



THE SPIRIT OF MEDJUGORJE
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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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The Vatican Has Granted a Nihil Obstat to Medjugorje!

MONTHLY MESSAGE OF DECEMBER 25, 2024

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 22 is the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. The picture shown above is a statue of Our Lady of Life. It was taken at St. Gianna Oratory in Tucson, AZ. You can read about Our Lady of Life Mission in Tucson, a fruit of Medjugorje, on pp. 4-5. The title of "Our Lady of Life" was first formally acknowledged by the Roman Catholic Church in France in 1646, where a chapel named "Notre Dame de Vie", or "Our Lady of Life," was founded. Pilgrims believed that if stillborn or preborn babies were brought there, they would be miraculously brought to life long enough to be baptized during the Catholic Mass before passing on to eternal life.

**"Dear children!
Pray, pray, pray that
peace may begin
to reign in every
heart and prevail
over every evil
and peacelessness.
Thank you for
having responded
to my call." (With
Ecclesiastical approval)**

Editor's note: Last month, Fr. Ray's internet connection was down for weeks because of the heavy snowfall. He was unable to send us his January article, so we decided the easiest solution was to use something he had written in February of 2021 that was on our website, but had never been published in the newsletter.

We Can Make Mistakes

By Fr. Ray Donohue



Fr. Ray

I had no internet all day as it snowed again very hard in many areas around the cabin and the grounds. The snow is over my head! Lots of things are over my head, though! Like how much God loves us. We goof up so much, we ignore Him for long periods of time. Sometimes we only remember Him when we need something, and we want it right then and there, so we call on God to answer us in our time instead of HIS time!

Life never came with instructions! We are guided by our parents when we are young, by the Holy Church, by priests and teachers and people we look up to, wondering how they got so much knowledge and wisdom. But then we realize it was the same way we do – through time, through prayer, through patience, through our mistakes and the mistakes of others, especially those we love and look up to. Funny to think our parents were once as confused as we are! But the answer is to give ourselves some space, some time, some guidance, and a lot of love! We grow each day, if we want to, and we stifle ourselves if we choose to.

God has the answers to things when we don't even know the questions. I am afraid to say this... but, we are NOT perfect! In fact, we are pretty far from it.

We need to remember that, when someone does something we don't like, or says something accidentally that hurts us, especially someone very close to us, it is so easy to jump to conclusions and feel hurt. We can make mistakes without even knowing about it and hurt someone. But we need not get mad, when they get angry with us, but find out why and then see what we can do in the Spirit of Jesus.

A long time ago when I was doing an RCIA class for those coming into the Faith, I was asked a question by a member of the group about being an Extraordinary Minister of

the Eucharist at Holy Mass. She asked me who could be a Eucharistic Minister, and I simply replied any person who is in good standing with the Church, is registered in a parish, has permission from his/her pastor, is a good practicing Catholic, and has no impediments.

The question was then raised, "What is an impediment?" "Good question." I continued, "Someone who is in keeping with the Church's teachings, for example, is not, say divorced and remarried outside the Church without an annulment." I gave that as a "for-instance."

The next thing I knew, the lady got up and left in tears. I went after her and asked what was wrong. She looked at me in tears and said to me: "You knew I was divorced and remarried, and now they all know and I cannot be a Catholic!"

I did not know she was divorced and remarried, and an innocent answer to what she asked me hurt her deeply. I got her to sit back down with the group. Afterwards, I explained we could look to see about an annulment. She had very solid grounds for her divorce and for a Church annulment. I worked with her and did all the paperwork, and we got her annulment, and she was a Eucharist minister in her parish until she passed a few years ago.

Words hurt, and we don't mean to hurt. But we can help others who need it, and God makes us aware of it. Good can always come from a hard situation if we pray, if we love and if we care.

This coming year, pray from your hearts, and pray throughout your day! Love, and do it unconditionally, and it will make a difference.

