



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. 38, NO. 3

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

MARCH 2025

The Vatican Has Granted a Nihil Obstat to Medjugorje!

MONTHLY MESSAGE OF FEBRUARY 25, 2025

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.



"Dear children,
May this springtime be an encouragement for personal conversion for you, that with your lives you may pray and love God above all, for all those who are in need. Little children, be my hands of peace and prayer; be love for all those who do not love, do not pray and do not want peace. Thank you for having responded to my call."

The painting above, entitled "King of Grace," is the work of Croatian artist, Petar Šibenik, who graciously gave us permission to use it. Petar has been to Medjugorje at least 10 times. He said that Jesus touched and saved him, where he lives in Zagreb, but that he goes to Medjugorje "to be filled with the love of God and Mother Mary, and to be spiritually renewed and to pray." The painting has an interesting history. Petar wrote, "I had an order to paint four women who were celebrating something. They were not dressed properly, and I couldn't paint them. So I decided to paint Christ over them, and by the grace of God, I painted the picture very quickly!" On 3/2/17, Our Lady said, "...speak of my Son and of me to all those around you with your life; so that the world would be different; that simplicity and purity would return..."

Holiness Begins in our Hearts

By Fr. Ray Donohue



Fr. Ray

Tempus Fugit! I collect clocks of all kinds. I have done so since I was just a child. My uncle gave me his broken pocket watch. It didn't wind up anymore, but I kept looking at the clocks in school and in my kitchen at home, and I kept adjusting my broken pocket watch to the times on the clocks that were working.

One day, as I was in second grade at St. Teresa's Catholic School, I put my non-working pocket watch in my desk at school, and as we left to go home

for lunch, the kid who sat next to me took the watch out of my desk, and after putting it to his ear, started to laugh at me, and said very sarcastically, "This watch is junk and worthless. Why do you keep it and keep adjusting it to the correct time? You're just wasting YOUR time!" He left me holding my watch and laughed all the way out of the classroom.

I felt so bad. Even though it didn't work, I really liked that watch. I felt happy just carrying it around with me. I loved clocks, and for some reason, that old watch made me feel happy, and even important!

My mother saw me so proud having that watch. It was the year I was going to make my First Holy Communion, so as a gift for my Holy Communion, she bought me a wrist watch, and this one worked! I have pictures they took of me that day, and in each picture, I had my First Holy Communion Rosary, my First Holy Communion book of the Holy Mass to follow it and all the prayers (we are talking about the year 1966), and a simple Timex watch, and I still have BOTH those watches to this day, from 59 years ago!

Time goes by so quickly, seasons change, we grow up, we grow more independent, and we also grow more dependent on others. Watches show us the time of day and night, but God is there in every second of our lives, guiding us, helping us, consoling us, and always loving us!

Sometimes we are like that new watch that works great, and does exactly what it was made to do. Sometimes it needs repairing, and at some time, it will stop.

March is here and brings us Hope! Where I live up here in the hills and way back in the woods, it is so peaceful and beautiful, but we get a TON of snow, especially Lake Effect snow, as Lake Erie is just down, down, and down the hill from me, and from October to March it snows, and we get the brunt of it up in the hills. It is beautiful and it all works in November and December and January, but once we get into February, it seems to never stop and like it will never stop! But the time will come when it does stop, and we see a glimpse of springtime!

As I write this, we have over four feet of

snow, and under that, we have three inches of pure ice! But March brings us great hope and helps us to change gears and open our eyes to some changes. In March, we see Spring happening – more birds are coming around to my feeders, and we seem to not get as much snow. It starts a new season of growth and awaiting in great hope for new life to appear, from white, cold snow to longer days of sunshine, warming up out of the teens and twenty-degree temperatures to the 50s!

Ash Wednesday falls on my birthday this year, March the 5th! I'll be turning 67 years old, but I feel so much younger than that! I feel happy, and hopeful, and look forward to the Lenten Journey we all make. But *how* we make it, is either with love and surrender, or we may look at it as a burden. Lent is no burden; it is such a holy gift to us all to journey with God in a most special way – to do what Jesus did, to sacrifice, to pray all the more and with our hearts, to work on not getting distracted, but focus on our relationship with God and where we put Him in our lives.

