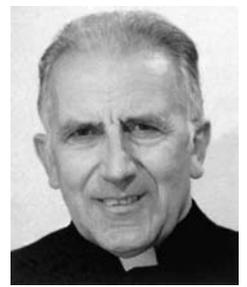




Echo of Medjugorje

July-August 2013 - Edited by: Eco di Maria, Via Cremona, 28 - 46100 Mantova (Italia) - Year 29, no. 7/8
Poste Italiane s.p.a. - Sped. in A. P. - D.L. 353/2003 (conv. in L. 27/02/2004 n° 46) art. 1, comma 2, DCB Mantova

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Fr. Angelo Mutti
founder Echo of Medjugorje

Message of 25 May 2013:

"Dear Children, Today I call you to be strong and resolute in faith and prayer, until your prayers have the strength to open the Heart of my beloved Son Jesus. Pray my children; pray without ceasing until your heart opens to God's love. I am with you and I intercede for all of you and I pray for your conversion. Thank you for responding to my call."

Be Strong and Resolute!

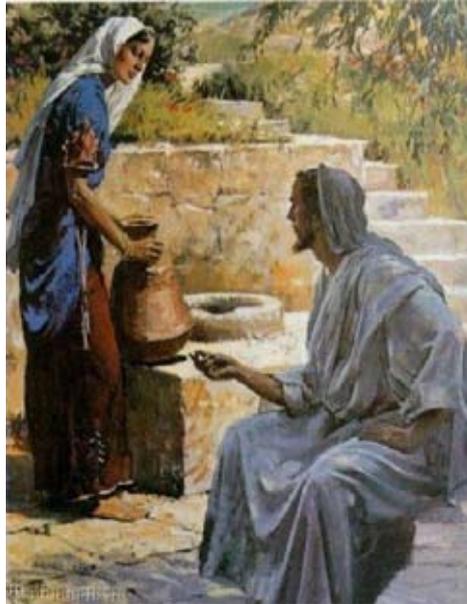
Strong is the faith of he who believes in God and who believes especially in His Love independent of wordly advice. Incomparably strong is Abraham's faith when he sets out to sacrifice his only son (Gen 22:1-10; Heb 11:17-19). On the other hand, weak is our faith when we totter before life's difficulties, when we prefer compromise to truth, when we turn to false idols, when we prefer comfortable solutions to a less-than-comfortable evangelical life.

In a similar way also prayer can be strong or weak. It is strong when it is true dialogue with God that nourishes a life of grace. Prayer is weak when it is a commodity for an exchange; how could we think that such a prayer could open our hearts to the Heart of Jesus? *Not he who says, "Lord, Lord," can enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does my Father's will can enter into heaven* (Mt 7:21).

Being in tune with God's will and converting to Him has been Mary's daily plea to us for the past 30 years. It is also what the Gospels have been teaching us for nearly 2000 years! God awaits us with great mercy. Mary is with us, intercedes for us and prays for us. Can't we see? Yet today the world is not that of yesterday and the fragility of our faith and the hardness of our hearts impede us from seeing.

May your prayers have the strength to open the heart of my beloved Son!, Mary says to us today. Since we know how tender and merciful and constantly open His heart is, we must assume that it is only our own inconsistency that makes our prayer ineffective. There is no genuine prayer that remains unfulfilled, that falls on deaf ears. That's why Mary invites us to pray without ceasing: not to multiply empty prayers, but to find the right prayer, pleasing to God; the prayer that the Holy Spirit himself kindles in us. Peace and joy in Jesus and Mary!

N.Q.



Set Out Behind my Son!

Message to Mirjana, 2nd June 2013:

"Dear Children, In this restless time, I call you anew to set out behind my Son; to follow Him. I know the pain, suffering and difficulties, but in my Son you will find rest; in Him you will find peace and salvation. My children, do not forget that my Son redeemed you by his Cross and enabled you to be once again children of God; to once again be able to call the Heavenly Father: 'Father'.

