could triumph. Thank you.

## Bits and "Peaces"

- We are hoping to get more prayer warriors to sign up to pray for the prayer intentions posted on our website. Please go to [www.spiritofmedjugorje.org/prayerWarriors.php](http://www.spiritofmedjugorje.org/prayerWarriors.php) to sign up.
- Suggestion from subscriber Mary Ann Condit: "I just finished reading the latest issue and read that we should all pray a Hail Mary for the president. Recently I received an email suggesting we 'flood the White House' with Mass cards for Donald Trump. I think this is a great idea and hope you do, too. Send to: President Donald J. Trump, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20500." Remember that when we pray for our leaders, we are praying for ourselves!
- Last month, we offered Our Lady of Sorrow cards with an excerpt from the January 2, 2017 message. The company printed more than what I ordered, so we have a lot left. If you would like some (limit of 5 per person), please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to us at P.O. Box 6346, Erie, PA 16512, and let us know how many cards you want.

*Our thanks to Joanne Warren, Sue Taccone, Diane Niebauer, Kathy Wayman, Chris Falk, Marge Spase, Sue Kirby, Vickie DeCoursey, Georgia Chludzinski, Kathy Luschini, Dianne Yochim, Barb Sirianni, Mary Tirak, Rose Leach, Diana and Nate Englund, Louise Lotze, Stephanie Koshinski, Darlene Wilkinson, and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the March mailing. We thank Susannah Klins, Louise Lotze, Mike Golovich and Johannes Dittrich for their photos. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, and our webmaster, Jason Klins.*

# Jesus Appeared in Medjugorje

By Sr. Emmanuel

Long ago, Vicka told me that during the apparition on Good Friday 1982, the Madonna appeared with Jesus. But not the way She comes every year at Christmas, when She is radiant with joy, holding Her newborn Child. On that day, Jesus appeared as an adult. He was suffering His Passion and wearing His Crown of thorns. His blood was flowing down His forehead, cheeks and His beard. His face was covered with spit and mud. He was swollen from the blows He had received during the night in the prison of Caiaphas and the cruel abuse inflicted upon Him by Pilate's soldiers. He was wearing a red mantle all torn and bloody.

"Dear children," said the Gospa. "Today I have come with my Son Jesus in his Passion so that you may see how much He suffered for you and how much He loves you." I asked Vicka: "Did Jesus talk to you also?" "No", she replied, "Jesus remained silent, He said nothing. But I looked into His eyes and I saw such tenderness there, such love, such humility that for me it was more powerful than any words He could have said. I saw how much He suffered and at the same time how much He loved us! You know, I will never forget the eyes of Jesus in His Passion!"

The visionary Marija also told the story of the apparition of Christ in an interview on Radio Maria (Italy) last February 25th. This is her story: "At that time we were being persecuted by the Communists. They took us to the mental hospital which was filled with people who had mental disabilities. We suffered a lot because they told us that we, too, would end up the same way as them. We were 16 year-old children and we were afraid. When Our Lady appeared,

we started to cry, and we told Her that we did not have any more strength to continue, we were too exhausted.

"Earlier the Gospa had warned us: we should neither eat nor drink anything the Communists would give us. We were not to accept anything from them. We later learned from one of them that they had tried to drug us. They had their plan: they had said on television that we were drugged and they wanted viewers to see that. Fortunately, the Blessed Virgin had warned us of the danger. Then they brought us back to the church in the village, and at night, we returned home, exhausted. That is when the Blessed Virgin appeared to us. We told Her that we couldn't take it anymore, that we didn't deserve what they were doing to us. To make us afraid, they said for example that Vicka's father, who was working in Germany, would be



Corpus of Jesus in Medjugorje

arrested and put in jail as soon as he came back home, that he would no longer be able to earn money to support his family and that his family would die of hunger.