God isn't just around on Sundays, or Christmas. Lent is a journey with God. We walk with Him, and He is at our side. Jesus never leaves us. The Blessed Mother stood by Jesus in the hardest of times. I can't contemplate enough our dear Mother standing by the Cross of Jesus as His blood dropped down from His crown of thorns, from the terrible lashing at the scourging as He was tied to a post or rock and whipped with such horrible force that each snap of the heavy whip tore His holy skin right off, tearing Him apart at all parts of His holy body. How could He stand or walk, let alone carry that heavy cross, after such an inhumane beating with those whips and lashings? The blood that Jesus lost from the scourging must have been horrible. Then Jesus was forced to carry an outrageously and horribly heavy cross of huge trunks of trees up an extremely steep hill, all the while being whipped, beaten, spit upon, ridiculed, mocked and hated, all for no reason at all except for evil jealousy, and to take our sins upon Himself, so that He suffered for us, and hung on that cross for us, and died on that cross for us! For YOU, and for me, and for ALL Humanity!

Lent is a gift that God gave to the Holy Catholic Church and the entire world. It is a time to reflect on our behavior. Remember, whatsoever you do for even the least of your brothers and sisters, you do it for Jesus, too!

On Ash Wednesday, I will distribute Holy Blessed Ashes on the foreheads of many people, the followers of Jesus, and I will have one of the wonderful Sisters at St. Columban's put those same ashes on my forehead, reminding us that we are dust and to dust we shall return. The body will die, but we will never die. Our souls are eternal! Where we end up after death is our choice! Lent, these 40 days and nights, gives us such a great opportunity to look at ourselves and see that we all have or had at times also shouted: "CRUCIFY HIM," and "WE WANT BARABBAS." The ashes we wear are from last year's palms from Palm Sunday. One week we



One of the clocks from Fr. Ray's collection

shout out that Jesus is Lord, and by the next week we shout out, "CRUCIFY HIM."

We do this when we fail to see Jesus in other people, when we judge others for any reason, when we don't like the way they look, or speak, or clothe themselves. We judge, where God is the True Judge. We forget the 10 Commandments, and make up our own rules. Lent makes, or allows us, to take a good hard look at ourselves, and not so much at others. It gives us the chance to renew our relationship with God, with the Holy Catholic Church, with the Blessed Mother and all the saints, with the tiny little unborn babies whom God has given life to, and are meant by God to be born and taken care of. If a mother doesn't want that precious baby, may she at least have the heart to put that baby up for adoption for those who can't have babies of their own, so that the babies will have what God expects of us, to give those babies a happy loving home through adoption!

Yes, March is a transitional month. It is a time for change of seasons, and especially the seasons of our lives, to give up things. Stop smoking; it is a horrible death. I watched my loving mother die a long painful death as she couldn't get enough oxygen for the last few years of her life. Give up something that is NOT good for you and at the same time, not good for your family. Don't just give up eating popcorn for Lent. Pray about it and ask God and your Guardian Angel what you should do and *not* do for Lent, and don't, at the stroke of midnight after the Easter Vigil, go right back and start doing the same old things again. Let Lent be a Holy Guide for you and your families and friends to get closer to God, to each other, and especially to Holiness on earth! God is calling you, me, and all of us to be the best we can be, to be forgiving, as Jesus is forgiving. Also, to be honest,

kind, generous with our time and possessions, to share with those who have little, to give from our hearts and not our surplus. If you can help someone, don't just think about it, do it! Jesus did that for us and still does.

Even if your watch stops, you can still keep it if it brings you happy memories. Reach for the simple things, and share what you have. We have love, we have forgiveness, we have the ability to make others feel loved and reach out to those in need. Jesus called out to the Father: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." We need to know what we do, and do the right things. Get to Holy Confession this Lent. It doesn't matter if it has been two weeks or 30 years – go to Holy Confession! Give it all to God and feel the Peace of letting it all go and letting God come ever closer to you. Get to a few extra Masses during Lent on the weekdays. Control your anger, and forgive yourself as well as others. Let it go and give it all to God! Lent can, and will, change our lives for so much more love and grace and peace! Stay with Jesus in the Garden and pray with Him, and love Him, and follow Him!

God bless you, one and all, and a very blessed, holy, and life-changing Lent to you. I am also going to take my own advice and do the things I mentioned above, to the best of my abilities and then some!

