

Our Lady's message of 25 February 1994:

Dear Children, Today I wish to thank you for your prayers. All of you have helped me to make this war end as soon as possible. I am close to you, I pray for each one of you, and I beseech you: pray, pray, pray.

It is only through prayer that we can defeat evil and protect everything that Satan wishes to destroy in your lives.

I am your mother; I love all of you in the same manner and I intercede for you before God. Thank you for having responded to my call.

Our prayer united to Mary's can destroy Satan's destructive power

What made Mary thank us for our prayers, while on many other occasions She complained about us being too talkative and not prayerful enough? What is it that we did to deserve this gratitude if even when we pray more it is still not enough? Mary, truly a Mother, wants to encourage us! And perhaps She thanks us because we **helped Her to make this war end as quickly as possible**. We can see for ourselves that this is, in fact, happening. *Prayer and fasts can truly stop wars.*

We think Our Lady is happy because many responded to the great prayer and fast promoted by the Pope for the good of the whole Church on 23 January. How important it is that prayer rises to God from hearts united to His representative on the earth! Many people prayed on this occasion, moved by the sad events of our time, but this time the prayer was public and unified. Tertullian speaks about this unity: *we shall be unanimous and take God by storm, and He will not resist the strength of our faith.*

Yes, now we can say that the Pope is moving in the same direction as Our Lady and he is taking the whole Church in this same direction. Even in this simple message Our Lady shows how She is a spiritual guide that gets to the heart of things, so different to the abstract intellectualism of our times.

Basically She is telling us: **Satan has a plan of destruction**, aimed at each single person and the universe as a whole. We cannot face up to this on our own, because he is more powerful and shrewder than us. Only the power of Jesus can destroy his plots. The devil himself says: *I know who you are, the Holy One of God; have you come to bring us ruin?*

We let God's power act through us when we humble ourselves and pray, continuously, in union with Christ, the Head. He says: *ask and you will receive, knock and it will be opened for you.* God wants to give us grace upon grace. Remember, it would have taken only 10 righteous persons to save Sodom! So how could we not hope and trust in His

goodness and omnipotence? We must dare to ask for everything! The Father is not unwilling to bestow [His graces on us], as it may appear to us at times. This is precisely what He wants. *It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit* (Jn 15:8).

Let us lend ourselves to the prayer of Jesus in the Church, His body, and pray **united to Mary**. She is one with Jesus and is **close to each one of us and pleads on behalf of each of us**, to obtain not only what we think we need, but what She knows we need the most.

She loves all of us in the same way. She wants every single one of us to be saved, because we are Her children. Now the *time is favourable, it is time of grace.* Yes, *everything is possible for those who believe* (Mk9). Thus, **pray, pray, pray.** *Fr. Angelo.*

10th Anniversary of Consecration of world to Immaculate Heart of Mary

Celebration on 25 March in Medjugorje
- Bishop Hnilica's letter to leaders of prayer groups and pilgrimages:

«As you probably already know, March 25 marks the 10th anniversary of the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On that same date in 1984, Pope John Paul II performed the consecration in front of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima. He asked all the bishops to join him in replying to a request made by the Blessed Virgin in Fatima, which was finally fulfilled, by the pastor who came from the East. It was not just a simple liturgical act, but the faithful reply to that heavenly appeal made in Fatima. It is God's wish.

That act of consecration opened the doors to Christ in the terribly tormented lands of the former Soviet Union and the east. The wall that separated the west from the east fell. It was the strength that came from that act carried out by the Vicar of Christ, in union with his brothers, that placed Russia and the world in the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Today we have a world situation which is no less dramatic than that of 10 years ago. "Who would have thought that other walls could have sprung up so quickly in the heart of Europe to become barriers of hate and blood for the division of brothers?" (John Paul II) The Mediatrix of all graces, the Virgin co-redemtrix, who was and is at the foot of the Cross of Her Son, offers us the only remedy that can triumph over evil in the world: devotion and consecration to Her Immaculate Heart. This is our only refuge, and in it God's tender love for us is unveiled.

For this reason, and this reason alone, I invite you to come with me **on pilgrimage to that Marian shrine in March where we shall renew our Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to ask for peace.**

*25 March 1984:
The Pope in St Peter's square
consecrates the world to the Immaculate Heart*

Those who cannot come to Medj. can remain united to us spiritually so that the Immaculate Heart may triumph as promised in Fatima. It is a great privilege to live under a pontificate which is totally consecrated to Mary!»
Paul Maria Hnilica SJ

Pilgrim bishops of past invited to Medjugorje

In another letter, Bishop Hnilica extends an invitation to those bishops who have been to Medj. on pilgrimage, that they may renew their Consecration to Her Immaculate Heart together on the anniversary date. More than 200 bishops have been there on pilgrimage. "In these most difficult times we are desperately in need of tangible signs of unity around the Vicar of Christ and the Virgin Mary."