"We told Our Lady everything they did to us, how they had arrested us, taken us to an asylum, and how they were threatening us with having to stay there forever and becoming insane. It was then that She showed us Jesus with a crown of thorns, covered in wounds, bathed in blood, and She told us: 'As He has done that out of love for you and for the whole of humanity, do it for Him as well.' Jesus said nothing; He only looked at us... That night, I was unable to sleep, it had left a very deep impression. We will never forget it!"

Children of Medjugorje, [www.childrenofmedjugorje.com](http://www.childrenofmedjugorje.com), April 2016 report

## Medjugorje – a Metaphor for Life

*The following is an excerpt, used with permission, from Mirjana Soldo's book My Heart Will Triumph.*

Our Lady knows what it feels like to lose a child, but She was reunited with Him in Heaven and has been with Him ever since. We're destined to see our departed loved ones again, but it's not always easy to understand God's will...

Our Lady has shown me that Heaven is devoid of suffering. I see abundant truth in the statement heard so often at funerals: "They're in a better place now." Our true home is with God. We are like pilgrims on Earth, here for a brief sojourn on our way to an eternal reality that transcends time, space and death...

People who think that the existence of suffering disproves the existence of God misunderstand their own existence. If the world were devoid of sorrow, could we recognize joy?

If sickness did not exist, would we cherish good health? In many ways, a pilgrimage to Medjugorje is a metaphor for life. The pilgrim endures the pain of long-distance travel and the exhaustion of climbing the hills, but in the end he realizes that all the suffering opens a doorway to love.

*Editor's note: Mirjana's book is available through most bookstores. If you are a subscriber and cannot afford a copy of the book, let us know and we will send you a copy for free, while supplies last. We also have many copies left of our own book, I Have Come to Tell the World That God Exists, which we will also send for free to those who cannot afford it. Someone has graciously provided the funds for us to be able to do this for our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of publishing. We are very grateful. Please say a Hail Mary for this generous lady, who would not want her name published.*

## Mirjana's Message on March 18, 2017

"Dear children! My motherly desire is for your hearts to be filled with peace, and for your souls to be pure so that in the presence of my Son you could see His face. Because, my children, as a mother I know that you thirst for consolation, hope and protection. You, my children, consciously and unconsciously are seeking my Son. I also, as I passed the time on earth, rejoiced, suffered and patiently endured pains, until my Son, in all His glory, removed them. And that is why I am saying to my Son: help them always. You, my children, with true love, illuminate the darkness of selfishness which all the more envelopes my children. Be generous. May both your hands and heart always be open. Do not be afraid. Abandon yourselves to my Son with trust and hope. As you look towards Him, live life with love. To love means to give oneself, to endure, and never to judge. To love means to live the words of my Son. My children, as a mother I am speaking to you: only true love leads to eternal happiness. Thank you."



## Homily at English Mass, June 21, 2014

*The following is a transcription of a homily from the English Mass in Medjugorje on June 21, 2014. We thank Cathy Nolan for taking the time to transcribe it. Cathy said the priest was from Ireland, but she did not know his name. You can view the homily in the archives of homilies at the English Masses at [www.marytv.tv](http://www.marytv.tv).*

A number of years ago, when I was a student, I met a priest from one of the South American countries. We were talking, and I asked him about his country, and I asked him what percent of the population was Catholic. He said it is 100% Catholic, but 95 % of the people believe in Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the other 5% believe in God. One of the things that has struck me so forcefully since coming to Medjugorje is that in all of the messages of Our Lady, and in everything that happens here, the focus is always drawn to Her Son. That is what She wants. I saw it yesterday in the beautiful Veneration of the Cross. We saw it so movingly on Thursday, the Feast of Corpus Christi, with the beautiful and moving Corpus Christi procession, and the reverence that there is here for Jesus, present in the Eucharist.

