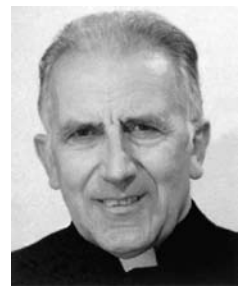




Echo of Medjugorje

September-October 2013 - Edited by: Eco di Maria, Via Cremona, 28 - 46100 Mantova (Italia) - Year 29, no. 9/10
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 July 2013:

“Dear Children, With joy in my heart I call you all to live your faith and to witness it with the heart and through your example. Decide, my children, to distance yourselves from sin and from temptation. In your hearts may there be joy and love for holiness! My children, I love you and I accompany you with my intercession before the Most High. Thank you for responding to my call.”

JOY AND LOVE OF HOLINESS!

We must not forget that one of the age-old temptations is to distrust God, and to trust only ourselves or human works. Yesterday we thought that reaching out our hand to gather up the forbidden fruit was enough to become like God, and today we place excessive trust in science and technology; and we still haven't understood that **in God alone can our problems be resolved.**

We have yet to understand that Love is the only force - or clean energy if you will - without contraindications, because it is fruit of the Holy Spirit!

“Decide, my children, to distance yourselves from sin and from temptation,” Mary warns us, while also indicating the road to take: **“In your hearts may there be joy and love for holiness!”**

This is the way forward; the way is interior (in your hearts), but it is not detached from reality, from the concreteness of life. Indeed, our life must shine with it if we want to reach the goal set by God, the same goal Our Lady has come to remind us of. That goal is holiness.

Holiness can be achieved with the help of the Sacraments which are gifts to us by Jesus. They help put us in communion with the Lord Jesus. Through the Sacraments we receive from Him strength, light and discernment; enabling us to witness the faith with our heart and by our example. §

(Comments to messages by Nuccio Quattrocchi)



Philipp de Champaigne, Assunzione di Maria, XVI sec.

GIVE ME YOUR HEARTS!

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 asked them to offer to you. Thank you.”

This particular message is almost a synthesis of Our Lady's entire work. She has come to call us back onto the path to God; to help loosen the chains that have enslaved mankind and kept it from the only Good, who is Jesus Christ. She has come to remind us that God the creator, our Father, wants us as his children; not to dominate over us, but to deliver us from every form of slavery, from every fear. In Him we are raised up and made children in the Son, Jesus Christ. §

Message of 25 August 2013:

“Dear Children, Also today the Most High has granted me the grace to be with you and to lead you towards conversion. Day after day I sow and I call you to conversion, that you may be prayer, peace, love and the wheat grain that by dying produces one hundredfold. I do not desire for you, dear children, to have to repent for everything that you could have done but did not want to do. Therefore, my children, say again with enthusiasm: ‘I want to be a sign for others.’ Thank you for responding to my call.”

BE A SIGN FOR OTHERS!

This message regards the theme of salvation, which is also the theme of today's Mass reading (XXI Sun. OT. Year C), and it has been the theme of Mary's work over these last 32 years at Medjugorje. **Conversion, fasting and prayer** are strong points in her messages. **“Day after day I sow and I call you to conversion,”** Our Lady tells us, while pointing out that we are being called to a state of life, not to a bureaucratic commitment: **“That you may be prayer, peace, love and the wheat grain ...”**

Fasting, prayer and the Sacraments are useful means - even necessary means - for our salvation, but their action is not automatic. Their **efficacy depends on the way in which we practise them.** In St. Luke's Gospel (Lk 13:22-30), from today's Reading, this concept is clear. It is not enough to have eaten at the Lord's table to be able to go through the narrow door. Nor can the Baptismal certificate guarantee our salvation.

If prayer is only lip service, while the heart is elsewhere, how can it produce conversion? The risk is that we approach superstition rather than faith.

The conversion to which we are called goes beyond the surface, and reaches into the heart to transform it. We are being called to be born anew. Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (Jn 3:3).

So let us take Mary's call seriously, and be a sign for others. This means allowing oneself to be transformed so as to become witnesses. §

2 XXVIII World Youth Day Rio de Janeiro 23-28 July 2013

With the WYD RIO theme, "Go and make Disciples of all Nations!" (cf. Mt 28:19), Pope Francis desired that each of the young persons present at the WYD felt called personally. Following is an excerpt of what he told the youth:

"Dear young people, the Lord is calling you today! Not you, the crowd; but you, and you, and you ... each of you singularly. Listen in your heart to that which he has to say to you... Being a disciple means knowing that we are God's Field of Faith. So I have thought of three images that can help us better understand what it means to be a missionary disciple.