The fact that bishops go to Medj. is not prejudicial to the acknowledgement (or non) of the supernatural in the apparitions, nor would this force it. A pilgrimage by bishops is more than legitimate since Medj. was declared a Marian Shrine by the Yugoslav Bishops' Conference, and praying for peace in such a tormented land is more than justified.

Without a doubt, this is a blessed and prophetic initiative for the entire Church.

It was precisely in Medj. that we found that motherly refuge, and now we realize how precious it is for us! No one can deny or ignore the presence of a great, uninterrupted prayer for peace in that little village in Bosnia & Herzegovina - the only oasis of peace in the country. No matter what people think »

Pope proposes: THE FAMILY ACCORDING TO GOD

as opposed to projects aimed at
destroying unity
between man and woman

The family is a central theme in the teachings of John Paul II, to which he has dedicated many discourses and catecheses, and the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* in 1981. **1994 was dedicated to the family** both by the UN and the Church. It is natural then to expect abundant and clear indications from the Pope. On 22 February, his LETTER TO FAMILIES was published. It is ample and profound.

We cannot cover all the themes covered in this letter, but we do wish to stress the importance given by the Pope to prayer in the family. «In the solemn nuptial blessing during the Rite of Marriage, the celebrant calls upon the Lord in these words: "Pour out upon them the grace of the Holy Spirit so that by your love poured into their hearts they will remain faithful in the marriage covenant."»

This effusion of the Holy Spirit gives rise to the inner strength of families, as well as the power capable of uniting them in love and truth.»

Prayer is only force capable of healing all types of wounds present in families

Everyone can see «how urgent it is for families to pray and for that prayer to increase and to spread throughout the world, expressing thanksgiving for love in truth, for the outpouring of the grace of the Holy Spirit, for the presence among parents and children of Christ the Redeemer and Bridegroom who "loved us to the end."»

Let us be deeply convinced that this love is the greatest of all, and let us believe that it is really capable of triumphing over every-

» of Medj., whether it be in favour of or against it, it is clear that **Medj. is a prophetic sign for the Church and for all humanity in our present times.**

35th anniversary of Italy's Consecration to the Immaculate Heart

On the **13th September 1959**, Italy was consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, at the closure of the National Eucharistic Congress held in Catania. The consecration celebration was performed by the bishops in union with Pope John XXIII. A shrine was subsequently built in Trieste and dedicated to Mary, Queen of Hearts, in remembrance of the event.

The statue of Our Lady of Fatima, before which the consecration was performed, was placed in the votive temple which was consecrated on 22 May 1966 by Pope Paul VI. Our present Pope went on pilgrimage to this shrine on 1 May 1992.

The **"great prayer" for the Italian population**, in response to the appeal launched by John Paul II in his letter to the bishops, will begin officially with a Holy Mass, concelebrated by the Pope himself and Card. Ruini (president of the Italian Bishops' Conference) in St Peter's on 15 March.

thing that is not love.»

The Pope points out how love for the family is fundamental, and is the first step to acivilization of love: God's plan for humanity. **Love means donation of self**, it is an act in which man «fully finds himself. To love means to give and to receive something which can be neither bought nor sold, but only given freely and mutually.»

From the sacrament of marriage spark forth values, which if lived, become a tangible sign of the spousal love: «These values, rather than being taught, must be witnessed in a family environment where oblation love accepts the differences in the others, takes upon itself other's needs and shares its goods.

The domestic virtues, based on profound respect of life and of dignity of the human being, are embodied in comprehension, patience, encouragement and reciprocal forgiveness. They give the family community the possibility of living that prime and fundamental peace experience. Beyond this context of loving relationships and solidarity which is both active and reciprocal, the human being is in itself an incomprehensible being, its life has no meaning unless love is revealed ... and experienced and made one's own.

Such love is not a fleeting emotion, but an intense and lasting moral force that pursues the good of others, even to the point of self-sacrifice.»

These last words, from the Pope's letter for the day of peace (1 January), bring us to another point in his new letter regarding **love that demands:**

«Love is true when it creates the good of persons and of communities; it creates that good and gives it to others. Only the one who is able to be demanding with himself in the name of love can also demand love from others. Love is demanding. It makes demands in all human situations; it is even more demanding in the case of those who are open to the Gospel...»

People need to rediscover this demanding love, for it is truly the firm foundation of the family, a foundation able to "endure all things." According to the Apostle, love is not able to "endure all things" if it yields to "jealousies" or if it is "boastful... arrogant or rude" (1 Co 13:5-6). True love, "believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things," because at work within it is the power and strength of God himself, who is love, the power and strength of Christ, the Redeemer of man and Saviour of the world.»