As we were walking around the streets on Thursday night [in the procession], I thought about something that I read a number of years ago. Many of you here may have heard of Sr. Briega McKenna. Briega McKenna is an Irish Franciscan Sister who, in her own life, had an extraordinary experience of healing. And as a result of that, she has dedicated her life to traveling the world, sharing the message of the Gospel. And a number of years ago, she wrote a wonderful book called *Miracles Do Happen*. And in one of the chapters of that book, called "The Transforming Power of the Eucharist," she describes an incident. She was in South America and a priest that she knew invited her to his parish, and he asked her to come with him on a journey. It took them hours to get there on very rough terrain, to a community in a very poor area, where he was able to go only once a year to celebrate Mass.

She describes the scene as they arrive on the mountain side area...there is no church, no semblance even of a church...there is a broken down table for an altar. But there are hundreds and hundreds of people walking towards this spot for this one Mass that they have every year. She describes the poverty and the squalor, and she was really disturbed by it. In her own words, she said she had been a daily communicant since she was twelve years of age, but this one Mass changed her life. And the reason for that was that just before the Mass, she noticed an old woman coming with a little bundle in her arms, and she went up to this woman, thinking this was a gift she was bringing for the priest, and the woman opened the bundle and inside was a little boy who was very badly burned and was screaming with pain. Then the priest and Sr. Briega said a little prayer with him and the priest suggested that the lady place the little boy under the make-shift altar for the Mass. That she did.

Briega goes on to describe the extraordinary reverence with which these people prayed, particularly when it came to the Consecration. When the Mass was over, Briega went up to see this woman, and to see the little boy, but he was nowhere to be seen when she got to the altar. And she met the woman and she said, "Where is the little boy?" And she pointed to him. He had crept out from under the altar and was playing with the other little children. And Briega McKenna looked at the woman and she just couldn't believe it. She said, "What happened?" And the woman said, "Sister, what do you mean, what happened. Didn't Jesus come?"

I read that passage a few times and I thought I had missed something here. Then I realized it was my own lack of faith that didn't allow me to believe what those people in their poverty had no difficulty believing – in the healing power of Jesus in the Eucharist, that that *could* happen and *did* happen. So I am very conscious of that here. We have this privilege of celebrating the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. He comes to us in the most intimate way, and comes to all of us, whatever our state in life. Whatever state our life is in, in our brokenness, in our pain, in our grief, in our sinfulness, He wants to be intimately united with us.

One last little thought – a few months ago, as you will probably remember, President Barak Obama paid a visit to Pope Francis in the Vatican. The next day it was worldwide news, and there was one picture in particular of these two powerful men meeting together in the Pope's study, sharing a joke. Their faces were filled with laughter. And that morning, I visited one of the schools in my parish at home, in a little village called Aral, a beautiful little school with beautiful children. And in one of the classrooms, the teacher was showing them that picture on a white board screen of the two men meeting each other. And he said to the class, "Which of those men do you think is the most powerful man in the world?" And one little girl...spoke up and said, "Sir, it's neither of them. It's the Guy hanging on the Cross behind them."

That to me is what Medjugorje does. It reminds us it's the Guy on the Cross; it's the One present to us in the Word of God today; it's the One present here in the congregation. But most of all, it's the One present here on the altar every time we come to Mass. Because every time we come to Mass, heaven and earth meet together in the most powerful way. That is the message of Our Lady of Medjugorje. It is also the message of St. John the Baptist, whose feast day we celebrate next week, and who is so important here in this village. He was the one who gave us the line, "Behold the Lamb of God. Behold Him who takes away the sins of the world." I think if we could all go away from here, those of us who have been privileged to be invited to this beautiful place, if we could go away from here with just our faith in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, strengthened just by a morsel, that would make His mother very happy.

*www.marytv.tv*



*The Irish priest giving the homily*

# Apparitions of St. Joseph

By June Klins

Before the traditional feast day of St. Joseph (March 19), I realized my neglect of this saint in our March issue. I felt I had let down Our Lady by neglecting Her spouse. Then I remembered that he has another feast day coming up on May 1, St. Joseph the Worker. A second chance! Perhaps our patron saint, St. Martin de Porres, had something to do with this, since he had a devotion to St. Joseph. How awesome God is, because I was not aware of the following information until after the March issue was published!

