



**THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE**  
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*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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VOL. 35, NO. 1

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

JANUARY 2022

## MONTHLY MESSAGE OF DECEMBER 25, 2021

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.



January 1 is the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. She is our Mother as well. Our hope is that you will feel Her motherly love through this issue. In his 1974 letter introducing the solemnity, Pope Paul VI explained: "This celebration, placed on January 1 ...is meant to commemorate the part played by Mary in this mystery of salvation... It is likewise a fitting occasion for... imploring from God, through the Queen of Peace, the supreme gift of peace." Note that the Pope called Our Lady the "Queen of Peace" seven years before Our Lady began appearing in Medjugorje, requesting to be called "Queen of Peace"! The picture above was taken in Medjugorje. The artwork was done by a cousin of Fr. Slavko Barbaric.

"Dear children! Today I am carrying my Son Jesus to you, for Him to give you His peace. Little children, without peace you do not have a future or blessing; therefore return to prayer, because the fruit of prayer is joy and faith, without which you cannot live. Today's blessing which we give you, carry to your families and enrich all those whom you meet, that they may feel the grace which you are receiving. Thank you for having responded to my call."

# I am Your Mother and I Love You

While Father Ray is taking some time off, we would like to share an excerpt from the book *Why I Believe in Medjugorje* (copyright 2012) by Fr. Livio Fanzaga, founder of Radio Maria. It is used with permission from Ave Maria Center for Peace in Canada.

“Tota pulchra es Maria”: “You are beautiful, Mary,” the Church sings along the course of the centuries from the time when the angel Gabriel, appearing to her in the moment of the Annunciation saluted her with the words, “full of grace”. The pilgrims who come to Medjugorje listen willingly to the description of the beauty of the Madonna from the live voice of the visionaries. You see the eyes of the people bright with joy as if they were seeing something that no human imagination succeeds in representing.

One speaks very much of a totally supernatural beauty which rises from the depths of the soul full of God and that wraps in divine light all the human being of the Holy Mother. I had tried many times to imagine how the Madonna could seem based on the description of those who see her every day. This is a useless exercise, because it is the splendor of grace that the heart of each of us can only accept as a gift.

It is only recently that I have seemed to grasp the mystery of the being of Mary in her deepest roots, apart from the description that one can make with human words, always very poor and humble. I found myself at the vigil of the last day of 1997 in Medjugorje in a very beautiful little church in the middle of the woods just in front of the mountain of the first apparitions. It is the place of the prayers of the “Oasis of Peace”, a Marian religious community, formed by young people of both sexes, born of the charism full of fervor of Fr. Gianni Sgreva.

The chapel was filled with people waiting for the Rosary and the Holy Mass. That evening, those present had the grace to assist in the apparition of the Madonna to Marija who, when she comes to Medjugorje, lives nearby. The boys and girls of the Oasis of Peace are very charming. They are young people who come from every part of the world and who have found the love that has transformed their lives in Medjugorje.

They live very simply with whatever is donated to them or which they themselves produce by working. They dress in the colors gray and white with which the Madonna appears here. Father Gianni directs their many studies and they alternate prayer and work with receiving all those who are in need. I always see them happy, even in church, and this is for me a sure sign of good health both spiritually and mentally. Looking at them I am made aware that it is possible that the relationship between man and woman can be lived again as a sign of fraternity brotherhood and sincere friendship.

After the Rosary and before the Holy Mass there is a highly evocative and unrepeatable moment of the apparition. There is always a great silence filled with emotion and an elusive presence. At the end, Marija tells us that the Madonna

has prayed over all those present and has blessed them, exhorting us not to forget that she is our mother and that she loves us.

“I am your mother and I love you.” That evening these words entered my heart as if it was the first time that I had heard them. How many times in my catechesis had I explained that Jesus, before He died, had given us Mary as our Mother? How many times had I begged her like a son in a moment of need? And yet, never before then had that expression hit me, piercing my heart like a sharp sword of love and pain: the love of the heart of Mary and the pain for our hearts which are so hard and slow to understand.

It was in that moment that the splendor of the beauty of Mary, how the visionaries of Medjugorje describe her, showed me its true significance. The face of light of Mary, the sweetness of her smile and the eternal youth of herself were those of a mother, indeed of my mother, the one given to me by God, the one whose heart loves, understands, accepts and comforts like no mother in the world has ever been able to do or will be able to do until the end of time.