To be worthy of the Father, love and forgive! because your Father is love and forgiveness. Pray and fast, because this is the way of your purification, it is the way of coming to know and comprehend the Heavenly Father. When you come to know the Father, you will comprehend that he is all you need. [Our Lady said this with decisive and accentuated tones.] As a mother, I desire my children being in the communion of a single people where the Word of God is listened to and carried out. Therefore, my children, set out behind my Son. Be one with him. Be God's children. Love your shepherds as my Son loved them when he called them to serve you. Thank you." §

Annual Apparition to IVANKA,
25 June 2013, at Ivanka's family home with only Ivanka's family present. After the apparition, Ivanka referred: ***"Our Lady did not give a message. She blessed us with her motherly blessing."***

Message of 25 June 2013:

"Dear Children, With joy in the heart I love you all and call you to draw closer to my Immaculate Heart so I can draw you still closer to my Son Jesus, so He can give you His peace and love which are nourishment for each of you. Open yourselves, my children, to prayer; open yourselves to my love. I am your mother and I cannot leave you alone in your wanderings and sin. You are called, little children, to be my children, my beloved children, so I can present all of you to my Son. Thank you for responding to my call."

Open Yourselves to My Love!

"God the Father gave his only Son to the world through Mary. Whatever desires the patriarchs may have cherished, whatever entreaties the prophets and saints of the Old Law may have had for 4,000 years to obtain that treasure, it was Mary alone who merited it and found grace before God by the power of her prayers and the perfection of her virtues." (Treatise on true devotion to Mary, no. 16, Montfort).

Mary was chosen by God, and at Medjugorje her presence is part of God's divine plan. As part of this plan each of us is called to decide whether to believe or not, whether to accept or not this great gift of God. Mary speaks clearly. All we need to do is accept with the heart.

To those who complain about the Medjugorje messages being repetitive, we remind you that also the Gospel is the same after 2000 years! The novelty is not within the text, but in how it works in us. The novelty isn't to be found in the words, but in what they generate in us. **We are to be the novelty!** Mary says to us that she wants to bring us closer to her Heart so she can bring us even closer to her Son's Heart, and be nourished by His Peace and Love.

But is this what we seek? What is "peace" and "love" for us? *He who loves his father or mother, or child more than he loves me is not worthy of me. He who does not take up his cross and does not follow me is not worthy of me. He who will have kept his life for himself will lose it; and he who has lost his life because of me, will find it,* - Jesus warns us (Mt 10, 37-39). His words express the contradiction between divine Wisdom and human wisdom. Not only, but they reveal the satanic deception at work since the beginning of time (cfr. Gen 3:4-5). §

(Comments to messages by Nuccio Quattrocchi)

“Lumen fidei” Light of the Faith

Following is a synthesis of Lumen fidei (LF), the first encyclical that bears the signature of Pope Francis.

Light of the Faith (LF), given in the Year of the Faith, 50 years after the Second Vatican Council, which was a Council on faith, gives new vigour to our perception of the amplitude of faith's horizons. In fact, faith is not something to be taken for granted, but is a gift of God to be nourished and strengthened. "He who believes, can see," writes the Pope, because the light of the faith comes from God, and is able to illuminate all of man's existence.

Believing means entrusting

With the biblical figure of Abraham we see how faith is "listening" to the Word of God, and a "call" to come out from one's isolated self to open up to a new life and a "promise" for the future. Faith is also characterized by "fatherhood" because the God who calls us is not a foreign God, but God our Father, fount of goodness.

The opposite of faith is idolatry. "Idolatry is always an aimless passing from one lord to another. Idolatry does not offer a journey but rather a plethora of paths leading nowhere and forming a vast labyrinth. Those who choose not to put their trust in God must hear the din of countless idols crying out: "Put your trust in me!"

Believing means entrusting oneself to a merciful love which always accepts and pardons. Faith consists in the willingness to let ourselves be constantly transformed and renewed by God's call. Herein lies the paradox: by constantly turning towards the Lord, we discover a sure path which liberates us from the dissolution imposed upon us by idols." (no. 13)

LF leads us to the figure of Jesus as mediator in whom is made manifest the love of God which is the foundation of our faith. "Christian faith is faith in a perfect love, in its decisive power" but, "Faith does not merely gaze at Jesus, for it sees things as Jesus himself sees them," the Holy Father says. And just as we trust experts in our daily lives (such as architects, pharmacists and lawyers), **"We also need someone trustworthy** and knowledgeable where God is concerned," the Pope points out. "Jesus is the one who makes God known to us." (18) And when we share in Jesus' love, which is the Spirit, we see with the eyes of Jesus and share in his mind and his filial disposition. Yet, "faith is not a private matter, or a completely individualistic notion or a personal opinion. It comes from hearing, and is meant to find expression in words and to be proclaimed." (22)