Many people know that St. Joseph appeared in Fatima on October 13, 1917, holding the Child Jesus. St. Joseph also appeared with Our Lady at Knock, Ireland. But most people are probably not aware of the apparitions of St. Joseph in Itapiranga, Brazil from 1994 to 1998, in which St. Joseph appeared along with Our Lady and Jesus to a young man named Edson Glauber. In January of 2010, Bishop Carillo Gritti declared a Decree of Worship favoring the appearances.

Our Lady appeared in Brazil under the title "Queen of the Rosary and of Peace." Like Fatima and Medjugorje, Her messages stressed the need for conversion, praying the Rosary, Mass, Confession, and penance to save the world caught up in unbelief and sin. She and Jesus urged devotion to St. Joseph's Most Chaste Heart.

Jesus taught Edson the following prayer: *"The most Chaste Heart of St. Joseph, protect and defend my family from evil and danger. The most Chaste Heart of St. Joseph, pour out the graces and virtues of your most chaste heart upon the entire humanity. St. Joseph, I surrender to you. I consecrate my soul and my body, my heart and my whole life to you. St. Joseph, defend devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary."*



St. Joseph statue in Medjugorje

*Destroy the devil's plans with the grace of your chaste heart. Bless the Holy Church, the Pope, bishops and priests from all over the world. We give ourselves to you with love and confidence now and forever. Amen."*

St. Joseph said that all those who honor his Chaste Heart, *"will receive the grace of my protection from all evils and dangers. For those who surrender to me will not be slaughtered by misfortunes, by wars, hunger, by diseases and other calamities, they will have my Heart as a refuge for their protection. Here, in my Heart, all will be protected against the divine justice in the days that will come. All who consecrate themselves to my Heart, honoring it, they will be looked upon by my Son Jesus with eyes of mercy, Jesus will pour out His love and will take to the glory of His Kingdom all those I put in my Heart."*

When St. Joseph appeared on the first Wednesday of March 1998, he said, *"On every first Wednesday of the month, my Chaste Heart pours numerous graces on all who rely on my intercession. On these Wednesdays, men will not receive a shower of simple graces, but very strong torrents of extraordinary graces! I will share them with those who honor me and rely on me, all the blessings, all the virtues, and all the love I received from my Divine Son Jesus and my spouse the Blessed Virgin Mary while still living in this world and all the graces that I continue to receive in the glory of paradise."* The request came with the promise: *"I will give them the graces to be able to resolve the most difficult problems and urgent necessities, that to the eyes of man seem impossible, but that, through my intercession to God, will be possible. I grant the graces of my Heart to all sinners so they may convert."*

Editor's note: To read more of the messages, you can visit the website, [www.santuariodeitapiranga.com.br](http://www.santuariodeitapiranga.com.br).

## The Thief Who Stole Heaven in 2017

Divine Mercy Sunday is on April 23 this year. Jesus told St. Faustina, "The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion [on Divine Mercy Sunday] shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment." No Purgatory!

Recently I heard about a man who received these special graces the month before Divine Mercy Sunday. I was brought to tears when a priest told this story in his homily, which was about having compassion (mercy).

Father said that a woman asked him if he would come to pray for her husband who was dying. Of course, Father obliged, and when he got there, the woman told him that her husband had never been baptized. So Father baptized him with his family surrounding him. Then Father heard his Confession and absolved him of his sins. (This was not necessary because the Sacrament of Baptism would do this, but Father, in his wisdom, probably thought this man would feel better doing this.) Then the man received his First Holy Communion and Confirmation (a priest has permission to do this when someone is dying). Then Father asked the woman

if they had been married in the Church and she said, "No," but that she always wanted this. So Father absolved her and then witnessed their marriage. After that, Father gave the man the Sacrament of the Sick, and prayed the prayers of the dying for him. Two hours later, the man died, after having received six of the seven sacraments! Father said there is no doubt that this man went to Heaven – that he was like the Good Thief, St. Dismas, "the thief who stole Heaven." Do we have an awesome, loving, and merciful God, or what?!!!