Chapel at the Oasis of Peace

“What is the Madonna like?” the pilgrims ask, eager to know. Any words used to describe her would be cold and impersonal if they didn’t capture the essence of Mary herself, the mother of us all. The Madonna reminds us of this innumerable times in her messages. She never tires repeating it and we can say that her goodness, her patience and compassion are almost infinite. These have led her to ask God to allow her to remain such a long time with us, and we can only find an explanation in the infinite love of her maternal heart.

“No mother is a mother like the Madonna” is repeated often by the visionaries. “She has all the most beautiful things,” and even when she corrects, she does it with sweetness which penetrates and conquers the heart. She loves us like no one else in the world, except God. One could say, finally, that the maternal love of God arrives to us through her heart. Is it not wonderful that in those most particular moments, the Madonna exchanges a hug and a kiss with the visionaries, at a birthday or a name day or whenever there is a need for tenderness and encouragement?

No one is outside the bounds of the maternal love of Mary. For her we are all important and many times she reminds us that she prays for each of us. Her heart is vigilant along every step of our way to sanctity, because she desires to bring us all to Paradise and she never ceases to love us even when we are far away from her and from her Son. She loves us so much that her heart cries tears of blood for each of us who becomes lost in sin.

Sometimes I think of the immense gift that Jesus has given us, entrusting us to Mary as our mother. It was His last thought, the extreme act of His love before dying on the cross. I also think of the great fiat of Mary for staying so long

among us. Some say that in her messages she repeats herself. Don't earthly mothers repeat themselves? Don't they always give us the same advice even when we don't listen? When children run blind and deaf toward the road to perdition, which mother would not speak? Who would not repeat ad infinitum [without end or limit] the call towards salvation? Would anyone suggest that the Madonna be silent? Should a mother let her children be destroyed and led astray by evil?

In all the apparitions the Madonna shows herself as a mother. It seems to me however that in no place is there such an emphasis on her maternal goodness as in Medjugorje. In the most difficult situations, when the visionaries and their families were subjected to the stress of the special police, the youngsters during the apparitions would tell

everything to the Madonna and she would listen attentively, "just like a confessor" because evidently she already knew about everything. In all this time she has followed them, has sustained them in the difficult moments, she has instructed them, has guided them and has formed them in the Christian virtues.

**But Mary has done and is doing the same thing with each of us. She is a mother who doesn't exclude anyone. We are all noticed by her, in the most hidden fibers of our beings and she loves us all as if each of us were her only child** [editor emphasis]. Understanding the maternal heart of Mary means to enter into the depths of her overflowing being of celestial beauty.

## The Blessed Mother is Always with You

By June Klins

My mother passed away over eight years ago on Our Lady's birthday (according to the Church) – September 8. When I was going through some of her things, I found the following letter which she wrote to my nieces, who were teenagers at the time. I have no idea if she ever mailed it. My mother was a simple housewife who said she wanted to be remembered for being devoted to her faith and her family, so I trust that she would not mind my sharing this if it would help someone. This was written in July of 1998, after my mother traveled with me on my first pilgrimage to Medjugorje. On that pilgrimage, my mother's rosary turned gold the first day we were there and a few days later, her foot was healed of arthritis on Cross Mountain, but notice that she does not even mention those things in this letter.



"Grandma" on Apparition Hill

Our dear Grandchildren,

Aunt June and I have just returned from the most wonderful trip ever. We went to Medjugorje, which is the place where the Blessed Virgin Mary has appeared to teenagers – like you – the first time was seventeen years ago and many times since. She asked them to pray for the

children and for peace in the world and pray for all its people. There is so much evil in this world. The devil is trying to take over – every time someone tempts you to do things you know are wrong, just say no and say a silent prayer and ask God to help you, and walk away from those who tempt you.

The Blessed Mother Mary is always with you and She is asking all of Her people to pray more than ever for world peace and for all of Her children – young and old.

Medjugorje is a tiny hamlet in a valley in Bosnia. It is surrounded by huge mountains. It is very hard to get there. From the airport it took three hours by bus to get there on a narrow road with many hairpin turns. It was not an easy drive. It is a very beautiful place. The people there are so friendly and always have a smile on their face. They have to work hard in the fields, sometimes even in the evenings. They have no modern equipment. These people are so content and happy. It is indescribable. It is a very special place.