Care for each other, show compassion, and be as patient as you can be. Prayer brings compassion and love. When we pray, God is right there with us, to help and to guide, and give us what we need for ourselves and for others!

God bless you always.

In Jesus and Mary and Saint Joseph,

~Father ray and my little pal, Dublin [and now Sweet Pea]

"Let the words of my mouth meet with your favor" (Ps 19:15).

Fasting and Joy

The following is an email sent a few years ago by the former website, livethefast.com.

Have you ever met a person who was so joyful, they shined? And because they were so joyful, you wanted to be with them all the time? The Gospel encourages us to "shine like lights."

We live in a society of overconsumption and materialism. How often during a normal day do we eat because we are bored? Fasting helps us to distinguish between a want and a need. By depriving ourselves of the food that we enjoy on a regular basis, we can grow in virtue and holiness and thereby shine like lights to others.



Medjugorje fasting bread made by subscriber Patrick Kelker

Admittedly, many of us do not "shine" with joy on fasting days. Perhaps we can be a bit grumpy when our stomachs are empty. Attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist (daily, if possible) give us the grace to have a joyful and successful fast. In the afternoon, when our stomach is crying out for food, go to a quiet place and pray. Prayer is an integral part of our fasting routine. When we

are following God's laws and open to the graces of the sacraments, we can't help but "shine" and be joyful.

“She Said We Should Pray for Peace”

The following is excerpted with permission from the book, Ten Secrets: The Hidden Prophecies of Medjugorje and the Path to Peace by Dr. Thomas Petrisko. Parts of the interview below regarding questions about the Secrets were omitted because Jacov said repeatedly that he did not want to talk about it.

Jacov Colo [also spelled Jakov] is extremely reserved about the Secrets. When asked if the world should convert now, however, he doesn't hesitate. "That is why Mary is here." She has come, he then offers without prompting, to convert and reconcile, *the whole* world. Will such an unfathomable transformation of humanity happen? "Yes" he calmly answers.

Since June 25, 1981, Jacov Colo – who turned ten years old just three weeks before – has been receiving apparitions of the Virgin Mary. Being the youngest of the six visionaries, the early photographs of him in ecstasy were fascinating. The sight of a child, totally consumed in mystical wonder, was not something one sees every day.

But in contrast to such a blessing at that young age, comes the fact his mother died just two years later, and his father was nowhere to be found to raise him.

From the beginning, Jacov has gone out of his way to avoid publicity. He does not desire attention and never will. To his credit, he shunned the role of the quasi-celebrity that the visions tried to cast upon him in the early years. And he didn't relish speaking much back then. Although he was the youngest of the six by far, he clearly identified his calling: "My role is not as a prophet. I am a witness to the messages the Blessed Mother is bringing to the whole world here at Medjugorje."

Consequently, there is little of substance on record from him during the early years of the apparitions, especially with regards to the Secrets, which he almost totally refused to speak about...

In the early 90s – around the time of the start of the war in the former Yugoslavia – I presented Jacov with a list of questions in an interview that took place in Medjugorje.

The following is an excerpt of that dialogue. It has not been published before:

Question: *What does Mary ask of the world today that is different from the beginning of the apparitions?*

Jacov: During these twelve years, she is always calling us to pray. But she especially calls us to pray for peace.

Question: *It has been written that when the first secret of Medjugorje is revealed, Satan's powers will be broken. Is this true? What is going to happen?*

Jacov: I don't want to talk about the Secrets.

Question: *Is the world making progress in its conversion?*

Jacov: Our Lady never said anything about that. But she is very happy if people come here to pray.

Question: *Has Our Lady ever wept tears? Has she ever wept tears of blood?*

Jacov: I have seen Our Lady weeping. But never tears of blood.

Question: *Tell us about the Great Sign.*

Jacov: Our Lady promised us that she will leave a Great Sign on the Hill of Apparitions and we know when it will be.

