

THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE
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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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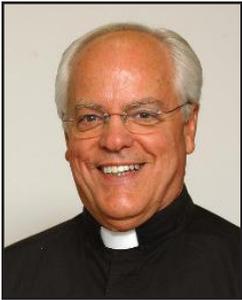
CURRENT MONTHLY MESSAGE OF OCTOBER 25, 2017

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.



The picture above was cropped, with permission, from a painting by Mike Conti, an artist from Wales. Mike calls the painting of St. James Church in the early days, "Medjugorje in Autumn." To appreciate the fall colors in this picture, please visit our website and click on "current issue." Mike also has written music about Medjugorje which you can listen to on youtube.com.

Dear children! I am calling you to be prayer in this time of grace. You all have problems, afflictions, sufferings and lack of peace. May saints be models to you and an encouragement for holiness; God will be near you and you will be renewed in seeking through your personal conversion. Faith will be hope to you and joy will begin to reign in your hearts. Thank you for having responded to my call.



Fr. Bill Kiel

Do I Have An Open Heart?

By Fr. Bill Kiel

Recently, we were given the following words: "...my Son... is sowing love in open hearts." And "...have open hearts always ready for mercy and forgiveness." (10/2/17)

Prior to every pilgrimage to Medjugorje, each pilgrim is given the Novena to the Holy Spirit, and is asked to pray the novena for a spiritually enriching experience while on the pilgrimage.

An open heart is requested of each pilgrim, and to be aware of how God is moving in their hearts, they are also reminded not to restrict God's love in their hearts. Be open to what God has for them!!!

While on pilgrimage, we are constantly reminded to ask the Holy Spirit to guide our thoughts, and pray to hear our inner thoughts with an open heart—a heart that discerns God's voice or the Blessed Mother's message. Through our prayers to the Holy Spirit, we are able to trust the words we hear. Words that were given to us (1/25/14) help us to know we are not alone in our quest to know God's will: "I am praying with you and for you, little children, that from day to day you may become still more open to God's will."

Many pilgrims go to Medjugorje with a list of needs, wants, or just an open heart to be able to discern God's will in their life. As pilgrims, or praying at home, we are reminded: "Pray, little children, so that you may comprehend who you are and where you need to go. ...you will be everything and will achieve everything only if you pray and are open to God's will – to God who desires to lead you towards eternal life." (11/25/14)

During a pilgrimage, our hearts open more and more to God's love, and so our thoughts and our prayers begin to change and our transformation continues. The peace beyond understanding becomes more apparent and we feel a difference in ourselves, something more intense than ever before. Becoming aware of the peace within us, we want others to share that peace and love of God. While going through the days of pilgrimage, it seems words that have been given to us are being lived in a new way in our individual lives. "You, little children, open the door of your heart



The Holy Spirit pictured on a mural in Tihaljina, near Medjugorje.

so that hope, peace and love, which only God gives, may grow in your heart." (8/25/16) "Open your hearts, little children, so that God may fill you with His love and you will be a joy to others." (5/25/15) "...my dear children, with hearts open and full of love, cry out the name of the Heavenly Father that He may illuminate you with the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit you will become a spring of God's love." (4/2/14)

Upon leaving Medjugorje filled with many new or renewed experiences

with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – we are responding to the words, "In this time of grace, I am calling all of you to open your hearts to God's mercy, to begin new life through prayer, penance and a decision for holiness." (3/25/17)

For those unable to travel to Medjugorje, we can set aside time in our lives to "retreat" and open our hearts to God's love, and ask our Blessed Mother to bring us to a deeper relationship with Her Son. Pray, pray, pray.

Mary Queen of Peace, pray for us.

Message to Mirjana on October 2, 2017

"Dear children, I am speaking to you as a mother – with simple words, but words filled with much love and concern for my children who, through my Son, are entrusted to me. And my Son, who is of the eternal now, He is speaking to you with words of life and is sowing love in open hearts. Therefore, I am imploring you, apostles of my love, have open hearts always ready for mercy and forgiveness. According to my Son, always forgive your neighbors, because in that way peace will be in you. My children, care for your soul, because it alone is what truly belongs to you. You are forgetting the importance of family. A family does not need to be a place of suffering and pain, but a place of understanding and tenderness. Families who strive to live according to my Son live in mutual love. While He was still little, my Son would say to me that all people are His brothers. Therefore, remember, apostles of my love, that all people whom you meet are family to you – brothers according to my Son. My children, do not waste time thinking about the future, worrying. May your only concern be how to live well every moment according to my Son. And there it is – peace for you! My children, do not ever forget to pray for your shepherds. Pray that they can accept all people as their children; that, according to my Son, they may be spiritual fathers to them. Thank you!"