Love always,  
Grandma



*Due to circumstances beyond my control, acknowledgements for donations will be late. If you do not need or want an acknowledgement, please note this with your offering. Thank you for your understanding and for your prayers. ~ June Klins, editor*

As of December 25, 2021, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 36, 890. Thank you.

### Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for

#### January: For true human fraternity –

We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.



Our thanks to Fr. Ray Donohue, Laura and Kevin Di Bacco, Carol Bleck, Pat Berrier, Peggy Smith, Betsy Truran, Tom McIntire, Marlene Figurski, Barb Sirianni, Joan Peterson, Pat Heinlein, Darleen Wilkinson, Rose Heintzel, Kathy Wayman, Louise Lotze, Diane Niebauer, Chris Falk, Peggy Chludzinski, Cindy Bielani, Barb Cesare, and those who want to remain anonymous for their help with the December mailing. We thank Wendy Ripple for her photo in this issue. We also thank our proofreader, Pat Berrier, our webmaster, Jason Klins, and our prayer group administrator, Patti Millar.

## The Sixth Stone

The following testimony was given by Deb McEllistrem on Fruit of Medjugorje (Episode #455) on marytv.tv. We thank Cathy Nolan of Mary TV for transcribing it. To get the full effect of this heartfelt testimony we recommend watching it.

I am from Columbus, Ohio. I am here today to give my testimony about the Blessed Mother and how she intervened in my life during a very difficult time. I am giving this testimony because in her most recent message (9/25/2021) She asked us to give witness...

In 2005, I met my husband... we got married, and in 2006 we had our daughter. Then when she was five, my husband was diagnosed with cancer. It was a rare, aggressive form of cancer called "Double-Hit Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma." Double-Hit means it is two types of cancer at once, as if one type of cancer is not bad enough. He would go into the hospital for three to five days at a time and then come home for three weeks and then go back into the hospital... he did that until December of 2012. Then they did a whole bunch of scans and gave us the results in January 2013.

I was praying a lot in 2012, asking the Lord for a miracle to heal my husband. I would tell Him, "I'm not that good of a parent! You can't leave me with our daughter, I need him in our life." She was the apple of his eye. People come into this world with a vocation, and his was to be a father. He was an amazing father. He was wonderful to her.

So, when we got the results of the first round of chemotherapy, it wasn't good. They said, "It doesn't look good and we will have to continue the chemo." I had so much anxiety. You can't even imagine. I would wake up in the middle of the night. I had never understood people who would pace, but then I understood them. I couldn't watch TV, I couldn't play video games, I was just too distracted. I had all this energy at 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, so I would pace back and forth downstairs on our main floor, and wring my hands. The anxiety level was through the roof. And I thought things like "what if he dies...what if this... what if that..."

You know, when someone has cancer, they tend to have other things go wrong as well. So he had had a stroke, and he started to have issues with his heart because the Chemo was very aggressive because the cancer was very aggressive. So there was a lot for me to have anxiety over.

I would talk to my siblings and tell them what was going on, but nothing seemed to help. My father was going through a bout of dementia and I didn't want to burden my mother with more negativity. And so I wouldn't call her or talk to her. So after about two or three weeks of just wringing my hands, two things happened.

First, my friend, Roseanne, told me: "When you have anxiety, it is because you are looking into the future and you are trying to predict what is going to happen. But the truth is, Debbie, you are not the master of time. You do not know what is going to happen in the future. And the Lord doesn't give you the grace for six months from now. He gives you the grace for *right now!* That is all He gives us the grace for – the grace for *today...*"

The other thing that happened was I started to think, "What would my own mother, my earthly mother, Eleanor,



Deb McEllistrem

do if she was in this situation?" And I thought, "She would pray!" And I thought, what was the biggest thing she did last? Well she had gone to Medjugorje in 1991. So, I said, "Ok, that's it, I am going to read the messages!"

So, starting from 1981 all the way through to 2013, if I was up in the middle of the night, I would read them: one message, two messages, 25 messages. For however long I was up, I just read the

Blessed Mother's messages. And slowly, over time, I started to have peace. What was revealed to me was... "Even if I take your husband, I am not going to abandon you...I will always be there for you..."

A priest said to me once, "If the Lord takes your husband, then He Himself, will be that provider that your husband would have been, had he been on earth with you. The Lord will be with you and take care of you and give you peace because He has taken your husband."