With much love and prayers, remember the sick, the lonely, the bed-ridden, the forgotten. Bring them joy in your prayers and good works! Tell Jesus you love Him every day and throughout the day, and do so from the very bottom of your heart.

Love and prayers,

~Father ray and my pals Dublin and Sweet Pea!

I promise I will be praying for you, one and all!

A Healing in Medjugorje

By Fr. Norbert Khangelani Nyathi

I give thanks and praise to God for this: I went to Medjugorje with a young man 32 years-old, Craig Shamu by name. This young man is happily married with a son. Craig could hardly walk because of severe gout. A distance of 100 m was agony to him (he was on medication for severe gout). But something happened to him while in Medjugorje. After the private apparition to Marija (the visionary married to an Italian), he felt no pain anymore and could walk without any problems! I called him just before writing this and he's in great spirits and fine – no more medication for him. This is amazing and he tells me he's sharing his experience with people where he stays. I'll live to praise my God. Ave Maria!

Editor's note: Fr. Norbert lives in Zimbabwe and receives our newsletter. He has been to Medjugorje a number of times, thanks to generous benefactors. I recently found out that one of our U.S. subscribers, Gail Boos, took Fr. Norbert to Medjugorje the last two years. (Gail founded a non-profit called St. Clare Helper of the Poor, Inc. that, until 2013, was the official U.S. sponsor for



Fr. Norbert celebrating Mass outside when the mud church was blown away

Fr. Jozo's orphans.) She recently told me they are working on a project to help Fr. Norbert get a new truck. She is working directly with the archbishop in Zimbabwe. Father's truck is so old and has been breaking down. The bishop told her that the diocese there is so poor they have no money to get new cars or trucks for their priests. Fr. Norbert receives about \$200 a month in pay. His mission is out in the bush with over 20 Mass centers he serves. It takes him a month to make his rounds. Gail never asked me for money, but asked that I pray that they can raise the balance needed to pay for the truck. Personally, I prefer to donate to causes like this, in

which 100% of the funds go to the cause in need. If you would like to help Fr. Norbert as part of your Lenten almsgiving, you can send a donation to a 501(c)(3) non-profit helping with this cause: Mary Our Mother Foundation, 2600 Dennard Road NE, Conyers, GA 30013 (new address for them). Make sure to note Fr. Norbert's name on the memo line of your check. Gail wrote, "Fr. Norbert is so humble and grateful. He just touched all our hearts and never asked for anything."

Greg – 30 Years Later

The following testimony was taken with permission from the website, imedjugorje.com. This testimony was given by a man named Greg during his pilgrimage to Medjugorje in October of 2020.

My story began when I was about 28 years old. I was raised Catholic and realized I was going to Mass because my parents made me and then my wife wanted me to. Then, at 28, I decided, **“This is ridiculous. I don’t even believe in God.”** And I stopped going for two years.

When I was 30, I can’t even remember why, but for some reason I decided to go to Mass one day. It went very well, and I realized that if I’m going to be Catholic, I need to understand what it means to be Catholic. So I began to look into the Catholic Church to understand what it teaches.

About that time, I went to see a friend of mine who was paralyzed from the neck down, had been for many years. He said his mother had just come back from a place in Yugoslavia and that she brought me a rosary. I didn’t really pay much attention to it. I thought, “Okay cool. I’ll have a rosary for the next Catholic funeral I go to, and I’ll look good. I won’t know how to pray it, but I’ll look good.”

Then his mom told me about this book she read, and she suggested we read it, my wife and I. So my wife read it while we were on vacation up in Wisconsin. I was fishing every day, and I didn’t pay any attention to it. I had to promise that I would read the book when we got back home, because I was too busy fishing while I was there.

I did read it. It just really caught my attention, and I thought, “There’s something going on here. I need to pay attention to this.” That would have been our 10th anniversary that year. Instead of going on the cruise that we’d planned on going on for our anniversary, we decided that we would go to this communist country on a religious pilgrimage instead.

Things began to happen to me, even on the way to Chicago to fly there. That was November of 1990. I noticed halfway there I pulled my rosary out because the priest that led the trip wanted us to pray a Rosary and the linkages on my rosary had already changed from a silver to a gold color. That’s when things really began to happen for me.