Faith needs truth

"We need knowledge, we need truth, because without these we cannot stand firm or move forward. Faith without truth does not save." The real meaning of "truth" is no longer understood: "In contemporary culture, people often tend to consider the only real truth to be that of technology: as the only truth that is certain and that can be shared. At the other end of the scale we are willing



to allow for subjective truths of the individual ... yet these are truths valid only for that individual, not deemed capable of

being proposed to others in an effort to serve the common good, while Truth itself is regarded with suspicion": as something imposed, that crushes the actual lives of individuals. But this leaves us with relativism, in which the question of universal truth is no longer relevant. "The question of truth is really a question of deep memory, for it deals with something prior to ourselves and can succeed in uniting us in a way that transcends our petty and limited individual consciousness. It is a question about the origin of all that is, in whose light we can glimpse the goal and thus the meaning of our common path."

Truth needs love

"Love and truth are inseparable. Without love, truth becomes cold, impersonal and oppressive... The truth we seek, the truth that gives meaning to our journey through life, enlightens us whenever we are touched by love." Chapter two continues in the exposition of the knowledge of truth and love, a knowledge that is necessary to understand man's search and need for God.

Church as storehouse of memory

Chapter three concentrates on the importance of evangelization. "Those who have opened their hearts to God's love cannot keep this gift to themselves" (37). While addressing the question of transmitting the faith and being sure that we have encountered the "real Jesus", LF points to the Church as a Mother who teaches us to speak the language of faith. "The Church passes on to her children the whole store of her memories" (40). Stress is placed on the importance of the Sacraments as a special means for the transmission of the faith, together with the Lord's Prayer and the Decalogue. "The four elements which comprise the storehouse of memory which the Church hands down are: the profession of faith, the celebration of the sacraments, the path of the ten commandments, and prayer" (46).

Faith is good for everyone

"Faith is a common good. It helps us build our societies in a way that they can journey towards a future of hope" (51). The Holy Father points to the family as one of the important settings where faith is transmitted. "I think first and foremost of the stable union of man and woman in marriage. Promising love for ever is possible when we perceive a plan bigger than our own ideas and undertakings. In the family, faith accompanies every age of life, beginning with childhood." Faith is no refuge for the fainthearted - says the Pope - but something which enhances our lives; and when faith is weakened, the foundations of life also risk being weakened.

Faith and painful testing

Another setting lit up by faith is suffering and death. "Christians know that suffering

cannot be eliminated... Faith is not a light which scatters all our darkness, but a lamp which guides our steps in the night and suffices for the journey. To those who suffer, God does not provide arguments which explain everything; rather, his response is that of an accompanying presence, a history of goodness which touches every story of suffering and opens up a ray of light" (57).

Mary's memory

"Mary treasured in her heart all that she had heard and seen. She is the perfect icon of faith. Her motherhood ensured for the Son of God an authentic human history, and true flesh" (59). To Mary, the Holy Father prays: "(...) Help us to be touched by his love, that we may touch him in faith."

Priest - Shepherds

In nearly four months of Pontificate, Pope Francis has assiduously spoken of how he sees the role of priests.

"Be shepherds that smell of sheep!" (28 March 2013). A priest has to have on him the smell of those whom he pastors to. To this, Pope Francis added another "smell" when he said they must have the **fragrance of Christ's (anointing) oil**. Says the Pope: "A good priest is seen by how his people are anointed. This is a clear test."

"When our people are anointed with the oil of gladness, it is obvious: e.g. when they leave Mass looking as if they have heard good news. People thank us because they feel that we have prayed over the realities of their everyday lives, their troubles, their joys, their burdens and their hopes. And when they feel that the fragrance of the Anointed One, of Christ, has come to them through us, they feel encouraged to entrust to us everything they want to bring before the Lord: "Pray for me, Father, because I have this problem", "Bless me", "Pray for me" - these words are the sign that the anointing has flowed down to the edges of the robe, for it has turned into prayer; in to prayers of the people of God." (28 March 2013)

"We need to "go out" in order to experience our own anointing, its power and its redemptive efficacy. A priest who seldom goes out of himself, who anoints little - I won't say "not at all" because, thank God, our people take our oil from us anyway - misses out on the best of our people, on what can stir the depths of his priestly heart.