And I think that after hearing this and reading the messages, over time... and I wasn't even good at it...I'm not like (some people) where they think deep thoughts through the messages...I just read them. But I just kept on reading, and the anxiety went away. And I still got up in the middle of the night and I started reading more and more of the messages. It took probably five months to read all the messages. There are a lot of messages!

I told my sister that I didn't know what I would do now that I had read all the messages. Should I start over from the beginning? And my sister said, "No, you should watch Mary TV, because Denis and Cathy will give a message and then pray a decade of the Rosary, and then another message, and a decade..." So, I started watching Mary TV...

There are two things I want to say:

The first thing is – and I believe it is the most important thing – I believe that there is a *sixth* stone. Our Blessed Mother talks about the five stones: The Bible, Prayer with the Heart, Confession, Fasting, and the Holy Eucharist. Those are the five stones. But there is a sixth stone. But she would never say there is a sixth stone, because the *sixth stone is Her messages*. If you read those messages and you have anxiety, they will give you peace – a peace that surpasses all understanding – the peace that you get when you read Sacred Scripture, the peace that you get when you have just received the Eucharist and you are alone with Jesus and you are just communing with Him, the peace that you have after you have come out of Confession. That peace will be yours if you just go through and read the messages!

And you don't have to think deep thoughts. You don't

"For your husband is your Maker; the LORD of hosts is his name" (Is 54:5).

have to be Padre Pio – I am certainly not. But just to read them...I believe they are the sixth stone! The Blessed Mother ... is with Him [Our Lord] all the time in Heaven, so whatever words She comes to give us, She gives them for our good, for our salvation!...

One of the messages that She gave us was: *"If you can, grasp the rosary" ... "One Rosary alone can work miracles in the world and in your lives."* And so, I try to always have a rosary with me, and carry a rosary with me to Mass. I tell my daughter that if I don't have a rosary with me, I don't sleep well. So, I always have the rosary with me.

And what the Blessed Mother did, as my husband was going through his cancer – through his last treatments (they gave him 2 weeks' notice before he passed) – I just had a profound sense of calm. People would come up to me and say, "I don't understand how you do it. I would be a mess. How do you do it?" I tell them that if the Lord puts you in the situation, then the Lord will give you the grace to deal with it. He doesn't give you the grace for six months from now...He gives you the grace for today. That's it, that is all He does.

And so, slowly, what the Blessed Mother did was that She started to build a net around me of people who would support me. I would listen to Cathy and Denis (on Mary TV), and my family would be a support, and my daughter was in kindergarten and 1st grade at the time, and the mothers would come to me at pick-up, and ask me how I was doing, and tell me they were praying for me. I had strangers stop me on the street and say things like, "My son works with you at the bank, and you don't know me, but I and my whole church are praying for you and your husband." Thousands of people prayed for us!!!!

One reason I want to give this testimony is because in Her last message the Blessed Mother says: *"Give witness."* But I want to speak to anyone out there whose loved one might have cancer. I want to tell you to put everything on the Blessed Mother. She is your best friend. She wants to be there for you. And She will make your life heaven... She will build a safety net around you to help carry you through this difficult time. And it is that sixth stone that is Her messages that will really help carry you through it.

My husband passed on August 4, 2014... the Feast of St. John Vianney. I have a devotion to the Blessed Mother, clearly. But my husband really loved priests! And the Blessed Mother has a devotion to priests. Someone told me, "I wish he had passed on August 5, because that is Her birthday." Then someone else said, "She doesn't care about Her birthday. She cares about priests. You might be devoted to the Blessed Mother, but the Blessed Mother is devoted to priests." And I thought that was powerful and gave

me a great amount of peace to know that on the Feast of St. John Vianney, the patron saint of priests, my husband was in Heaven!

That was a Sunday, and I went to Mass at 7:30 in the morning, and I was praying, "Lord, let me know that he is with You. Somehow just tell me that he is with You." And I felt in my heart after Communion to look up at the Tabernacle, (and my husband more than anything loved to laugh...) and as I looked at the Tabernacle, I saw my husband just smiling and laughing and saying, "Everything is OK. It's great now! You can't wait to get here. It is so wonderful!" So I always remember that. It was the Lord telling me that he is with Him now!! He is in Heaven, and he continues to look out for us!