In Medjugorje, we were climbing Cross Mountain at 4 o’clock in the morning and I climbed it barefoot as penance for my friend Pat who was paralyzed. He was really the reason that I was there. I didn’t have a flashlight on because I was falling so much I was afraid I would break the flashlight. It was below 32 degrees. It was below freezing out because there were puddles on the ground that were ice. I finally got to a point where I was just exhausted, and I turned on my flashlight. I didn’t really know where I was, but right there in front of me was the 12th Station of the Cross where Jesus dies on the cross.

I just began to cry like a baby. [Eyes fill with tears] I feel it right now like I’m back there. My life just completely changed on a dime right then. I realized

“But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8).

He died for me. There wasn’t anybody else in that moment. It was very personal. And I realized also that this incredible place is not about Mary. It’s about Her Son. **She’s calling people there, like myself, calling us there to reunite us and reconnect us with Her Son.**

On our way back, things were so tense over there – helicopters flying overhead. When we got to Zagreb to fly back to the states, the flight was delayed like 12 hours, and they were not guaranteeing us a flight. We had to sit on the floor and there was like 50 of us. We decided to pray a Rosary, and they wouldn’t even let us pray a Rosary. They were with machine guns, and they said, “No you can’t do that here.”

The trip ends. The war starts the next year. I’m going to Mass every day, and my life has changed, but I’m never thinking I’m ever going back to Medjugorje again.

Then it was about 1995. A friend asked me to go to a weekend retreat. It was a Marian retreat in Iowa. It was a silent retreat. It was going very well. On Saturday afternoon, there was some quiet time and I went outside and I was praying the Stations of the Cross. When I got in front of the 12th Station of the Cross, I was kneeling down, I looked up and there was a butterfly. It was in September, and there was a butterfly slowly opening and closing its wings sitting on His shoulder. I was so mesmerized in remembering my moment of conversion, and here’s this beautiful sign from God.

That night, I got up, had to go down the hall to use the restroom, and I ran into a female that was getting up to use the restroom in the middle of the night. I broke the silence and said, “So what brings you here?” And she said, “Oh I just came along with my boyfriend. He wanted me to come with him. What brings you here?” And I thought, “Well, I guess Medjugorje brought me here.”

She said, “Oh my gosh. I want to go there so bad. Did you go?” I said, “Yeah. I went five years ago.” She said, “I’ll do anything to get a chance to go there.” And the next words out of my mouth were, “Well, I’m planning a trip there.”

I had no intentions of planning a trip. The war was still going on. I had no idea why I said it.

So the next day, it’s lunchtime, the retreat is over, and we can talk now. I’ve got all these women coming up to me giving me their phone numbers because they’ve heard about this trip I’m planning!

On the way back to Davenport, Iowa with my friend, I said, “Joe, did you catch what that conversation was about?” He said, “Yeah.” I said, “I’m not going to Medjugorje. I don’t know how to get there. I just signed up for a trip the last time. There’s a war going on. If I go, my wife’s going to want to go. She’s going to want to take our 12 year old daughter. I can’t take my family into a war zone. That’s crazy.” And he says, “Well you better pray about it.”

So I gave it a lot of thought and prayer, and I thought, “How am I going to do this? This is crazy! Where did this come from? Why did I say that?” I’m not someone who asks



12th Station of the Cross

for signs, but I thought, "If You really want me to do this, I've got to know if this is something that I'm being called to do. I need to see something I've never seen before."

Thinking about the butterfly sitting on the shoulder of Christ, I was in traveling sales at the time, and I thought, "Okay, I would like to see a butterfly on the dashboard of my car. If You put a butterfly on the dashboard of my car, I'll take a group of people to Medjugorje."

So I purposely kept my window up because I was not going. I did not want to go.

It got to be late October, maybe early November. Butterfly season is done in Iowa by that time, I forgot all about it. We didn't have cell phones back then. I pulled up to a payphone in Illinois and reached out and punched in my credit card number to make a call. I pulled the phone back into the car to speak to someone, and right there on the dashboard of my

car was a butterfly.

I've been taking people to Medjugorje ever since.

There was some fighting still going on in Mostar [a town near Medjugorje]. We could hear the NATO flights coming in from the Adriatic overnight. But we had no troubles.