Our thanks to Sue Taccone, Diane Niebauer, Julie Hansen, Marge Spase, Chris Falk, Marge Burchard, Kathy Luschini, Peggy Chludzinski, Sue Verga, Peggy Smith, Cindy Bielani, Barb Sirianni, Vickie DeCoursey, Irene & Dan Zuba and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the October mailing. We thank Mike Golovich for his photos and Dorothy Cavanaugh and Mary Stumpp for making us more prayer cloths. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, and our webmaster, Jason Klins.

As of October 25, 2017, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 20,227.

Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for November:

Christians in Asia: That Christians in Asia, bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed, may promote dialogue, peace, and mutual understanding, especially with those of other religions.



Vicka is Back

By Cathy Nolan

Today (October 9, 2017) our group rose early in the morning and walked together, praying the Rosary, towards Apparition Hill. Our destination was Vicka's family's ancestral home, where Vicka has resumed giving her witness to pilgrims on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. It is such a familiar spot, on the narrow road in Bijakovici, just before the entrance to the Apparition Hill climb. When the pilgrims gather to hear Vicka, all traffic is stopped! No one can get through!

Vicka will talk very slowly and carefully about what she has learned from Our Lady. Here is a portion of her talk from this morning:

"I am happy to share with you Our Lady's main messages. The main messages of Our Lady are prayer, peace, conversion, confession, and fasting. And Our Lady recommends that we pray all three parts of the Rosary daily. And She recommends fasting every Wednesday and Friday on bread and water. And a beautiful thing that Our Lady invites us to pray for is to pray for our strong faith.

"But when Our Lady invites us to pray, She doesn't want us to just move our lips. But Our Lady would like for us, day by day, to open our hearts so that prayer may really become a joy for us, so that we may succeed to pray with love.

"Our Lady gave a beautiful example when She said: All of you in your homes have a flower pot. And if you put just a few drops of water in this pot every day, you will see a beautiful flower growing. The same example is our heart, because if you put a few drops of prayer in your heart, you will see it become a beautiful rose. And if just for a few days we do not give it water, we will see the plant vanish as if it never existed. And Our Lady says that the same thing will happen to us if we do not pray, one day, and we say, 'I am tired so I will pray tomorrow.' But then when tomorrow comes, we find another excuse, and then practically, day by day, we distance ourselves from prayer, and our heart only gets implants from the bad side. And Our Lady says, same as a flower cannot live without water, so we cannot live without God's grace...

"Now we will remain united in silence in prayer. I will pray for blessing for all of us, but it is very important for all of us to remain in silence. Our Lady says, 'Do not be afraid of silence, because silence can bring forth so many beautiful and great things.' Our Lady has said more than once, 'You

people talk too much and you pray too little,' so that is why we must change this attitude and pray more and talk less. So it is very important to remain in silence in prayer..."

We stood in silent prayer for more than 1/2 hour, drinking in the peace.



Vicka speaking at her family's home

This is only a sample of what Vicka said, but you can hear the entire talk on our website soon. Vicka prayed then in silence for a very long time. One pilgrim told me that she felt drawn into prayer, as into a deep pool of water. She was able to pray unusually well as Vicka prayed.

Vicka is a luminous example of someone who is given over completely to God. She suffers joyfully, offering all her suffering to the Lord. And she witnesses such joy!

We were so blessed to be with her in the early morning brightness, the air so cool and fresh. What a blessing it was to pray with Vicka. It reminded me of this message from

April 25, 1987: "Dear children! Today also I am calling you to prayer. You know, dear children, that God grants special graces in prayer. Therefore, seek and pray in order that you may be able to comprehend all that I am giving here. I call you, dear children, to prayer with the heart. You know that without prayer you cannot comprehend all that God is planning through each one of you. Therefore, pray! I desire that through each one of you God's plan may be fulfilled, that all which God has planted in your heart may keep on growing. So pray that God's blessing may protect each one of you from all the evil that is threatening you. I bless you, dear children. Thank you for having responded to my call."