I wear my necklace and I wear his wedding ring all the time. It has been almost nine years since he passed, and there is not a day that goes by that I don't think of him. But right after he passed, I was listening to the radio, and the net was still being built by the Blessed Mother around me, and someone came on and announced that they were going to go to Medjugorje! And I thought, "I am not going to Medjugorje, I just lost my husband." And then she said, "We are going on September 23" – which is the feast day of Padre Pio, and my birthday!!! So, I thought, "Ok, I am going."

Then I was watching Denis and Cathy, and they said: "We are going to Medjugorje; we will be there on September 23rd!! So if you want to meet us, we would love to meet you!..."

So, we arrived, and I called Cathy and Denis, and I said, "I'm in Medjugorje!" And I went and met them at the Blessed Mother statue in front of St. James. And it was like meeting my parents! They start hugging you right away...

Then that same day, Vicka's grandmother had a statue of the Blessed Mother, and the statue started to glow. And I was able to get a picture of it. (You can see the picture in the testimony on our website, [marytv.tv](http://marytv.tv)!) Her mantle is glowing, green. It was another gift from Our Lady, saying that She was caring for me. I am sure Padre Pio had something to do with it, too!! It was the Blessed Mother saying, "I am here with you and I won't leave you alone. I am still building the net around you and I still love you, and I still think of you as my daughter, and I still want to be close to you...I want you to know you can do anything because I am with you."

That's my testimony, and I wanted to thank Her for all She has done for me, and for giving me my beautiful daughter who is so wonderful, and to just say thank you!

[www.mary.tv](http://www.mary.tv)



Statue in front of St. James

*"...little children, I ask you to accept and live the messages with seriousness, so that your soul will not be sad when I will no longer be with you, and when I will no longer lead you like insecure children in their first steps. Therefore, little children, every day read the messages that I have given you and transform them into life. I love you and therefore I am calling you all to the way of salvation with God." (Our Lady, 12/25/89)*

## Patron Saint(s) for 2022

For many years, we have been randomly choosing the name of a saint to be the “holy protector” for The Spirit of Medjugorje for the year. St. Faustina’s community used to do this every year on New Year’s Day (St. Faustina’s Diary, #360). This can be a fun and educational thing to do with your family and friends. Almost always, there is a connection between the saint and the person or group who randomly picked it.

Although any list of saints can be used, there is one we recommend on the website, [www.marytv.tv](http://www.marytv.tv). You can also use the saint generator on [jenniferfulwiler.com/saints](http://jenniferfulwiler.com/saints). However you choose, it is important to pray to the Holy Spirit first! The tradition goes that it is the saint who chooses you, not the other way around. As you pray with the saint every day, that saint will pray for you and help you. On October 25, 2020, Our Lady said, “Invoke the help of all the saints, for them to be an example and a help to you.”

This year I asked my husband to pick a saint for us from our bag of saints after we prayed about it. I was very surprised when I saw there was more than one saint’s name on the paper, and I never heard of them. In a fleeting moment, with a lack of faith, I said to my husband, “Maybe you should pick a different one.” Wisely, he answered that these saints picked us for a reason, and I agreed that he was right.

Our saints this year are the Child Martyrs of Tlaxcala – Saints Cristobal, Antonio, and Juan. All three were early converts to Christianity in Mexico and were all martyred between 1527 and 1529 at the age of 12 or 13. They were beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1990 and canonized by Pope Francis in 2017. “So why did they pick us?” I wondered. It did not take me long when reading about our new saints to find some connections to Medjugorje. The fact that they were children jumped out at me first. After all, Our Lady addresses us as “children” in every message, and sometimes

more than once. I was led to this message of July 25, 1996, where Our Lady said, “Dear children! Today I invite you to decide every day for God. Little children, you speak much about God, but you witness little with your life. Therefore, little children, decide for conversion, that your life may be true before God, so that in the truth of your life you witness the beauty God gave you. Little children, I invite you again to decide for prayer because through prayer, you will be able to live the conversion. Each one of you shall become in the simplicity, similar to a child which is open to the love of the Father. Thank you for having responded to my call.”



When I read this message, a few other connections to our young saints became clear. Our Lady speaks of “conversion” and also being a “witness”. Our three young saints were examples of conversion and were certainly great witnesses. According to an account from the Diocese of Tlaxcala,

Mexico, Cristobal’s father, who was angry when his son asked him to give up his idolatry, locked Cristobal in his room and repeatedly beat him. On his death bed, Cristobal told his father, “Oh father, do not think that I am angry because I am very joyous. Know that you have honored me in a way much more than all your lands and titles.” What a witness!