- **the first image: a field for sowing:** When we accept the Word of God then we are the Field of Faith! Please, let Christ and his Word into your lives! Let the seed of God's Word in! Let it sprout! Let it grow! God does it all, but you [need to] allow its action; let Him work for this growth.

- **the second: a field for training:** the Lord Jesus asks us to "play in his team". What does a player do when he is called to be part of a team? He has to train, and he has to train very hard. Such is our life as disciples of the Lord. What Jesus offers us is something greater than the World Cup! Jesus offers us the possibility for a fertile life, a happy life ... in eternal life. However, he asks us to pay the entry ticket. The price is training to become "fit" so we can face without fear all life's situations and witness our faith, through dialogue with Him, which is called prayer.

I want to ask you - but respond in your heart, in silence: Do I pray? Each of you respond. Do I talk to Jesus, or am I afraid of silence? Do I allow the Holy Spirit to speak in my heart? Do I ask Jesus what He wants me to do; what He wants of my life? This is training.

- **the third: a field for building:** Your heart, dear young person, wants to build up a better world. Please, do not allow that others be the protagonists of the change! You are the ones who have a future! You! It is through you that the future of the world is ushered in. It is to you that I ask: be the protagonists of this change. Continue to overcome the apathy, and offer a Christian response to the social and political unrest. I ask you to be builders of the world, to work for a better world.

Dear Young People, please, do not look upon life from the balcony! Thrust yourselves into it. Jesus didn't remain on the balcony; he immersed himself into it. Immerse yourselves into life too, as Jesus did! There is still a question though. Where to begin? Once Mother Teresa was asked the same question. She responded: 'From me and from you!'. She was a courageous woman! So this evening I say to you: Shall we begin? and from where? The answer is: From me and from you!

Dear friends, do not forget: You are the field of faith! You are Christ's athletes!



You are the builders of a more beautiful Church, and of a better world! So let us lift up our gazes to Our Lady, so that She might help us to follow Jesus. She has given us the example with her own "yes" to God. (...).

Life, however, is made up also of crosses, and on Friday evening at the VIA CRUCIS, the Pope spoke of the encounter between Jesus and Peter who was escaping from Rome (escaping from the cross). "Lord, where are you going?", asked Peter. And the Lord responded: "I am going to Rome to be crucified again." And Peter understood that he had to follow the Lord with courage, to the end. He also understood, in particular, that he was never alone in the journey. That Jesus that he had loved was always by his side!

So you see how Jesus journeys on our path and takes upon himself our fears, problems and suffering, even the deepest of them. Through the Cross, Jesus unites to himself all the people who suffer... He unites to himself all the youth, those who have lost trust in political institutions because they see the egoism and corruption, and who have lost faith in the Church and even in God, due to the incoherence of Christians and ministers of the Gospel.

How Jesus suffers for our incoherence! The Cross of Christ is made up of suffering and of man's sin - even our own! - and He opens up his arms to take it all upon himself. And he says to us: "Take courage! You are not alone in carrying your cross! I carry it with you, and I have defeated death, and I have come to give you hope, to give you life (cf. Jn 3:16)". (Editorial Staff)

Pope Francis and the Message of the Queen of Peace

The Pope's Angelus message of the 1st September moved hearts and "sleepy consciences" (cf. homily 7 Sept.) of millions of people of every creed and religion. The Pope unveiled the "shameful face of Satan" which is cleverly hidden behind the screen of Media lies used to hide personal gain.

It is deception of the father of lies when we "have sharpened our ideas to justify ourselves. (And) as if it were normal, we continue to sow destruction, pain, death!" (Holy Father, 7 Sept.).

At the conclusion of the Angelus the Holy Father said, "Hence ... I have decided to announce a day of fasting and prayer

for peace in Syria, the Middle East, and the entire world [it was the 7th Sept.]. He also said, "We ask Mary's help so we can respond to violence, conflict and war with the strength of dialogue, reconciliation and love. She is Mother. May she help us to find peace! We are all her children! Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us!".