I don't know how many times I've been there. I stopped counting at 25.

It did so much for me to go there. **It just completely changed my life**, and I just want other people to have the opportunity to experience what I've experienced. I've been able to take people who can't afford it. My business was blessed magnificently during this period while I'm doing this. I think God knew that I wasn't making money just for myself, but I was going to use it to feed the flock. It's been such a joy to be able to take priests and even a bishop – I took a bishop with me one year.

Imposters

By June Klins

Every Christmas, I make cookies which have a dark chocolate mint placed on top of cookie dough. My husband called them "Flying Saucer" cookies. I also make Peanut Butter Blossoms, with peanut butter cookie dough and a Hershey kiss on top. A few years ago, at a family gathering, our son Brian was talking to someone and grabbed a cookie from the tray, thinking it was a peanut butter cookie, but it was the mint one. His taste buds got a big surprise, which he did not like, and he called my mint cookies "imposters." He said I had tricked him, because they both had chocolate on top of a circular shaped cookie. It has become an ongoing family joke.

This past Christmas, Brian made a short video about the mint "imposter cookies." The gist of it was that I was the "Christmas witch," trying to trick people with the mint cookies. People in the world were eating my imposter cookies and getting sick. "The world was decaying before our eyes," said the narrator, who tried to salvage the world through advertising for the Peanut Butter Blossoms and a stand-up comedy routine targeting the imposters. "Let's get these cookies out of the Christmas line-up," he said to a crowd who booed

"Cursed is the man who trusts in human beings.... He is like a barren bush in the wasteland that enjoys no change of season, but stands in lava beds in the wilderness, a land, salty and uninhabited" (Jer 17:5-6).

him off the stage. The video ends with him giving up, saying, "What's the point, when even your family prefers the imposters?"

Why am I writing about Christmas cookies during Lent? After showing this video, which is hysterical, to a number of people, it dawned on me that I could use this video as a little analogy for a



Scenes from the "Imposter" video

teachable moment.

Even though the imposter cookies are my favorite, for sake of the analogy, the mint cookies (the imposters) could represent the lure of the world, desires for power, wealth, fame, sin, sin, and more sin – what the world offers that looks appealing. The Peanut Butter Blossoms represent a life of happiness only Heaven can give. The more we give in to these imposter "false gods," the more the world will continue to "decay before our eyes."

Our Lady has come to save the world with Her peace plan, and although most people are not booing Her, they are ignoring Her. She has been telling us for over 43 years how we can save

the world, but people prefer the imposters! But unlike the narrator in Brian's video, who gave up and went to sleep, Our Lady is *never* asleep. She continues to come every single day to earth to help us rid the imposters out of our lives. She knows that what will reverse the decay of the world is to live Her messages, especially the "five stones" – **Prayer** with the heart (especially the Rosary), daily **Bible** reading, monthly **Confession**, **fasting** on Wednesdays and Fridays, and making the **Eucharist** the center of our lives.

On January 2, 2015, Our Lady said in Her message to Mirjana, "Many false truths are being offered to you. You will overcome them with a heart cleansed by fasting, prayer, penance and the Gospel. This is the only truth and it is the truth which my Son left you."

If you are not living Our Lady's messages, maybe for Lent this year, you can pick one of them to work on. Maybe you can even make it a family affair to encourage one another.

Let's get the imposters out of the line-up for good!

"The devil is afraid of us when we pray and make sacrifices." ~ St. Anthony of Padua, our patron saint for 2025

The Virgin Brings a Message that Focuses on the Fallacies of this World

The following is excerpted with permission from the book, *Twilight of Marxism: Medjugorje, The Downfall of Systematic Evil, and the Fulfillment of the Secret of Fatima* by Dr. Thomas Petrisko.

Ivan, like Ivanka, is quiet and enjoys solitude.

By the second year of the visions, Ivan entered a seminary, but found it was not God's will for him. Right from the beginning, though, he says he realized the seriousness of the apparitions and tried to use them to truly better himself on a consistent basis.

He quickly developed a devoted prayer life, and his words, in a certain way, give any listener a keen insight into Mary's mission at Medjugorje in ways that are different from the others. There was a rumor that the Virgin Mary had shown Ivan his future right up until his death, but he has repeatedly explained that this was not true and just a misunderstanding.