Another little connection I found when reading about our saints was that the three were baptized and trained as evangelizers by the Franciscans and attempted to spread the faith in their families and elsewhere in Mexico. The Franciscans assigned to the parish in Medjugorje have been instructing the visionaries, the parish, and the pilgrims, and have been evangelizing the whole world through spreading Our Lady’s messages!

Saints Cristobal, Antonio, and Juan, please pray for us and help us to live and spread the messages of Our Lady!

“Children, be on your guard against idols” (1Jn 5:21).

## A New Apostolic Visitor for Medjugorje Appointed

The Press Office of the Holy See announced today at noon, November 27, 2021, the news that Pope Francis had appointed Archbishop Msgr. Aldo Cavalli, titular Archbishop Vibo Valentia (Vibo Valentia - lat. Diocesis Vibonensis), former Apostolic Nuncio to the Netherlands, as the Apostolic Visitor with a special role for the parish of Medjugorje, indefinitely and ad nutum Sanctae Sedis.

It is a continuation of the mission carried out in Medjugorje by Archbishop Henryk Hoser, S.A.C., who died on August 13, 2021 in Warsaw.

Msgr. Aldo Cavalli was born on October 18, 1946 in Lecco (Italy). He was ordained a priest of the diocese of Bergamo on March 18, 1971. After being ordained to the priesthood, he taught literature at the Seminary, during which time he completed his studies in political science at a Catholic university. He has been at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in Rome since 1975, crowning his stay with a postgraduate degree in theology and ecclesiastical law. He served in several nunciatures as the Secretary and in the

State Secretariat of the Holy See. He was ordained a bishop on August 26, 1996 in the Cathedral of Bergamo. He has been the Apostolic Nuncio to Chile, Colombia, Malta and Libya, and since March 21, 2015, he has been the Nuncio to the Netherlands and the Permanent Representative of the Holy See to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

On the occasion of this appointment, the Provincial of the Franciscan Province of Herzegovina, Fr. Miljenko Šteko, said: “I express my deepest gratitude to the Holy Father Pope Francis for appointing a new Apostolic Visitor with a special role for the parish of Medjugorje, represented by Archbishop Cavalli. We see this appointment as a sign of the careful attention of the High Priest for this place of pilgrimage. We welcome the new Apostolic Visitor with a deep sense of gratitude and respect as his predecessor, the benevolent Msgr. Hoser, whose birthday is, quite significantly, on this day. May the new Apostolic Visitor in the new ministry, by which he represents the Holy Father

and the Holy See in Medjugorje and in the local Church, be accompanied by the heavenly help of the Most Holy Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary!"

"I am truly happy because of this news. I was wonderfully surprised by the news that Pope Francis had appointed Msgr. Aldo Cavalli as the new Apostolic Visitor with a special role for the parish of Medjugorje. We are grateful to God for Msgr. Henryk Hosier for being with us and

for having done so much for Medjugorje and we believe that Msgr. Cavalli shall continue his path. We are glad for this news. Thank you, Pope Francis, for sending us Archbishop Cavalli as Apostolic Visitor with a special role for the parish of Medjugorje", said the parish priest of Medjugorje, Fr. Marinko Šakota, after the announcement of this news.

[medjugorje.hr](http://medjugorje.hr)

## Your Questions Answered by Jakov

By Veronica Raymonda (Founder of Friends of Mary's Hands)

The following was excerpted with permission from the September 2021 newsletter for Friends of Mary's Hands, an organization founded to help visionary Jakov in his mission to help the poor in Medjugorje and beyond.

As we have mentioned, we make a point of reading every email you send. Jakov has graciously volunteered to give his thoughtful response to one or two of your queries each month.

In this inaugural response, Jakov replies to the question, "What is the point of COVID, AIDS, the Holocaust? Why so much horrible suffering? I know it's difficult, but people will ask me why God allows this. What are your thoughts?"