The connection seems obvious between the words by Pope Francis and the fundamental message of Our Lady who presented herself at Medjugorje as Queen of Peace (26.06.1981) and who came to say, "Peace! Peace! Peace! Be reconciled! To do this, you must believe, pray, fast and confess...". On another occasion Our Lady said: "I call you to pray and fast for peace in the world. You have forgotten that with prayer and fasting it is possible to stop even wars, and to suspend even natural laws" (21.07.1982). In 2003 Our Lady said: "Also today I call you to pray and fast for peace. I have already told you, and I repeat it again my children, that with just prayer and fasting it is possible to stop wars. Peace is a precious gift from God. Seek it; ask and you will receive ..." (25.02.2003).

We are convinced that these coincidences have not come by chance, but that they belong to the profound essence of grace at Medjugorje. This is the first time in the history of Marian apparitions that Our Lady has addressed an entire portion of the Church, rather than a few chosen people. "I have chosen this parish especially, and it is my desire to lead it. With love I protect it and I desire that all belong to me..." (01.03.1984). "I desire telling you that I have chosen this parish and that I hold it in my hands like a flower that does not want to die" (01.08.1985).

Mary, who alone "attained perfection, making her the spotless bride" (cf. Eph 5:27), (cf. LG 65), is sent by the Father: "By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and worry, until they are led into the happiness of their true home." (LG 62). Therefore, in these apparitions at Medjugorje "which are the last for humanity" (message 17.04.1982), the grace of Mary's presence is offered above all to the Church; and the Church, through her various dimensions (institutional, sacramental and charismatic), continually makes Jesus Christ Saviour alive and present in the world: "for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved" (cf. Acts 4:12).

The above concordance between the messages of Medjugorje and the Pope's reflections are a consoling sign of the fulfilment of the great plan of salvation that the Father is working for the good of his children through the proclamation of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart. At Medjugorje Our Lady said, in fact: "Only through my shepherds will my Heart triumph!" (02.09.2013). §

«Consecrate Yourselves to my Immaculate Heart»

Image of Mary's Immaculate Heart as described by Sr. Lucia of Fatima

More than once Our Lady has asked that we be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart, including the solemn form of Fatima which was addressed to the Pope (The time has come in which God asks the Holy Father to perform the consecration - 13 June 1929), to the many and frequent calls included in the messages of Medjugorje.

In this Year of the Faith (11-X-2012 - 24-XI-2013) this request appears even more intense because the Pope will again renew the act of consecration next October 13th. The gesture belongs to a tradition that is almost a century old. It started with the first request by Our Lady at Fatima on the 13th July 1917.

Pius XII tried to fulfil the request in 1942, as did Paul VI in 1964 during the Second Vatican Council. However, it was John Paul II who did fulfil it according to the requested form, on 25th March 1984. He also renewed it in 1991 during his second pilgrimage to Fatima, and in 2000 during the Jubilee of Bishops. When Benedict XVI went to Fatima, he made a special act of consecration to Mary; during the Year of the Priests (12th May 2010). This particular gesture had a more ample meaning since the Pope explicitly said he meant it to also imply that the prophetic mission of Fatima was not over.

The prophetic mission consists in speaking in God's name, proclaiming his calls, battling for the recognition of his rights and communicating his salvific will. This prophetic mission continues with great evidence in Medjugorje; and in Marian apparitions it is in fact inherent - as explained by many popes (Pius IX, Pius X, John Paul II), saints (J.H. Newman, John Bosco, St. Maximilian Kolbe) and theologians (Von Balthasar, Rahner) - that they represent a new phase in history starting from the great sign of Lourdes in the mid nineteenth century. This is to sow this truth into the hearts of all men.

Pope Francis, too, carries forth the great Marian tradition, and on the 13th May he asked the Bishops of Portugal to join him as he consecrated his pontificate to the Blessed Virgin. From the time when Mary received from Jesus the task of leading us as Mother (Jn 19:26-27), there has never been an interruption to that historical line that has always accompanied and sustained the Church especially in circumstances and situations that have been particularly difficult. When the Church is united to Mary, as it was at Pentecost, the Church experiences the fullness of the power of the Holy Spirit.