Question: *Tell us about God's peace.*

Jacov: Our Lady invites us all the time to peace. This is the reason for her coming here. That's why she came here – for peace. First, she calls us to peace in our hearts. And, if we have peace in our hearts, we can start to pray and to love everybody. We can do anything!

Question: *Has Mary spoken to you of the Fatima message, the consecration of Russia and the era of peace that is promised the world?*

Jacov: Never!

Question: *Many say the Church and the Pope must suffer much. Has Mary spoken of this to you?*

Jacov: There is no message to me especially for this. One time, she gave me a message for priests.

Question: *Jacov, the whole world has sunken into a deep darkness, and Mary is said to be concerned about the whole world as much as the war that is taking place here. What does all this mean to us? What should we do?*

Jacov: When Our Lady came twelve years ago, right at the beginning of the apparitions, she said we should pray for peace, and that her messages are not only messages for Medjugorje, they are messages for the whole world.

Question: *Is there anything special you would like to tell Americans?*

Jacov: I would just like to call all people to pray. Our Lady calls us for these twelve years to pray, especially now, for peace in our country. And, of course, for all the world.



Jacov in the 1990s

Jacov's Message on December 25, 2024

At the last daily apparition to Jacov Colo on September 12, 1998, Our Lady told him that henceforth he would have one apparition a year, every December 25, on Christmas Day. This is also how it was this year. The apparition began at 2:45 p.m. and lasted 8 minutes. Our Lady came with little Jesus in Her arms. Through Jacov, Our Lady gave the following message:

"Today, on this day of grace, in a special way I am calling you not to live a life striving for earthly goals and not to seek peace and joy in earthly things, because in this way darkness takes over your life and you do not see the meaning of your life. Little children, open the doors of your hearts to Jesus, permit Him to take over your entire life so that you may begin to live in God's love and mercy. My children, only with Jesus in your hearts will you come to know the true goal of your life and long for eternal salvation. I am blessing you with my motherly blessing."

Our Lady of Life Mission

By James Kern

This journey began on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje in October of 1988, the year of our Blessed Mother. On that pilgrimage and afterwards, I experienced many miraculous signs, some of which I captured on video and still photographs, confirming what would later become Our Lady of Life Mission.

One of the first was when I had just left St. Joseph's Church in Tucson, Arizona, where I live. I was standing in my backyard, and for some reason, I could look right at the sun, which I don't recommend to anyone, but I saw it, and as I was watching this, the sun started spinning. I was astonished by this, all the while experiencing an extraordinary call heavy on my heart to serve the Blessed Mother in a greater way. Right after, looking away, I noticed the outline of the Blessed Mother in the sky, kneeling on the world with her hands folded in prayer.

I quickly ran to get my camera and photographed the image, which did not move while I went in search of my camera. I snapped a photograph with an inexpensive camera and 110 film. When the film was developed, I was surprised at all the other images that appeared in the picture. God the Father, Jesus on the Cross, St. Joseph and an angel were among the many images that can be seen in this photograph. I had reprints made to distribute, but continually questioned whether this vision was more than just that, and what it was all about.

I needed confirmation that the Blessed Mother was really kneeling on the world, since I had never seen Her portrayed that way before. My son and I traveled back to Medjugorje with hopes of finding some answers on what our Blessed Mother was calling me to do. Our Blessed Mother answered me, reassuring me of Her closeness to us with a miraculous healing for my son who was totally healed of his epilepsy during that visit.

After returning to Tucson, a few weeks later, I finally received the confirmation I was looking for. I traveled to the San Xavier Mission in Tucson to visit, and while in the gift shop, I was surprised to find a statue of a young Mary kneeling on the world, Her hands folded in prayer. This helped confirm the vision I had of our Blessed Mother kneeling on the world.

So, I purchased the statue and began showing people the resemblance to my picture. About two weeks before Christmas that same year, a woman gave me a plastic baby Jesus, which I was amazed to discover fit below the folded hands on the statue of Mary without slipping off. I began sharing my picture, statue, and baby Jesus with prayer groups. The mission of handing out little blessed Jesus babies from the Womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary became so popular, that I ordered large quantities of plastic Jesus babies and continued to give them out.