Epilogue: One of our pilgrims stayed behind to listen to Vicka again and again, almost all morning. When Vicka was leaving, she had one of her helpers give him a rosary she was praying with. It was so special to receive that rosary. But he noticed a woman near the stair that Vicka had been standing on, begging that Vicka come back to just pray with her a little. She was desperate. But Vicka was exhausted and they couldn't ask her to return. The woman was so sad. So our pilgrim placed the rosary Vicka had given him into her hands and explained that it was Vicka's rosary. He said she could have it. She broke down in tears. He found out she was very ill, and this rosary meant very much to her. She wept and wept. We have no idea what wonders God is working in us as pilgrims, as we love one another. In Heaven, we will know!!!

www.maryto.tv

Please Note



If you are moving south (or any other place) for more than one month, **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE** send us your alternate address. The same applies if you are moving permanently to a new location. It will save us both money and time! Also, I would **VERY MUCH APPRECIATE IT** if you held off sending your newsletter renewals in December until **January** so that I can have time to properly prepare my soul for Christmas, as well as plan the January issue. **THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR HAVING RESPONDED TO MY PLEAS!**



“The Testimony of Fr. Paul Nomellini”

By June Klins

Last month, I was led to an interesting “Fruit of Medjugorje” testimony that aired on Marytv.tv on October 29, 2012. The testimony is that of Fr. Paul Nomellini, who is a retired priest of the Diocese of Marquette, Michigan, now living in Wisconsin.

Father began by admitting that in 1990, when he was pastor in a small town outside of Escanaba, MI, he was very skeptical of the events in Medjugorje. Then someone offered him a free trip.

At the beginning of that pilgrimage, Father said he was still doubting and questioning. Then one morning his group climbed Cross Mountain before sunrise. They prayed the Stations of the Cross on the way up, and just as they got to the top, the sun was beginning to rise. Father was sitting on a big rock by himself watching the sun rise, when he noticed the sun began to vibrate and pulsate. He did not want to believe this. Then as the sun rose in the sky, the sun became a “Host” and had a cross on it. Then the sun pulsated towards Father and it became a gold Monstrance. He also saw rainbows. Father said, “As I sat there still doubting, I heard a voice say (and I normally do not hear voices), ‘Paul, if you think you’re going straight to Heaven, forget it.’” Father looked around and there was no one near. He said he now believes the voice was his guardian angel. After descending the mountain, as he was praying about this, he heard the voice again tell him not to go to Mostar with his group the next morning. Obedient to the voice, Father stayed back and spent time praying the next day in St. James Church by the statue of Our Lady. While he was praying there, a nun invited him into the side chapel where the apparitions used to take place. While praying there, the voice he heard before talked to him about becoming a Marian priest. Father said this was the point where his conversion began, and from that time on, he began promoting and witnessing to Medjugorje. Months later, he joined the Marian Movement of Priests.

That fall, Father began having a monthly holy hour to pray for life, vocations, priests, etc. They prayed the Rosary, read Our Lady’s messages and the commentaries, and would conclude with Benediction. Father said it “exploded,” in a time when the Church had gotten away from devotions like this. He continued the monthly holy hour until his retirement 12 years later.

In 1995, Father Paul returned to Medjugorje with his sister, Lori, who had had a conversion experience after having had an abortion as a young woman. (Father talked extensively on her conversion, but that is another story in itself.) Father was invited to Ivan’s apparition one evening in the chapel to the left of St. James Church. They prayed the Rosary and at

6:40 Ivan had his apparition. During that time, Father heard that voice again and it said, “Pray for Michael Nomellini.” Father thought, “Who in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in a chapel in Medjugorje, had ever heard of Michael Nomellini?” Father has hardly any memory of what happened after the apparition except that as he was exiting the chapel, Ivan put his arm on Father’s shoulder and said, “Father, do what you were told.” Father went back over to the church and noticed people from his group surrounding his sister, who was crying. Lori looked at him and said, “Who is Michael Nomellini?” Father did not say in his testimony, but apparently she got the same message that he did.