After I heard this story, I began to wonder who prayed for this man to receive such an awesome gift. Of course, I will never know, but if you are reading this, maybe it was YOU! If you are praying for Our Lady's intentions or if you have had a Mass said for Her intentions, which includes the conversion of unbelievers, She applies those graces where they are most needed, and at that moment, this man needed those graces. Thank you for having responded to Her call.

Editor's note: As of March 25, 2017, the number of Masses reported is 17,582. I'm sure Our Lady is smiling!



# The Sharpest Tool in the Shed

By June Klins

Recently a man shared with me a problem in his family, and asked what would be the best prayer to alleviate this situation. He had left a message on my answering machine about this in the evening, so that gave me time to pray about how to answer him. This man said he felt that I might know the right “tool” that he should use for his problem. So I prayed for the wisdom to give him the answer that the Lord wanted me to give him. I assumed he was already praying the Rosary for this intention, so what more could I suggest?

Should I send him a Medjugorje prayer cloth to pray with? Should I suggest Our Lady Undoer of Knots Novena? Should I suggest he pray through the intercession of certain saints or through the intercession of the Holy Souls in Purgatory? Should I tell him I will give his intention to the international internet prayer group (IIPG) where over 4,300 people will pray for him? The list goes on and on.

After praying about this at Mass and Adoration the next morning, what came to me was to tell him to *fast* for this intention. Most people are not receptive when I suggest fasting, so I prayed for a sign that this is really what I was supposed to tell him. I never trust my own thoughts. And for something as important as this – I did not want to be wrong. So I asked the Lord to send me something about fasting that morning if this is what He wanted me to propose to this man. Within the hour, the Lord placed in my hands a newsletter from the charismatic renewal center of our diocese, with an article entitled “Fasting: God’s Secret Weapon” (see below). I had my answer.

Before I called this man back, I prayed to the Holy Spirit to give me the words and to give him an open mind to what I was going to present to him. I asked him how serious his

problem was, and he confirmed that it was indeed serious. I told him if it was that serious then it would require not just a “tool,” but the “best tool.” He needed the “sharpest tool in the shed.” And that is fasting, particularly fasting on bread and water on Wednesdays and Fridays. Sure it is hard, but how badly do you want your prayer answered? William Penn said, “No pain, no palm; no thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown.” And the visionary Ivan said, “Prayer without fasting is like a soldier with only one leg.”

Fortunately this man was very open to my suggestion. I told him to start very slowly and work up to it, and then I shared with him some of the



Bread and water in Medjugorje

many blessings I have gotten in my own life that I feel are a result of fasting. (I know we are not supposed to tell people we are fasting, but everyone should know that I fast. How could I tell others to fast if I did not do it myself???) After my first intention was answered in a way that could only have come from God, I began fasting for Our Lady’s intentions in thanksgiving. But the blessings continued to flow over the years. “Through fasting and prayer, one can stop wars, one can suspend the laws of nature.” (Our Lady, July 21, 1982)

*Editor’s note: Some people do not fast during the Easter season, which runs from Easter until Pentecost. I checked with one of the guides in Medjugorje to see if they fast there during Easter, and she confirmed that they do fast during that time “to obtain more graces.”*

## Fasting: God’s Secret Weapon

By Kathy Wilcox

Lent is here; will I take the easy choice and give up candy to appease my conscious? Or will I finally attempt and accomplish real fasting? My past failures prompted researching modern and biblical fasting. A quick Google search provides a list of forty Bible verses on fasting, both in the Old and New Testament – solid biblical proof.

To really learn the lost art of fasting and enjoy its fruit, I must listen to Jesus. He assumes His followers will fast, and even promises it will happen. He doesn’t say “if,” but “when you fast.” And He doesn’t say His followers *might* fast, but “they will”. “And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast” (Matthew 9: 15-16).