It now became clear to me our Blessed Mother was calling me to support the gift of life. All the plastic Jesus babies were blessed prior to giving them out, and some of them became associated with miraculous events. After handing these out for some time, people started returning to me, thanking me for the



James holding a 7" statue of Our Lady of Life

babies, claiming that they helped in some way, either spiritually or physically. From that time and up to this day (December, 2024) *about 45 women who struggled with infertility have had healthy pregnancies after receiving one of these blessed babies.*

For years, I continued to search for more statues like the one I found of Mary, with no success. San Xavier Mission said it was the only one they had, and they did not know where it came from. About seven years later, I was asked by a pro-life priest to speak about our Blessed Mother and the gift of life to a group of teenagers. The talk was received very well by all the teenage girls and there were tremendous confessions that day. After being invited to other events to speak, I was feeling this ministry growing and called by the Holy Spirit. I found myself questioning in prayer one day, saying, "What should I call her (the image and statue I've been given)?" The answer I received immediately was, "She's Our Lady of Life." So, I went one step further and asked, "What should I do with all of this?" The answer I received was, "Make a larger one and promote life."

So, I prayed to God, if that was His will, He would put someone in my path that would help me, specifically, a statue maker. This materialized in a very short period of time, through a young couple from Tucson. They were so inspired after receiving one of the little plastic Jesus babies that they contracted to have an 8 ft., 2-ton replica of the little statue built, which they said they were divinely inspired to do. They were not statue makers, but boy, the prayer was answered!

Many more miraculous events followed, which led a priest to recommend me to a spiritual director. Within a week, Our Lady of Life received Bishop Manuel D. Moreno's approval. To this day, there are 10 Shrines in the Tucson Diocese, blessed by former Bishops Manuel Moreno and Gerald Kicanas. None of the larger statues have been pushed by me, but requested by a parishioner or a priest. The Knights of Columbus went a step further and made a beautiful shrine for almost every one of the larger statues of Our Lady of Life that have been put up. At this time, we have handed out over 1,500 little seven-inch statues that have the baby Jesus in the bosom. We are currently working with a new artist to make a closer replica to the original statue, so many more can hand out the little blessed Jesus babies from the bosom of Mary and speak about the right to life and the story of God's beautiful plan for His Creation.

As we know, the most precious gift that God has ever given to us is the gift of life. The statue is pro-life, in all its facets. Later, I was reminded and noted that the day I first saw Mary in the clouds and snapped that photograph was January 22. I don't think it was a coincidence that this was the anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, establishing the right to

"Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live"
(Deut 30:19).

abortion in the US. The Blessed Mother is kneeling on the world to signify that she is praying with us, not only to eliminate abortion, but the horrendous contagion of this culture of death. She prays with us, that we will find Her Beloved Son, Jesus, by accepting His will in our daily lives, bringing unity with God and others, until we are called to come Home, so that we may join Our Blessed Mother and

Her Beloved Son in everlasting life.

Editor's note: If you would like a copy of the picture James mentioned, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Our Lady of Life Museum, 16675 E. Wagon Train Pl., Tucson, AZ 85739. James notes that these are copies of the original, and not always as clear. You can visit his website at ourladylife.org.

My Visit of the Pilgrim Statue

By Dianne Yochim

To have the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Medjugorje in our home for a week was such a blessing. It was a joy to pray in front of her. She filled our home with her presence. For two days I didn't want to leave the house and have that presence interrupted.

I know my family and I received many graces from her visit. My prayer life was enriched. I was more inclined to delve deeper into the Scriptures. This made praying from the heart easier when saying the Rosary and meditating. I noticed a certain new peace in my life throughout the day. An added blessing was my doctor removing a certain medication that had been causing me problems for quite some time.