Father then explained to his sister that Michael Nomellini was their grandfather, their father’s father. Lori asked Father if he knew their grandfather, to which Father said, “No.” Their grandmother had kicked him out of the house when they were young because he was an alcoholic and a wife and child abuser.

When Fr. Paul and his sister returned after the pilgrimage, they did some research on their grandfather. They found that he and their grandmother had come to the United States from Italy when they were young. They had three sons and the last one was born blind. Neighbors surmised that the blindness may have been caused when their grandmother was beaten when she was pregnant. Finally she had enough and kicked him out so she could raise her sons in safety.

Father said that when they were growing up, no one ever spoke about Michael Nomellini. He said that growing up, he never even realized he had a grandfather living in the same town. Father and Lori went to the courthouse and found that Michael had died in the summer of 1951. He died of cirrhosis of the liver on a poor farm, for people who have nothing. BUT, he was seen by a priest before he died! The reason Father knew this was because he checked the records of churches and found that he was buried from St. Joseph Church in Hancock, MI. He checked with the county and found that he was buried in a cardboard box with no one present except the funeral director, a few men who carried his body, and the priest who said the Mass.

Father said, “Lori and I came to this conclusion ...My sister said,

‘Paul, if he died in 1951, and we’re being asked to pray for him in 1995, if he was in Heaven, he didn’t need prayers; if he’s in Hell, we can’t help him. He’s been in Purgatory for 44 years!’ From what we can gather, he was a bad man. I won’t say evil, because somehow or other, he was forgiven on his deathbed. And he was buried from the church after receiving the Sacrament of Extreme Unction [now called the Sacrament of the Sick]. But having apparently – and I’m



Statue of Our Lady in St. James Church

being judgmental here – not prayed all his life, he was in Purgatory. I became a believer in Purgatory, truly a believer in Purgatory.” Father said that beginning in 1995, he and his sister began praying that Michael Nomellini would be welcomed into the joy of Heaven.

Father then spoke extensively on Lori’s later trial with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease). Father said, “Because of her Medjugorje experience she totally accepted ALS... She never complained ever! She would play Medjugorje tapes of Miki singing. She would pray three Rosaries a day with Sr. Emmanuel. She became an inspiration to all of us.” Father continued, “As she gradually went downhill, lost all use of her body, was fed through a tube, all she could say to me when she could speak, was, ‘I’m offering it up for the Poor Souls in Purgatory to get Michael Nomellini to Heaven.’ She was the happiest person. It was the greatest love story that I ever had.”

Lori died on May 19, 2007. Prior to her death, she had asked her friends to wear pastels instead of black to her funeral because she wanted it to be a happy occasion, like a wedding. “It’s my new birthday.” Fr. Paul said her funeral was the happiest, most joyful funeral he ever attended.

Whether Lori’s reunion with her grandfather, Michael Nomellini, was that day or would follow later, for sure he is thankful for all her prayers and suffering.

“Today I wish to call you to pray daily for souls in purgatory. For every soul prayer and grace is necessary to reach God and the love of God. By doing this, dear children, you obtain new intercessors who will help you in life to realize that all the earthly things are not important for you, that only Heaven is that for which it is necessary to strive.” (Our Lady, 11/6/86)

Editor’s note: You can listen to Fr. Paul’s testimony including the story of his sister’s conversion and final days by going to Marytv.tv. It is Episode #31 in the Fruit of Medjugorje programs.

Editor’s note: On my 2016 pilgrimage to Medjugorje, fellow pilgrim, Donna DeBone, of Monroeville, PA, told me about a priest she knew who died in Medjugorje as he was concelebrating Mass. I had never heard about that before, so I asked her to write something up. This is her article.

He Died at the “Edge of Heaven”

By Donna DeBone

Father Julius Stefurosky, a priest in the Diocese of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, died unexpectedly on October 4, 1989, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, while on pilgrimage in Medjugorje. Fr. Stefurosky was born in Pittsburgh and attended Duquesne University and St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe. He was ordained a priest in 1944 in St. Vincent Archabbey Church. Father served at a number of churches in the Pittsburgh and Greensburg areas. He was named Pastor of St. Rose Church in Latrobe in December, 1960, where he served until his death in 1989 at age 72.