How many of us practice this self-restraint? I can only speak for myself, since the topic rarely emerges in casual conversation, even among Christians.

Why fast? Scripture teaches that serious spiritual warfare using the power combination of prayer and fasting destroys

strongholds. These can include embedded bad habits, chronic sins and lazy spiritual habits, and even Satanic influences in my life or in others. Fasting can also bring God’s power into our ministry and outreach to others. Fasting creates a void eager for filling with the Holy Spirit by wedding our prayers to the Holy Spirit, who then makes huge power plays!

Can I do this? I need to stop thinking about it and just put down the fork. However, those who regularly practice this spiritual tool recommend starting slowly by skipping a meal, either every day or even a few days a week. A successful beginning helps individuals build up to an all-day or three-day fast.

Our Lady of Medjugorje suggests fasting by eating only bread and water two days a week – Wednesdays and Fridays. Consider and address your personal health issues before attempting this discipline. Water and juice provide critical hydration for prolonged periods of fasting. Some choose to fast from watching television or giving up the internet. This is a good alternative for those who have health

problems that would not allow fasting.

Planning promotes victory over hunger and habit by filling mealtime with other activities. Pacing around thinking about food, or using distractions such as a favorite TV show, wastes valuable effort. I also cannot focus on losing weight as a benefit. This is going to be difficult, but the goal is spiritual only! I also must avoid calling attention to my actions. Matthew 6:16 reminds us, "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to

you, they have received their reward." The key to successful fasting is to remember that prayer must be combined with fasting for God's power to ignite. I can pray in tongues, pray the Rosary, pray novenas, pray Scripture, and walk and pray. Just fast and pray.

As I begin this challenge, I trust Our Lord to provide the strength, and fulfill the promises! Will you join me? I am expecting miracles!

*Used with permission, "Reflections," newsletter of the Word of Life Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center, Vol. XXXI, #3*

## Incomplete News

*The following is an excerpt from an update written by Denis Nolan on March 9, 2017.*

The following may help those confused by a recent article written by the Bishop of Mostar-Duvno and posted on his Diocesan website on February 26, 2017, trying to bring an end to events taking place in his diocese – while at the same time the Pope is sending his envoy into his diocese to care for those events!

As the bishop of Warsaw-Prague (Poland) prepares to go to Medjugorje as the Pope's special envoy, the Catholic media is spreading on-going attacks by the Bishop of Mostar against the authenticity of Our Lady's apparitions there, even though the Secretary for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith had clarified in an official directive dated May 26, 1998 (Pr. No. 54/81-06419) that Bishop Peric's negative opinion "should be considered as the personal conviction of the Bishop of Mostar which he has the right to express as Ordinary of the place, but which is and remains his personal opinion" [editor emphasis]...

On October 9, 1998, five months after that announcement from the CDF, the Bishop of Mostar, Mons. Ratko Peric, went on record stating before witnesses that he had never met or spoken to any of the visionaries and that he didn't believe in any apparition of Our Lady, specifically naming Fatima and Lourdes... Though the Catholic media in America would spread widely Bishop Peric's June 15, 2006 demand for obedience and an end to the events of Medjugorje, it gave little notice to the July 15, 2006 rebuke he received from Cardinal Pulic, the President of his Bishops' Conference, ("Medjugorje and the Church", Queenship, p. 183, 184)...

On April 6, 1995 Pope John Paul II stated publicly: "I want

## About the Cover

On November 29, 2016, subscriber Dick Lichtscheidl emailed me with a request to pray for his daughter who was scheduled for surgery after having been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Remembering that at least two people who had pancreatic cancer prayed with the Medjugorje prayer cloths and were healed, I offered one of our prayer cloths to Dick and also told him I would give the intention to my internet prayer group of over 4,300 people.