Spending this time with Our Lady made me recall a "Medjugorje Moment" I had at a Mass on a 2019 pilgrimage to the Holy Land in Israel. We were in the Church of Gethsemane where Jesus was in agony in the garden the night before He died. The priest had given a homily on giving one's Fiat to God, as Jesus had done as He prayed to the Father, "Not my will, but Thy Will be done." The priest asked us to touch the large stone before the altar that Jesus had prayed on, and to ask Our Lord what



He wanted of us, and to give our Fiat, our yes to Him. When I did this, and touched the stone, I heard the words, "Pray, pray, pray." I was struck that those were the same words Our Lady of Medjugorje has been saying to us in Her messages. I gave my Fiat and was reassured in my dedication to my prayer life. I was on the right track and was doing God's will.

So, even if you can't go to Israel or to Medjugorje, Our Lady wants to come to you. Won't you give Her your Fiat and invite Her to your home for a week? I assure you, you will be greatly blessed!

Editor's note: For those in the Erie area, call June at 814-898-2143 if you would like the statue of Our Lady of Medjugorje to visit your home. If you are not in the Erie area and would like to order a statue to travel in your area, you can visit <https://l1nq.com/OurLadyofMedjugorje>.

We have had a number of calls by people who had trouble with the link. After the https://, the first character is a lower case letter L, and the next one is the number one. I was so happy to know a number of you have ordered the statue to visit homes in your area. I am sure that makes Our Lady very happy. If you have a testimony about your visit and would like to share, please send it to June at jklines1981@verizon.net.

"Promise Me You'll Come Back"

By June Klins

My husband is in a nursing facility and I try to visit him every day. One day two months ago, as I was leaving, he said to me, "Promise me you'll come back." It took me by surprise, since I visit daily, and it brought tears to my eyes that he would even think I would not come back. The words haunted me all night. The next day, the words continued to haunt me, but in a different way. It was like I was hearing Jesus say, "Promise me you'll come back" to those who have fallen away from the Church. It was like I was hearing Our Lady say, "Promise me you'll come back."

I get prayer requests frequently from parents who are worried about the salvation of their children. I have heard priests say the number one prayer request they receive is from parents who are worried about their children who have fallen away from the Church. Parents and grandparents want to know what they can do.

A friend recently shared with me that a priest on EWTN, Fr. Miguel, said in a homily, that he advises parents to continually pray the baptismal prayers said for children at their Baptism. Father said he thought the idea originated with Sr. Briege McKenna. (Our Fr. Ray had a prophetic

encounter with Sr. Briege, which he shared in our July, 2020 issue.) Parents have reported to Fr. Miguel great success stories with their children returning to the Church, using this Baptismal Prayer:

Lord Jesus, on behalf of my son / daughter, N., I renew his / her baptismal promises which took place on the day of his / her baptism; please bring him / her back to the Sacraments for your glory.

I renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his empty show. I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, You have given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins, keep us, especially my son / daughter, N., by your grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.

Patron Saint for 2025

By June Klins

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. Last year, our saint was St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.

Although any list of saints can be used, there is one we recommend on the website, www.marytv.tv. You can also use the saint generator on saintsnamegenerator.com. 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, 2024, Our Lady said, “May the Saints be your intercessors and example, that you imitate them and live holily.”

This year the plan was to have Fr. Ray pick our saint from my saint bag at our December mailing. (We have to do it a month ahead so we can announce it in the January issue.) Because of the record snowfall here, the mailing had to be postponed twice. (At this writing we are #1 in the contest for the most snowfall for the season for cities in the US of over 100,000 people.) Because of the change of dates, Fr. Ray was not able to come to our mailing, due to a prior commitment. So I asked the mailing staff for a volunteer to pick our saint.