Father’s devotion to the Blessed Mother led to several trips to Medjugorje. On his last trip, he traveled with a group which included Fr. Denis Sweeney, who was then serving as pastor of St. Mary Church in Freeport.

Fr. Stefurosky passed away while seated at the altar during the 10:00 English-language Mass at St. James Church in Medjugorje. Fr. Sweeney, who was seated with Fr. Stefurosky, said that he first thought Father had fallen asleep, since this was not long after their arrival in Medjugorje.

St. Rose’s announcement of Father’s passing states “Fr. Stefurosky had a happy, outgoing disposition, which was greatly appreciated by the priests and people who knew him. He obviously enjoyed being a priest and didn’t allow the confusion and challenges of the present age to weaken his love for God and the Church. The priests of the Diocese and the parishioners of St. Rose will deeply miss him.”

St. Rose Church received several lovely notes from pilgrims who were attending Mass at the time of Father’s death. One note from New York, addressed to the staff and congregation of St. Rose Church, stated, “We were blessed to be present in St. James Church, Medjugorje, as Fr. Stefurosky ascended to his heavenly home with Jesus and Mary. Our prayers go with him and his parish.” Another note, also from New York: “On the day that Fr. Stefurosky died, I was in St. James Church in Medjugorje. I wish to extend my prayers and sympathy to his family and parish. He must have been a very special priest to have died in Medjugorje.”

Let us remember this faithful priest in our prayers. Lord, hear the prayers we offer for Fr. Stefurosky, Your servant and priest. He faithfully fulfilled his ministry to your name. May he rejoice forever in the fellowship of Your saints. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Editor’s end note: When I went to Medjugorje for the 25th anniversary in 2006, it was very, very hot – on a few days it was over 120 degrees. When I returned home, I read that several pilgrims died in Medjugorje from the heat. At the time, I thought, “Wow, what a place to die! I would love to die in Medjugorje, the edge of Heaven!” But when I realized it would be a nightmare for family members who would have to go through a lot of red tape to get my body, I changed my mind.

Ironically, not long after Donna DeBone told me about the priest dying in Medjugorje I came across a book entitled, In Testimony – Priestly Reflections on Medjugorje, that mentioned this very same priest! I read that before Father Stefurosky’s pilgrimage, he had said to friends, “I’d like to go to Medjugorje and die there.” Needless to say I never prayed to die in Medjugorje.

I am glad Donna included a prayer for Father’s soul; there are many priests in Purgatory because no one prays for them, since people assume priests go straight to Heaven. A priest at my parish includes, in the Rosary he leads after daily Mass, prayers for the priests of our diocese who have died on that day. Some of them died over 100 years ago, but Father notes we should still pray for them. No prayer is ever wasted. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, if you pray for someone who is already in Heaven, they will receive what he called “accidental glory,” which means he will have a closer relationship with God and an increase in his intercessory powers.

Blossomed Fruits of Medjugorje

By Bridget Perez

Going on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje brings many graces and fruits into your life – some that you pray for and some that you don't even know you need or want. I have had the great blessing of receiving fruits from Medjugorje that have been devoutly prayed for and others that were very subtle and have taken time to become visible and blossom in my life.

As a very young child, I was given special permission to receive my First Holy Communion a year early, at the age of six, while I was on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje with my family. This was a very grace-filled time for me. I can still remember looking out into the pews of the St. James Church and seeing the faces of thousands of people who were asked by the priest giving me my First Holy Communion, to pray with me for my intentions on this very special day. To the surprise of many, God did hear our prayers that day, and my special intention on this First Communion day of mine was marked with overwhelming joy.

When we arrived home from this trip, my mother, who was in her forties at the time, wanted to surprise me with the wonderful news that I was going to be a big sister– but what she didn't know was that she was the one to be surprised! This was my prayer – for my mother to have a little girl to be my little companion and friend! God did hear my prayer through the many graces that filled the church of St. James that day, and my beautiful younger sister, Monica, was born on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, as a living blossom of the great graces we received.