The Virgin, says Ivan, brings a message that focuses on the fallacies of this world. Materialism is destroying the beauty of God's great gift of life, and people are living lives that lack order and proper direction. Strong prayers are the remedy, he emphasizes, and that is why Mary has come to Medjugorje – to tell and teach the world about the power of strong, faithful prayer.

Through prayer, the Virgin Mary has greatly helped Ivan when he is experiencing temptation. He now knows his weakness and God's strength. Prayer has taught him to rely on God's strength to change, especially old habits. One, however, must decide to pray and then concentrate on the prayer, he reminds his listeners.

Ivan especially understands how sin deprives one of eternal love. If we knew how much God loves us, we would never sin. Sin, he stresses, wounds us so much that we become unaware of God – we refuse His love. It's in the Eucharist, therefore, that we receive the armor to resist sin. We should try to make the Mass the center of our lives and receive the Eucharist daily, he suggests, if we can.

It is Satan, Ivan reminds his listeners, that tells us that we are not good enough, or that our prayer is not good enough.

Because of Satan's influence today, Mary is very concerned about the youth of the world and family life in general.

The world, Ivan repeats often to listeners, offers the youth only drugs, alcohol, and immorality. This causes great suffering for the youth; it ruins their lives and destroys families. It also causes a high divorce rate. Divorce, Ivan says, is a product of sin. Wherever there is divorce, there is sin. And, he reminds, wherever there is sin, there is Satan.

In interviews, Ivan has spoken of the following:



Ivan in 2019

- There is an “awareness” blindness that people develop. People often attach great importance to other people, certain material objects or status in life, such as homes, automobiles, or social and professional positions. As they go through life, these things become proportionally greater and greater until they devour a person's awareness of them. If that happens, they are no longer able to experience peace and joy. Many people are suffering from this illness. They die of hunger from these things.

- Sin is often the result of strong temptation and weakness.

- God expects parents to help and guide their young. The parent's first job is to create a loving environment of respect for one another, one that children can see. If there is little love or respect between parents, a child's spirit is sickened. It creates a perfect atmosphere for Satan to work in.

- Prayer groups should pray for world peace. They should pray for the sick and the abandoned, the born and the unborn, the hungry and the homeless, the poor and the lonely. They should also try to do corporeal works of mercy.
- Mary desires all people to be in prayer groups and to fast. Prayer, without fasting, he says, is like a soldier with one leg in battle. One is more easily defeated by Satan.
- The call of the Blessed Mother in Medjugorje is to change hearts. If you change hearts, you change society. The Virgin Mary promises that where families pray together, there will be harmony and unity. It is a process that must start when children are babies. When children are grown, it can often be too late.
- The authority of parents must rest on love. Parents must restrict the freedom of their children out of love and an awareness of Satan. Children must obey their parents out of love. Sacrificial love brings extraordinary blessings from God for parents and children.
- The Virgin Mary says that three generations in one household is very pleasing to God.
- Mary is the Mother of all people. She is calling from Medjugorje all her children on Earth.
- The family is greatly threatened by the disease of materialism. Families blame work for having no time to pray together. This is often the excuse. But it's really a lie, one that many people are living.

“I am the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace...Dear children, peace must reign between man and God and amongst all mankind. Dear children, this world, this humanity is heading towards a great danger which has the power to self-destruct.” (Our Lady, Ivan quoted during talks given in Australia on 2/26/08 and in Vienna, 11/15/14)

How St. Joseph's Name Was Added in the Mass

The following is excerpted, with permission, from the book, Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father, by Fr. Donald H. Calloway, MIC.

To be honest, it's hard to believe that St. Joseph's name did not appear in the prayers of the Mass until the 20th century. St. Joseph is, indeed, Mirror of Patience! Nevertheless, the manner in which St. Joseph's name came to be included in the Mass is very inspiring. Here's the story.

In 1958, a Bishop with a great devotion to St. Joseph was elected to the papacy: Angelo Roncalli. He loved St. Joseph so much that he had contemplated taking the papal name Joseph (Pope Joseph). Out of respect for his earthly father, however, he decided to take the name John. Since there had already been many previous popes named John, he was known as John XXIII.