Peggy Smith offered her assistance. I voiced that I wished we would get St. Anthony of Padua. He is one of my favorite saints and I had never gotten him personally, nor had he ever been picked for the newsletter. I asked Peggy to pray to the Holy Spirit first, so she prayed aloud and a few people joined her. She put her hand in the bag filled with hundreds of slips of paper with saint names. She handed the paper to me and I kiddingly said, “Drum roll...” and then opened the paper. I went crazy when I read the name – St. Anthony of Padua! I was like a little kid at Christmas! It later dawned on me that we had a story involving St. Anthony in the very issue (December 2024) that we were getting ready to mail

that day! He was already at work for us! How awesome is that?!

Not only is St. Anthony one of my favorite saints, he is also a favorite saint of the people in Medjugorje and the surrounding areas. I have been in Medjugorje several times on his feast day, June 13. The statue of St. Anthony in St. James Church is moved to a more prominent location that day. It is amazing to see the number of people walking for many miles, some with bare feet, to the Franciscan Monastery, St. Anthony of Padua, in Humac. There is a big procession with the Blessed Sacrament that day and St. Anthony’s relic is venerated. Later, the locals celebrate St. Anthony’s Day with a feast of roasted lamb.

Of course, St. Anthony is known for finding lost articles, but he has many other patronages as well. As I scanned through the list, I wondered if the reason he picked us is that he is the protector and guardian of the mail! I never knew that. Now I love him even more!

If you ever wondered why St. Anthony is the “go to” saint for lost articles, “Catholic Answers” (catholic.com) wrote: “One popular story is that a brother friar of St. Anthony stole a commentary the saint had written. The saint prayed for its return, and the friar was waylaid by a sudden storm that frightened him so badly that he thought it the wrath of God for his sin. He turned around and ran back to St. Anthony to return the manuscript. Since then, so the story goes, St. Anthony has had a special talent in the recovery of lost items. Whether this story is true or simply a pious legend is not something we know for certain.” I, and I’m sure many of you, have lots of St. Anthony stories, about the recovery of lost items. Some of those stories are pretty incredible. Our new patron is known as “The Wonder Worker.”

St. Anthony was known for his great preaching. A little-known fact about him is that his tongue is incorrupt. It did not decay with the rest of his body and can still be seen in Padua, Italy almost 800 years since his death! When St. Bonaventure, who at the time was minister general of the Franciscans, found the tongue, he said: “This is really a miracle. God wants us to know that St. Anthony was really the messenger of God’s love.” I can’t wait to see what great articles and stories he will find for us this year!



St. Anthony statue in Humac

Unfailing Prayer to St. Anthony

“Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints”

O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, your love for God and Charity for His creatures, made you worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Encouraged by this thought, I implore you to obtain for me (mention your request).

O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the sweet Infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms; and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours. Amen.

Our thanks to Carol Bleck, Laura and Kevin DiBacco, Diane Niebauer, Sue Taccone, Tom McIntire, Rose Heintzel, Corky Young, Peggy Chludzinski, Kathy Wayman, Louise Lotze, Barb Cesare, Betsy Truran, Deacon Jerry Peterson, Sue Verga, Darleen Wilkinson, Peggy Smith, Chris Falk, Cindy Bielatin, Kandace Lyons, Judy Johns, Barb Sirianni, Marlene Figurski, and Ronalee Curtis for their help with the December mailing. We thank Patrick Kelker and Dave Wayman for the use of their photos in this issue. We also thank our proofreader, Don Spaeder, our webmaster, Jason Klins, and our prayer group administrator, Patti Millar.

St. Anthony and the Remorseful Penitent

What Not to do After Confession

By June Klins

One of the “5 stones” of Our Lady is monthly Confession. While looking for something about Confession for this issue, I came upon a story about our new patron saint for this year, St. Anthony of Padua. The account said this story was well-known, but I had never heard it before.

According to the story, a man went to Confession to St. Anthony and with a contrite heart confessed that he had kicked his own mother so hard that she fell down. St. Anthony had heard many confessions, and had probably “heard it all,” but this sin really struck him as outrageous. Passionate for the Lord, St. Anthony exclaimed, “The foot which strikes mother or father should merit without doubt to be cut off.”