A short time after this trip, a friend who was on our pilgrimage sent a picture she had taken of the priest who gave me my First Communion preaching later that day outside in the pavilion. (Father was not able to preach the homily during the Mass where I received my Communion because of a mix-up. So he preached the homily he had prepared for Mass outside in the pavilion.) In this picture, even though it had been raining all day, there was a bright ray of light that shone down from the sky and went through Father's to me! I had prayed that Jesus would bless Father's hands because he would be giving me Holy Communion. When we blew up the picture, it looked like a Host in Father's hands! This picture made visible the grace of more answered prayers!

About 10 years later, my family had the opportunity to once again go on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje. While on this trip, our whole group of pilgrims experienced many amazing graces and life-changing moments. I can say that while on this trip, I did not have a specific prayer intention that I was praying for or any expectations for that matter. All I wanted was to be close to Our Lady again and walk the many peace-filled paths that I had walked before. Little did I know that this second pilgrimage would cultivate beautiful fruits to blossom in my life – many that have taken years to unpack and reflect on their originating from this trip.

When we arrived in Medjugorje this second time, I took the opportunity to go to the sacrament of Confession. I

remember being so amazed at the long lines of people waiting to receive this sacrament, and also being even more astonished at how many priests were available to hear all of our confessions! After waiting in line a little while, I walked up to and sat down by a priest whom I had never seen before, but whose name I still can recall after all these years, Fr. Sullivan. From the moment that I sat down next to this priest, it was as if all time stopped and I was the only one that mattered in the whole world. I was speaking directly to Jesus in the persona of this holy man. He spent what ended up being a whole hour, talking to me and telling me how much Jesus loves me and that He wants me to "Bloom where I was planted." I left there crying tears of indescribable joy, and a weight lifted off of me that I didn't even know I was carrying at such a young age of fifteen. I have never forgotten this priest, and I hope that one day, on the other side of Heaven, I will be able to thank him for the time he spent with me, and that I recalled his words many times throughout my adult life. I still, to this day, have a strong trust in the love of Jesus for me that resulted from this special fruit of Medjugorje.

After this experience, I was invited to join other teens in our group to spend a night camping up on Mount Krizevac. We all packed blankets, water and necessities, and made the hike up the steep hill. While at the top, many of the teens had incredible graces given to them, such as seeing flashes of light and the cross lit up [before there were lights up there]. What I remember the most from that night was

an overwhelming peace and the grace of starting a close relationship to one of the teens with us, who four years later became my husband. It was as if Our Lady showered Her graces upon us that night and blessed us for making the effort to hike up the mount to be close to Her and Her Son. The fruit that has blossomed from this grace-filled time has been the fifteen years of our marriage and our five beautiful children – who all pray Our Lady's Rosary each day. With each Hail Mary

we pray, it is a rose that we offer back to our Mother Mary as a "thank you" for Her abundant graces She showered and continues to shower on our family.

One last, and arguably the most important fruit that I have received from going on both of these pilgrimages to Medjugorje was the gift of Mary as my Mother. I could read thousands of books about Mary, or watch movies about Her stories, or listen to others' witnesses, but nothing would compare to actually going to the place where She appears and is in the midst of Her children. I have opened my heart to my Heavenly Mother on these pilgrimages, and it is because of this certainty that She is protecting and guiding me, that I am the most comforted and assured. A few years ago, I was given the heavy cross of breast cancer to carry, and I truly believe that the graces and comfort of Our Blessed Mother are what carried me through, with deep faith in Her Son and all of His promises. And when I hear the song, "Gentle Mother," the memories of being back at Medjugorje, close to my Heavenly Mother, give me strength and peace.



Ray of light going through Father's hands to Bridget



Bridget's family

I am so thankful for the gifts that these two pilgrimages to Medjugorje have given me and my whole family! The fruits that have blossomed from both prayers answered and prayers anticipated, that have come from these trips, will forever be in my heart. Our Lady continues to teach me and guide me, and I recognize Her gentleness in transforming my life by Her grace in all things.

Are there fruits that have blossomed in your life from the many graces you have received from Our Lady? Let us all thank God for the gift of Our Blessed Mother and the many graces and gentle guidance She has given to all of us!

Editor's note: You can read more of Bridget's writings at www.songofmercy.blogspot.com. She lives in Hudson, OH. Her sister, Monica, recently graduated from Med School and is serving a residency at the Cleveland Clinic.