The particular Marian festivity, entitled "Blessed are You for Believing," begins 12th October with a pilgrimage early in the morning to the tomb of St. Peter, and then during the morning with Eucharistic Adoration and confession in some of the churches close to St. Peter's Square. At 5 pm the original statue of Our Lady of Fatima will reach St. Peter's and

here there will be a celebration with a Marian catechesis. After 7 pm the statue will be placed in the Shrine of Divine Love for the prayer of the Rosary, in connection with the big Marian shrines around the world. At 10 pm there will be a prayer vigil.

On Sunday 13th, the statue will be once again in St. Peter's for the Rosary at 10 am and Holy Mass at 10.30 am, with Pope Francis presiding, and after which he will consecrate the world to Mary's Immaculate Heart. **Those who have "responded to her call"** and are thus part of Mary's spiritual family, clearly rejoice at this event as they also feel responsibility and gratitude to God for this church event which ought to be lived with a sense of unity and communion with the Pope's intentions: that we pray for all peoples that they journey in the direction indicated by Our Lady: «My desire, my mission here is the unity of God's family» (Medjugorje, 2 Feb. 2011).

Marco Vignati, Comunità Casa di Maria, Rome



Mladifest Medjugorje 1-6 Aug. 2013³ XXIV International Youth Festival

The Youth Festival, held in Medjugorje from the 1-6 August, concluded with a Holy Mass of thanksgiving atop Križevac at the break of dawn on the Feast day of the Transfiguration. Thousands of youth were present, many of whom had spent the night singing and praying on the mountain around the Cross which is a place of grace. We know this because Mary herself said, **"I am often on the mount, at the foot of the cross, praying"** (Mess. 3 Nov. 1981).

During the festival there were numerous and moving testimonies of extraordinary spiritual graces and wonderful works that God is accomplishing today amid his people through the intercession of the Queen of Peace. Amongst others, there was the witness by Fr. Michael, former football player from the US, who had been a victim of the various idols and prevailing demons of our times (drugs etc.) and who had come to Medjugorje for the sole purpose of keeping his mother happy. Yet, it was then and here that he found his priestly vocation!

Mary is preparing her new people, and like the Pope, she trusts in the youth, who are: **"Hope of the world and of the Church."** (Editorial Staff)

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"The festival was beautiful! Every day there were more than 500 priests of so many languages who listened to the confessions of the youth. The priests themselves were encouraged at seeing so many young people. Before a crowd of thousands, Ivan received an apparition and the following message on the 5th August on Podbrdo during the vigil of the Feast of the Transfiguration:

"Dear Children, also today it is with great joy that I see you here with open hearts and full of joy. I call you all to pray responsibly for peace. Pray my children, that peace may reign in the world; that peace may reign in the hearts of men, in the hearts of my children.

Be my bearers of peace in this world without peace. Be my living sign; a sign of peace for the people you meet in your parishes. Be my sign, be my light, my reflection for others.

Know, my children, that I am always with you, that I pray for you all and intercede for you all with my Son Jesus. So persevere with prayer! Thank you for having said 'Yes' also today to my call."

(Excerpt from: "Les Enfants de Medjugorje", by Sr. Emmanuel.)

**Virtues are formed by Prayer
Prayer preserves temperance. Prayer
suppresses anger. Prayer prevents
emotions of pride and envy. Prayer
draws into the soul the Holy Spirit,
and raises man to Heaven.**

(St. Ephraem of Syria)

I bind unto myself today
The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.

I bind unto myself today
The power of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, His might to stay,
His ear to hearken to my need.

The wisdom of my God to teach,
His hand to guide, His shield to ward,
The word of God to give my speech,
His heavenly host to be my guard.





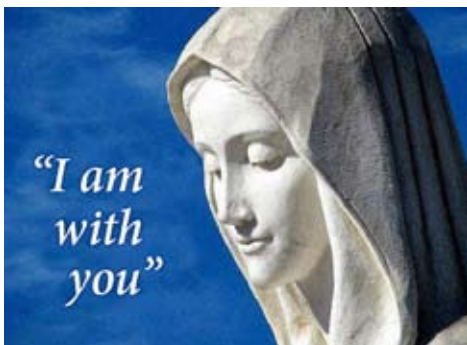
J.R.R. TOLKEIN writes to his son

"Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: **the Blessed Sacrament...** There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth, and more than that: Death. [...]"