In 1962, Pope John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council, entrusting the entire endeavor to St. Joseph. On November 10, 1962, at one of the sessions of the Council, a Bishop named Petar Cule offered a presentation on St. Joseph to the other bishops. In his lengthy presentation, Bishop Cule requested that the name of Joseph be included in the Canon of the Mass (The Roman Canon [Eucharistic Prayer 1]). Unfortunately, Bishop Cule was not well known, and due to his long, repetitious presentation, as well as his nervousness and inability to articulate things well, many of the cardinals and bishops at the presentation began to murmur and ridicule him for his pious and lengthy speech. At one point, the moderator of the session requested that Bishop Cule end his "eloquent and holy sermon" about St. Joseph. The moderator's belittling words caused many of the cardinals and bishops to laugh, resulting in Bishop Cule shuffling his aged body back to his seat, seemingly defeated.

Listening in on the speech via closed

circuit television was Pope John XXIII. He was not amused by the treatment given to Bishop Cule. Pope John XXIII knew Bishop Cule personally. He knew that Bishop Cule had suffered greatly under the Communists in Yugoslavia. Bishop Cule had been frequently interrogated by the Communists in cruel ways, eventually being sentenced to 11 years of hard labor in a concentration camp in Yugoslavia. The Communists even attempted to kill the bishop by placing him on a train that was deliberately wrecked in order to kill everyone on board. As a result of the wreck, the bishop's hips were shattered. After he was finally released from the concentration camp, the bishop suffered bouts of anxiety and nervousness, making it hard for him to speak without repeating himself. John XXIII knew that the bishop's presence at the council had taken much effort, and that the good bishop wanted to be there to testify that he had been spared from death through the intercession of St. Joseph.

Bishop Cule's speech on St. Joseph nearly brought Pope John XXIII to tears, and caused the pope to act. On November 13, three days after Bishop Cule gave his presentation on St. Joseph, Pope John XXIII decreed that the name of St. Joseph would be included in the Roman Canon of the Mass! The decree went into effect on December 8, 1962.

Today the name of St. Joseph appears in all four Eucharistic prayers. This came about during the pontificates of Benedict XVI and Francis. Pope Benedict XVI intended to insert St. Joseph's name into the three other Eucharistic Prayers, but was not able to accomplish it before his abdication of the papacy on February 28, 2013. Pope Francis, fulfilling the intentions of Pope Benedict XVI, officially placed the name of St. Joseph in all the Eucharistic Prayers on May 1, 2013.

The next time you attend Holy Mass, listen attentively to the priest as he prays the Eucharistic Prayer. Listen to hear the name of your spiritual father.



Statue of St. Joseph in Tihaljina, not far from Medjugorje

Did You Know?

Podbrdo Hill, where Our Lady first appeared, is located in the Medjugorje hamlet of Bijakovići. Bijakovići is under the patronage of the Holy Spirit. Their feast day is Pentecost.

In 1954, the villagers created a "klečina", or kiln, on Podbrdo Hill to make lime. They would burn stones at a high temperature for three days and three nights until they turned into a pure white substance. This substance was used to disinfect their crops and purify their drinking water.

Our Lady first appeared on the spot that was used to make that purifying lime.

On 6/25/96, Our Lady gave a message to the world: "I invite you again to open to prayer so that in prayer the Holy Spirit will help you, that your hearts become of flesh and not of stone."

This will also be the spot of the permanent visible sign for the world that Our Lady has promised.

marytv.tv

Our thanks to Fr. Ray Donohue, Laura and Kevin DiBacco, Kandace Lyons, Tom Kennedy, Diane Niebauer, Sue Taccone, Gina Adams, Tom McIntire, Peggy Chludzinski, Kathy Wayman, Barb Cesare, Betsy Truran, Stephanie Koshinskie, Deacon Jerry and Joan Peterson, Chris Falk, Corky Young, Marlene Figurski, Annette and Chris Fuhrman, Louise Lotze, Peggy Smith, and Rose Heintzel for their help with the February mailing. We thank Louise Lotze and Dave Wilkinson for the use of their photos in this issue. We also thank our proofreaders, Don Spaeder and Pat Berrier, our webmaster, Jason Klins, and our prayer group administrator, Patti Millar.

As of February 25, 2025, the number of Masses reported for Our Lady's intentions was 40,368. 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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VOL. 38, NO. 3