Have No Anxiety At All

By June Klins

On October 8, my pastor, Fr. Larry Richards, gave a homily that I felt everyone needs to hear, given all the turmoil in the world and in our lives today.

Father said he wanted to focus on the Second Reading that day, which was from the 4th Chapter of Philippians. In this letter, St. Paul wrote, "Have no anxiety at all." Father said that when he uses this quote on social media, he always gets a response from people wanting to know how that can happen. Father said we live in perpetual anxiety. "Anxiety is fear of the unknown...and we all have it." Father then said that God, through St. Paul, tells us how to deal with anxiety in the verses that follow. "Offer everything in prayer and petition." But then he said what St. Paul says next is the most powerful part of this reading. "...but in everything, by prayer and petition, with THANKSGIVING, make your requests known to God." Father said, "**That means we already thank God, for He is good and He'll take care of us.**"

Father then spoke about the "Mini- Novena" of St. Mother Teresa (also called the "Emergency Novena"), which is 10 Memorares – nine in petition and one *immediately* in thanksgiving for God hearing our prayer. Father said this has worked with him so many times. Then he related a personal testimony.

About five years ago, doctors found a little spot about the size of a nickel on Father's lung. They said it could be just a shadow and to come back in six weeks. When Father went back, it had doubled in size. His doctor said, "Father, this isn't good," and sent him for an MRI. He suspected lung cancer. Father said that as he waited for the results, he knelt in front of a statue of Our Lady and prayed the

Mother Teresa "Mini-Novena." Father prayed, "Mom, if you want to carry me home, I'm ready. But I also know that the doctor can call me and say, 'There's nothing there, Father.'" He got off his knees and went to his chair, and the phone rang. The doctor said, "Father, there's nothing there! There's nothing there!...There's three other doctors who looked at this. There's nothing there. There was a growth there big-time and it's gone!!!"

I, myself can attest to the power of this novena, which I have used many times. One particular time that stands out was on my 2006 pilgrimage to Medjugorje, when the bus broke down on the way to the Split airport. We decided to pray this novena, including the thanksgiving. By an incredible grace, the bus was repaired, but then we got into heavy traffic. It was obvious that we would not make our flight, and our travel agent who was working with the airline said they were adamant that they would NOT hold the plane for us. BUT when we got to the airport, they *had* held the plane! Amazing grace!

Fr. Larry recommended, "We always thank God for His answers – that He knows what's best for us, and we say, 'God, I thank You that You hear me. I thank You that You know what is best for me. I thank You that I never offer a prayer without You having the answer.' And when we do that, now we have this trust in God, and then it promises us the peace of God will guard our heart, because it's not just a petition of desperation. It's a petition of TRUST, and that makes all the difference to help kill the anxiety in our life."

Editor's note: You can listen to Fr. Larry's homilies at www.stjosephbol.org/sermons.

The Bridge

By June Klins

Visionary Mirjana said in a talk on May 5, 2008 (and other times as well), "From this moment that we are living now, until Her Triumph, there is a bridge and that bridge are the priests." Mirjana continued that Our Lady says that we should pray for priests so that bridge will be firm. Almost every 2nd of the month message ends with a plea to pray for priests.

Now we need to ask ourselves, "Have we done what Our Lady asks? Have we prayed enough for priests?" If we are honest with ourselves, the answer would probably be, "No." If we had been praying for priests as She asks, would we have had the priest scandal and the shortage of priests that some dioceses experience? When I mentioned to someone recently that this is in part *our* fault, she said she never thought of it that way, but agreed with me. I know I never prayed for priests until about 15 years ago or so. I now pray every day for priests and do a Holy Hour for priests every Thursday.

A friend recently told me that her neighbor died in the hospital without the Last Sacraments because there are no more priests as chaplains in our hospitals here. How sad! The same day I heard about this, a mother of a priest told me how over-worked her son is because of the priest shortage, and he is stretched very thin. He has so little time for private prayer that he has to stay up late at night to pray, and only gets four hours of sleep a night.

Please, please, please pray for priests and for more holy priestly vocations. Remember: No priests, no Eucharist. Maybe this Thanksgiving, we could send our priests a note of appreciation and maybe even have a Mass said for them.

"My children, do not ever forget to pray for your shepherds." (Our Lady, 10/2/17)

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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 \$.70 postage on it.

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