"Dear lay faithful, be close to your priests with affection and with your prayers, that they may always be shepherds according to God's heart.

The Gospel speaks of the shepherd who notices that one sheep is missing, and he leaves the ninety-nine to go look for the one. "He goes to look for one! (But) we have one (in the fold) and ninety-nine are missing! We must go out; go out to them," said the Pope. "We must ask the Lord for the grace of generosity and the courage and patience to go out and proclaim the Gospel. It is difficult. It is easier to stay at home with the one sheep and pamper it... but we priests, and we Christians, all of us: the Lord wants us to be shepherds, not pamperers of sheep. Shepherds!" (17-06-13). www.news.va

Anniversary of Medjugorje

Reflection by Msgr. Giacomo Martinelli, delegate to the Pontificia Accademia dell'Immacolata in Rome and Papal Chaplain.



The 25th June is for all of us the anniversary of Medjugorje. We know, however, that the first apparition was the day before, on the 24th June 1981; a day in which the Church celebrates the Nativity of St. John Baptist.

There are various reasons for which the anniversary is celebrated on the 25th. However, also the choice of the date itself is significant. Our Lady at times chooses certain dates to express something important. For example, the revelation at Lourdes of her name (*I am the Immaculate Conception*) was made on the 25th March, the feast of the Annunciation. As a matter of fact, it is in the Gospel that recounts the encounter between the Angel and Mary (Lk 1:26-38) that we find the fundamental affirmations upon which the Church defined the doctrine of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

So what is the reason behind choosing to appear the day before the first apparition; on the day dedicated to the Baptist? John the Baptist is the Precursor, the one who came to proclaim the coming of Jesus and to prepare the people to receive the Messiah, to "convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God" (Lk 1:16). Our Lady has taken upon herself this same role, to call God's people - through the Medjugorje apparitions - to conversion.

When we speak of "preceding" and of "preparing", it is meant in a chronological sense, visibly present in history, because Christ precedes everything; He is "begotten of the Father before all worlds". We men and women, however, need to be guided towards Him, to be prepared to become "a perfect people" (Lk 1:17).

This preparation means making us open to the action of God according to how and when He chooses. It is not the people who choose and establish the modalities of God's interventions. The events surrounding Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, are clear. He became unable to speak because he did not believe. It is only when he responds with an act of obedience - writing: *John is his name* (Lk 1:63) - that his tongue is loosened.

Before God's signs, we too must get off our high horses of pride, and receive what the Lord gives us with a certain passivity and humility. We received everything from Him, even our life, and we have to be humble to accept to be put in our place.

St. John the Baptist has within him that inner light that allows him to clearly point out the Messiah to his followers. "He that shall come after me, is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry;

he shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and fire" (Mt 3:11). He is pointing out Christ, not himself, and this is fundamental for every Christian because Christ alone is Saviour. **Christians are those who point to Christ** with the way they live, their virtues, within the context of the "mission" according to his state of life, and if it is the case, with his preaching. This is exactly what Our Lady has been doing here for years. The Baptist and the Virgin Mary can prepare a people to receive the Lord because they know very well who this Lord to be received is. John says at the beginning of Jesus' ministry: "It is the bridegroom who has the bride; and yet the bridegroom's friend, who stands there and listens to him, is filled with joy at the bridegroom's voice. This is the joy I feel, and it is complete. He must grow greater. I must decrease." (Jn 3:29).

John points out Christ, as does Our Lady: "So I can bring you even closer to my Son Jesus, to present you all to my Son" (25-06-2013).

In her messages we see how Our Lady tries to bring us closer to Christ, to the Church, to the Pope, to the faith! This task is done not without a certain degree of travail to make it possible for us to perceive her voice within the shadows of our sins, the darkness that surrounds our hearts and the pagan mentality of our world. This new rapport with God, this walking on the path that brings us closer to the Lord, does not happen "mathematically". The dynamics in a relationship with God and with Mary and the brethren is always hanging by a thread - so to speak - where the thread is the trust and love that our heart has for the Lord. Satan tries to sever this thread, and for this reason our life of faith is often disturbed by a type of satanic shadow that stirs up doubts and fears within our hearts. Only fidelity allows us to defeat these shadows; a fidelity to be renewed constantly and maintained to the end. Our Lady and John the Baptist help us by constantly indicating to us the sign to which we owe our fidelity.