The only cure for sagging or fainting faith is Communion. Though always Itself, perfect and complete and inviolate, the Blessed Sacrament does not operate completely and once for all in any of us. Like the act of Faith it must be continuous and grow by exercise. **Frequency is of the highest effect.** Seven times a week is more nourishing than seven times at intervals.

Also I can recommend this as an exercise: make your communion in circumstances that affront your taste. Choose a snuffling priest, or a proud friar, [where there are] ill-behaved children... Go to communion with them (and pray for them). It will be just the same (or better than that) as a mass said beautifully by a visibly holy man, and shared by a few devout and decorous people. It could not be worse than the mess of the feeding of the Five Thousand - after which our Lord pronounced the feeding that was to come."

[Fonts: EWTN: "The Irish Family"]



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Message to MIRJANA, 2 Aug. 2013

"Dear Children, If only you could, if only you would open your hearts to me with complete trust, you would comprehend everything! You would comprehend with how much love I call you; with how much love I desire changing you, and making you happy; with how much love I desire making you followers of my Son and giving you peace in the fullness of my Son. You would comprehend the immense greatness of my motherly love. Hence my children, pray! Pray because through prayer your faith grows and love is born, the love by which even the cross is no longer unbearable, because you will no longer carry it alone. In union with my Son, you will glorify the name of the Heavenly Father.

Pray, pray for the gift of love, because love is the sole truth: it forgives everything, it serves everyone and it sees everyone as brothers and sisters. My children, my apostles, great is the trust that the Heavenly Father has given you through me, his handmaid, to help those who do not know Him, that they may reconcile with Him and follow Him. That is why I teach you to love, because only if you have love can you respond to Him.

Again I call you to love your Pastors and to pray that at this difficult time the name of my Son may be glorified under their guidance. Thank you."

LOVE ALONE IS TRUTH

This message vibrates with the anxiety, but also the strength and the hope of a mother who is set on saving her children, but who knows that to do so she needs their consent, for each person's freedom is guaranteed by God. **We are called to holiness and communion with Christ**, yet, rather than tread the Way, we chase after new ways, and like those who preceded us, we lose the Way! **Mary has come to tell us that Love is the only truth!**

Before the rampant relativism of today, this message confirms that there is only one Truth, and that **Truth is Love which is identified in the Person of Jesus Christ**, true God and true man. *"Everyone on the side of truth listens to me,"* Jesus told Pilate (Jn 18:33-38), but he had not understood.

We too are often closed within ourselves and are unable to see or understand the good News. Perhaps we seek out what is more striking and in doing so we run the risk of looking in places where He is not, or to believe in any whatsoever person who says "He is here, He is there".

Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. If only we had the desire to open our hearts with total trust to receive this truth, then we would know how much we are loved by our blessed Mother whose desire is that we have the peace of her Son. All the same, **we are called to persevere in prayer**, because through prayer our faith grows and love is born enabling us to see how even the cross is no longer unbearable because we will no longer be carrying it alone.

N.Q.

Echo fully relies on Readers' donations.

Our prayers and heartfelt thanks to all who are instruments of providence for Echo, enabling us to continue to help Mary reach out to her children.

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Year of the Faith Suggestions from Medjugorje

"I call you to work on your personal conversion. You are still far from encountering God in your hearts. Therefore, spend as much time as possible in prayer and in adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Everything passes; only God remains." (25 March 2008)

Conversion, Faith, Eternal Life

Mary calls us to work on our personal conversion, since we are still far from encountering God in our hearts. It is possible to receive Jesus in the Eucharist daily, but our encounter with Him could still be cold and superficial, leaving our hearts unchanged. Mary's suggestion is that we pass as much time as possible in prayer and in adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, so He can change us and place in our hearts a living faith and the desire for eternal life.

Says John Paul II: "The worship of the Eucharist outside of the Mass is of inestimable value for the life of the Church... The Eucharist is a priceless treasure: by not only celebrating it but also by praying before it outside of Mass we are enabled to make contact with the very wellspring of grace." (Ecclesia de Eucharistia, no. 25).

Time spent in prayer and in Eucharistic Adoration, in listening to the Word, is never wasted. Rather, it is a precious good that benefits both those who practise it and mankind in general.

Conversion, faith and eternal life mean nothing to those who do not believe. But for those who do believe, at least in God's existence, they are means that lead to Him.

Editorial Staff

Mantua, September 2013

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