The man received absolution and his penance and returned home. So remorseful for his grave act, he took literally what St. Anthony had said, and he cut off his foot! Ouch!!!

Word spread like wildfire throughout Padua and reached St. Anthony, who was shocked at this turn of events.

He found out where the man lived and rushed there. He asked if the man still had his foot. When someone gave St. Anthony the man’s foot, he placed it near the leg from which it was severed. St. Anthony then made the Sign of the Cross over the foot and the leg and said a prayer. The foot became miraculously reattached to the leg as if nothing had ever happened! (This miracle reminded me of the account in Luke 22:50-51 where one of the disciples cut off the right ear of the high priest’s servant, and Jesus “touched the servant’s ear and healed him.”)

The penitent jumped for joy at this healing, thanking God for this miracle through the prayers of St. Anthony. This was one Confession he probably never forgot.

Answers to Questions About Prayer

Editor’s Introduction: While looking for a book in my large library of Medjugorje and other religious books, I happened upon a little gem I forgot I had. It is called The New Saint Joseph Baltimore Catechism, No.2. It is not so “new” anymore. The publication date was 1962. I started leafing through it. I don’t think I liked memorizing all those answers way back when I was in a Catholic grade school, but I sure did learn so much more about the faith than our children and grandchildren have. It came to me that it might be good to share excerpts from this book that may help us live Our Lady’s messages better. These answers are so concise and easily understood, just like Our Lady’s messages. This excerpt is on prayer.

479. How do we know that God always hears our prayers if we pray properly?

We know that God always hears our prayers if we pray properly because Our Lord has promised: “If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you.”

Asking in His name means asking for love of Him, since the name represents the person bearing it. We ask for what we need to love Him. Even if we do not use these words, what we really mean is this: “Oh Lord, please give me what I need to please You, and if what I am asking for does not really please You, then do not give it to me. Give me instead what would really please You, even if it is a cross.” Such a prayer, God has guaranteed to answer.

480. Why do we not always obtain what we pray for?

We do not always obtain what we pray for, either because we have not prayed properly or because God sees that what



we are asking would not be for our good.

Many people do not pray in the name of Christ, as explained in the preceding answer, but pray in this way instead: “Oh Lord, please give me what I want.” And they often do not think whether or not it will help them to love God more, and sometimes they do not even care. God has never guaranteed to answer a prayer such as this, as it is not really a prayer but selfishness.

481. Are distractions in our prayers always displeasing to God?

Distractions in our prayers are not displeasing to God, unless they are willful.

Distractions are the wanderings of our imagination. If we deliberately let it wander and do not even try to pray,

that is a sin. But if it wanders when we do not want it to, then this does no harm to our prayer. It is still very good and very pleasing to God. If you notice a distraction, gently turn your mind back to some thought of God. Meanwhile, your heart is praying all the time.

A Good New Year’s Resolution

The gift of speech – being able to speak – to have the ability to communicate with other people is a marvelous and sacred gift from God.

The purpose of the power to speak is to enable us to pass on to others the Teachings of God, attitudes of goodness, knowledge, sympathy, encouragement.

To misuse this magnificent God-given power by employing it to profane God’s name, to degrade others, to spread

misinformation, to attack people with verbal unkindness is a grave violation of God’s intention and purpose in giving us the ability to transfer thought through speech.

A good New Year’s resolution is to renew our efforts to honor God by using properly our ability to convey ideas truthfully, decently, charitably.

Church Bulletin

As of December 25, 2024, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady’s intentions was 40,266. Thank you.

The Spirit of Medjugorje
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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 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.

On September 19, 2024 the Vatican announced that the apparitions in Medjugorje received a nihil obstat.

If you want a prayer cloth we made, send a self-addressed stamped business size (4 1/8" x 9 1/2") envelope with \$1.01 postage on it. This offer is available while supplies last.



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