Both of them perform another task which is just as fundamental. The Baptist was a person who didn't mince his words: "Brood of vipers! Who made you think you could flee from the coming retribution? ... Even now the axe is being laid to the root of the trees, so that any tree failing to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire" (Mt 3:7,10). How many times has Our Lady called us to conversion, to change our ways! How many times has she listed and clearly described what she once called "modern day sins"! (2-10-2010).

Our Lady fights evil in an absolute way because she is Immaculate. St. John the Baptist was so radical and authoritative in asking others to repent and convert because he for first lived that same way: he lived in the desert, was clothed in camel hair and ate locusts and wild honey. It is for this that Jesus said of him: "Of all the children born to women, there has never been anyone greater than John the

Baptist" (Mt 11:11). **Our Lady and John the Baptist fight** strenuously to combat evil and they call us to do the same. God's signs are clear. The decision is up to us. And today Our Lady wants to know which side we're on, how we want to spend the gifts received at Medjugorje and how we intend to correspond to the graces received through her intercession. §

Message to MIRJANA, 2 July 2013:

"Dear Children, with a motherly love I beseech you to give me your hearts, so I can present them to my Son and free you; free you from all the evil that increasingly enslaves you and distances you from the only Good, my Son; from everything that leads you on the wrong way and takes away your peace. I desire leading you to the freedom of my Son's promises, because I desire for God's will to be completely fulfilled here, that through reconciliation with the Heavenly Father, through fasting and prayer, there may arise apostles of God's love; apostles who will freely and lovingly spread God's love to all my children; apostles who will spread a trustful love in the Heavenly Father and who will open the gates of Heaven.

Dear Children, offer your Pastors the joy of love and support, just as my Son has asked them to offer to you. Thank you."

On the 7th day of the 33rd year of her apparitions at Medjugorje, Our Lady gives us a message that is almost a summary of her work. **She came to bring the world back to God**, to deliver mankind from the seductions of the world that keep us from the only Good, Jesus Christ, because after more than two thousand years we still don't know that our salvation is in Him alone.

The first part of today's message is a **vibrant petition** by Our Lady to lead us to Jesus. The contrast between good and evil is not a childish or naive way of reading and interpreting History. The universal good is not a mythical chimera, but the essence of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and indeed of God's Plan for mankind who was made in His own image.

For it to be fulfilled **we must adhere personally** to this plan by our own free will. This requires conversion (return to God), belief in His Plan and collaboration on our part in the building up of His Kingdom of peace and love. The more we surrender ourselves to God, the freer we are. God the Creator, our Father, wants us as children and his will - which we submit to by praying the "Our Father" - is not to dominate over us, but to free us of every slavery, addiction and fear. It raises us to the state of childhood.

"I desire for God's will to be completely fulfilled here, that through reconciliation with the Heavenly Father, through fasting and prayer, there may arise apostles of God's love." Our Lady is pointing out to us a programme of life, which doesn't mean "things to do", but rather a style of life that points to God's Love.

Year of the Faith
Suggestions from Medjugorje

"Witness the faith with your lives, and pray so that day by day your faith may grow in your hearts."

(Medjugorje, 25 January 2012)

Faith lived out and not only stated, is not fruit of our abilities and capacities, but a gift offered to all and guaranteed by God, for which we must ask with a sincere heart; and after accepting it, live it out on a daily basis. Easily said, but we all know how difficult it is to witness the faith with one's life. It is, however, what Mary asks of us. And she too knows how difficult it is for us. For this reason she urges us to pray constantly that the faith might grow day by day in our hearts.

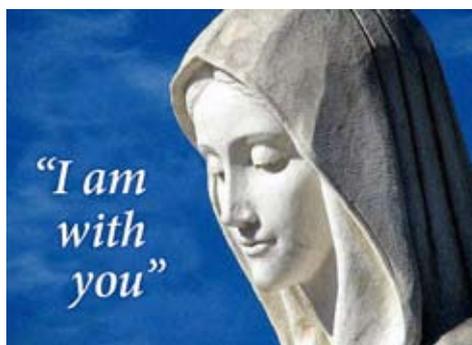
Prayer is vital to our faith. Our faith weakens and dies without the nourishment that comes directly from God when we communicate with Him through prayer. We need to learn to see prayer not only as a way to plead, praise and thank, but especially as a way to communicate with God, a means through which we remain in touch with Him.