Jakov says in reply:

Today I'd like to answer just one of your questions. I don't know whether you will be pleased with my answer, but I will tell you what I feel in my heart. You are asking me about the pandemic, about AIDS, but let us remember: Our Lady Queen of Peace has been coming here for over 40 years. For forty years she has been calling us to come to Her Son Jesus. Because when we come to know Jesus Christ, we come to know one entirely new life because we start with a new life. We understand so many things, new things, that we did not understand before. All depends on us. For 40 years, our Gospa, our Blessed Mother, has been telling us, "Pray, dear children." Let us recall a number of messages when Our Lady did not say anything else but repeated for three times: "Pray, pray, pray." In one message, Our Lady says as well: "Dear children, with your prayer and fasting you can even uproot wars from the face of the earth." I am certain, if we truly opened up our hearts, if we start praying with [the] heart and with joy, we can stop all evil. God has given us freedom. So, it all depends on us. What are we going to choose? Are we going to choose the good side, the side that will lead us to Jesus, or are we going to choose the side that will take us to other distractions?

With respect to the second part of your question, "Why so much suffering in the world?" you are asking me why is



Jakov

God allowing so much suffering. It is God's will. I cannot answer to that question, BUT Our Lady is teaching us how we can accept God's will, how we can deal with all that. Every cross that we carry in our life, I can speak from my personal experience, how much of grace God has given me to see Blessed Mother and how God was preparing me. I was seeing the Blessed Mother on a daily basis when I was

10 years old. I came to the main goal: to Jesus Christ. I felt the presence of Jesus in my heart. Jesus completely rules my life. Two years after our Blessed Mother was appearing to me on a daily basis, I lost my mother. A year later, I lost my father. These are all tremendous crosses. But if there is faith, when you come to know God as your Father, when you know Gospa is your Mother, then you will know that although they passed away, your parents, your loved ones, are always with you. And even in those most difficult of moments when you feel alone, when you are crying on your own, you'll feel the presence of God

and Him wiping (drying) tears on your face and you will feel His words in your heart: "You are not alone. I am with you. I will take care of you. All you need to do is surrender to me." Therefore, everyone who has faith, all that comes your way throughout your life, especially all kinds of crosses, God will always be with you and God will always help you to carry your crosses. That is what Our Blessed Mother has been teaching us here in Medjugorje. But today, everything depends on us. What are we going to choose?

*Editor's note: If you are interested in helping Jakov's charity, Mary's Hands (Marijine Ruke), visit [friendsofmaryshands.org](http://friendsofmaryshands.org). 100% of their donations go directly to the charity. You can read more about Mary's Hands in our January 2021 and February 2021 issues, which are available on our website. Last year they were able, with God's grace, to open a soup kitchen in Medjugorje and are in need of more monthly donors to keep it open. (People have called me to see if this is a legitimate organization. I can vouch for it, and am blessed to be a monthly donor myself.)*

## Jakov's Message on December 25, 2021

At the last daily apparition to Jakov Colo on September 12, 1998, Our Lady told him that henceforth he would have one apparition a year, on Christmas Day. The apparition began at 2:25 p.m. and lasted 9 minutes. Our Lady came with little Jesus in Her arms. Through Jakov, Our Lady gave the following message: "Dear children, you are, and you are called, 'children of God'. If only your hearts would feel that immeasurable love which God has for you, your hearts would adore and give thanks to Him at every instant of your life. Therefore, little children, today, on this day of grace, open your hearts and implore the Lord for the gift of faith; so that you could truly become worthy of the name 'children of God' who, with a pure heart, give thanks to and honor their Heavenly Father. I am beside you and am blessing you with my motherly blessing."

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## MARY IS CALLING YOU

On June 24, 1981 in Medjugorje, Our Lady began appearing to six children. She identified Herself as the Blessed Virgin, Queen of Peace. 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, the Blessed Mother still appears daily to three of the visionaries, and monthly or annually to the others. They are all now adults. 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. They declare to see the Blessed Virgin as they see other people — three dimensional. They pray and speak with Her.

The Blessed Mother granted to confide ten secrets to each visionary (some are chastisements for the world). Some of the visionaries have received all ten secrets. Our Lady promised to leave a visible sign at

the original site of the apparitions in Medjugorje, for all humanity. In the meantime, this period of grace is for conversion and a deepening of faith.

Father Jozo Zovko, who was the pastor of St. James when the apparitions began, has spoken about what he calls "the weapons" or "the five stones" of Our Lady (as in the story of Goliath). They are PRAYER with the heart, especially the Rosary; EUCHARIST; BIBLE; monthly CONFESSION; and FASTING.

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

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 \$.78 postage on it.



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