The week before Christmas, I got the crucifix, (pictured on the cover) in the mail with a letter from Dick. He said that his daughter's biopsy showed there was "no cancer." Dick wrote, "Even the doctor said, 'This is a Godly thing.' It was 90% cancer and now it is gone. We used the prayer cloth along with Our Lady's Prayer for the Sick. I've been a woodcarver for 40 years. Please accept my carving of Stylized Jesus. This is from my heart."

*Editor's note: For Our Lady's Prayer for the Sick, go to [spiritofmedjugorje.org/oct2006.htm](http://spiritofmedjugorje.org/oct2006.htm). I always enclose it with the prayer cloths. To receive a prayer cloth, please see page 8.*



*Sign pointing to the St. John Paul II Building in Medjugorje*

to go to Medjugorje," (Slobodna Dalmacija, April 8, 1995, p.3). Several months before the Holy Father's June 22, 2003 trip to Banja Luka in Bosnia, Zenit made public a report from the Holy See that he also wished to visit Mostar. Though the government had extended an invitation, local media reported the Bishop of Mostar's response that it would be a mistake for the Pope to come into his diocese (as he told the media every time the Pope traveled to Croatia or Bosnia). And so

the Holy Father had to content himself on that trip – his last to the country – with only visiting Banja Luka, the Serbian capital of Bosnia. Previously he had visited the Muslim capital, Sarajevo, twice. He was never able to visit Mostar, the Catholic capital of Bosnia. Bishop Ratko Peric, the Ordinary of the diocese that incorporates St. James Parish in Medjugorje, would not sanction Pope John Paul II coming into his diocese.

The Blessed Mother is calling to us through Her messages to pray for the shepherds, not to judge them. She will triumph alongside them She tells us..."My apostles, pray for your Church, love and do works of love. No matter how betrayed or wounded, it is here because it comes from the Heavenly Father. Pray for your shepherds so that in them you may see the greatness of the love of my Son. Thank you." (June 2, 2016)

*Editor's note: You can visit <http://marytv.tv/?cat=5> to read the entire update, which was too long to print here. If you do not have internet access and would like a copy of the entire update, you can send a self-addressed stamped envelope to us at P.O. Box 6346, Erie, PA 16512, and mark "Denis' update" on it.*

### Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for April

**Young People:** That young people may respond generously to their vocations and seriously consider offering themselves to God in the priesthood or consecrated life.



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## MARY IS CALLING YOU

On June 24, 1981 in Medjugorje, Our Lady appeared to six children. She identified Herself as the Blessed Virgin, Queen of Peace, and has continued to appear daily. Her message is PEACE, peace with God and man. Her words to the visionaries, "I have come to tell the world that God exists. He is the fullness of life, and to enjoy this fullness and obtain peace, you must return to God."

Today, all but three of the visionaries have daily apparitions of the Blessed Mother. During the apparitions, the visionaries do not react to light, don't hear any sound or react to being touched. They feel that they are outside of time and space. All the visionaries declare to see the Blessed Virgin as they see other people - in three dimension. They pray and speak with Her.

The Blessed Mother is confiding ten secrets to each visionary (some are chastisements for the world) and promises to leave a visible sign at the place of the apparitions in Medjugorje for all humanity. This time, this period of grace, is for CONVERSION

and a DEEPENING OF FAITH. After the visible sign, those still living will have little time for conversion.

Father Jozo Zovko, who was the pastor of St. James when the apparitions began, has spoken about what he calls "the weapons" or the "the five stones" of Our Lady. They are: prayer with the heart, especially the Rosary; Eucharist; Holy Bible; monthly Confession; and fasting.

The publisher recognizes and accepts that the final authority regarding the apparitions at Medjugorje rest with the Holy See in Rome.

To borrow an original prayer cloth from Medjugorje for a week, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the address below. You must include your phone number. If you want a prayer cloth we made to keep, send a self-addressed stamped business size (4 1/8" x 9 1/2") envelope with \$.71 postage on it.



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