We must pray knowing that the Holy Spirit will sustain our prayer to the point of praying Himself in us (cfr Rm 8:26-27). *I am with you*, says Mary, and this renewed confirmation encourages us, but it still requires our free adhesion to what she asks of us.

Mary's call is personal and universal at the same time. It is directed to each and every person, but the response of each has a universal value and therefore must be sought, found and given in the Church and by the Church.

At Medjugorje in particular we see how, with respect to the past, Our Lady has **chosen a Parish** as the place of her presence and action of grace (Message 01.03.1984). This is because the Catholic Church is the custodian of the universal salvation, and thus, a warranty for her authenticity. This is important, so that the faithful do not get lost. Only in Christ's Church can we find sure refuge: "And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt 16:18). Besides praying for ourselves, let us pray in particular for priests, according to Mary's request in the messages entrusted to Mirjana.

Edit. Team



"Step Back Satan!"

"A key factor for an exorcist is to know if the person he is praying over is a person who goes to Mass and tries to live a Christian life, for it is useless for a person to want to receive prayers of blessing if that person doesn't live a sacramental life.

Above all, the priest-exorcist must encourage these people to pray. One can be delivered from evil with just prayer and the sacraments, as many saints have done, without the need of exorcism. However, one can never be delivered with just exorcisms, unless there is also prayer and the sacraments.

[...] It is important to remember that the Bible never tells us to fear the Devil. **What we must fear is not being in God's grace.** This means to confess, go to Mass, receive Communion, but also do Eucharistic Adoration and pray, especially with the Psalms and the Rosary. All these are, amongst other things, the best remedy against the extraordinary activity of the Devil. We are armoured if we remain in God's grace."

[Excerpt from Padre Amorth's book, *Vade Retro Satana!* - Ediz. San Paolo]

Use only words that help build up

"Our speech is often used in a destructive way. 'The tongue is a fire,' says St. James as he describes how easy it is to fall into sinful speech (Jas 3:6, 8-9). It is easy to fall into **negative humour**, constantly pointing out others' faults even if in a joking fashion. But **we tear down others** when we point out their weak points, criticize them, or complain about them when they are not present. We may start off speaking positively about someone, yet add a 'but' that precedes our mentioning a certain fault or annoying point we think they possess: 'He's a great guy, but sometimes he talks too much.'

Such **detraction** is not necessary and diminishes the honour that is due to the other. Words that expose someone's faults to the detriment of his or her honour should be avoided. Just because a certain statement might be true doesn't mean I should say it. If I were to tell others about a person's hidden faults - even if true - this would be to the detriment of his or her honour, since now these faults would be in most people's minds when they thought of that person."

[Excerpt Dr. Edward Sri's article, *The Feathers of Gossip*]

On the Healing Power of Confession

In Genesis (3:9-13; 4:9-14) we see how first Adam and Eve, then Cain, reject the opportunity to own up to their sins. They shift the blame when God uses open questions to get them to "confess" and repent. Instead of repenting, Cain shifts the blame, accusing God of being unjust and too severe and even of betraying him. In doing so, we see how Cain assumes Abel's victim status and projects his own guilt elsewhere: "Now I can't work; I can't fellowship with You. Now I have to suffer injustice..."

[Excerpt Dr. Scott Hahn's book, *Lord, Have Mercy* (Doubleday)]



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With Mary, St. Pio of Pietrelcina and Pope Francis

Pope Francis uses every occasion to show his love and veneration for Mary, the Mother of God. When he speaks he transmits his filial relationship with Mary and shows his affectionate accord with her desires which are so similar to those expressed at Medjugorje.

Pray, pray, pray with the heart. Pray the Holy Rosary, Mary repeatedly tells us, and today adding: *Open yourselves my children to prayer; open yourselves to my love.*

Pope Francis echoes her calls. Last May, for instance, he said: "To listen to the Lord, we must learn to contemplate, feel his constant presence in our lives and we must stop and converse with him, give him space in prayer... Let us remember the Lord more in our daily life! ... I would like to recall the importance and beauty of the prayer of the Holy Rosary."

A few days before his death, Padre Pio was asked to say something. With a fatherly tone, he said: "Love Our Lady and bring others to love her too. Pray the Rosary always!"

I bless you with Jesus and Mary.

J. Remo

Mantua, July 2013

Resp. Ing. Lanzani - Tip. DIPRO (Roncade TV)