How does this love grow in families, to be a support and a help for them also in their decision making?

The answer is in prayer. In the Angelus of 6 February the Pope said: «The answer can only be found in *God's temple*, that is, in praying and in listening to the Lord's word. Sometimes, when the events of life become complicated, it is difficult to discern the divine will. **But a family that prays will not lack an awareness of its own basic vocation: that of being a great journey of communion.**

This is how God designed it from the beginning, when he created man and woman in his image. Scripture says: "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them." It is important to grasp this great truth in the Book of Genesis. The image of himself

that God gave man is also to be found in the complementarity of the sexes. Joined in marriage, man and woman reflect God's image and are in a certain way the "revelation" of his love.»

A family is born and develops when it conforms to this mysterious but real truth.

Marriage is a vocation that must be accepted and loved: «We need to pray that married couples will love their vocation, even when the road becomes difficult... we need to pray that, even then, they will be faithful to their covenant with God. The family is the way of the Church. In this letter we wish to both profess and proclaim this way which leads to the kingdom of heaven through conjugal and family life.

It is important that the "communion of persons" in the family should become a preparation for the "communion of Saints." This is why the Church both believes and proclaims the love which "endures all things," for with St Paul she sees in it the greatest virtue of all. The Apostle puts no limits on anyone. Everyone is called to love, including spouses and families. In the Church everyone is called equally to perfect holiness.»

Year of the defense or the dissolution of families?

The recent, squalid decision of the European Parliament to legitimize homosexual "marriages" and give them the right to adopt children violently contrasts with the grandness of God's project for the family.

The Holy Father spoke out against this resolution in the Angelus of 20 February: «The legal approval of homosexual *activity* is not morally acceptable. Being understanding towards the sinner who is unable to free himself from this tendency is not the same as lessening the requirement of the moral norm... The Parliament has unduly institutionalized deviant kinds of behaviour not in conformity with God's plan... Without a doubt we are faced with a great and terrible temptation.»

The International Year of the Family has started off straight away with a battle between the light of God and the darkness of Satan. The Pope suggests that certain attacks on the family can only be resisted through *prayer, fasts and mutual love*. That is what we intend doing, because debating over what the family is is a waste of time when others don't even know the difference between a man and a woman!
Edit. staff

Return to Fasting

Surprising reply by Pope to Roman clergy in discussion on needs of Church today!

On the 17th February John Paul II met the Roman clergy in the Vatican for the annual **Lenten** meeting. After a number of interventions by priests who called his attention to various matters (social emergencies, the role of the parish, family pastoral programmes, etc.), the Pope surprised them with his reply:

«I would like to say a word about something that I think has been neglected: fasting. Christ once told the apostles that the devil, and thus evil, cannot be overpowered, defeated or sent away if not through prayer and fasts. (...) These days, precept has reduced fasting to two days a year. The rest is left to personal initiative, considered a bit like a private event in the life of a Christian. Perhaps it is right to do it this way.

I fear, however, that the world of today is very contrary to fasting. So much is said about consumerism; and using things is contrary to fasting, because fasting means being able to give things up for a greater cause, a spiritual cause. It means living more on a spiritual level than on a carnal level. All this, it seems to me, is far from the present-day mentality.

I don't know if it's that our Orthodox brothers are in a more consistent or stronger position than us. Without mentioning the Muslims who observe their *Ramadan*, the Hebrew faith is certainly very observant with regards to this aspect. At times I think that we are a little behind.

This is not a problem to do with Catholic ambition. The problem is to do with our faithfulness to the Lord, and in particular with the effectiveness of our efforts, because our efforts are great, and the Church certainly has its structural force, but one fears that this spiritual force that comes from prayer and fasts is at times missing.

It is true that the **modern-day western man** is ready to offer things for the good of others, to give alms; yes, many do this. **It is easier for him to give things to others than to accept not having things for himself.** What we have before us is a worldly spirit. We also see before us a great work, that of defeating this worldly spirit, defeating that devil that Christ speaks about. It is a task, a big and difficult challenge. So we have to, as it were, calculate our strength, weigh the odds against the evens to see that we are not too weak for this spiritual battle.

It is known that the great saints and the great pastors fought with the spiritual strength that comes from prayer and fasts. This is something we cannot forget; it is something that we should perhaps even bring back into use in the life of the Church and the Catholic community (...).»

* A lovely church dedicated to the **Queen of Peace** will be inaugurated in Perugia, Italy on 29 May. The visionaries and Fr. Jozo will be present. Radio Maria and the national TV will also be on site. Perugia is close to Assisi and Collalvalenza where there is a Merciful Jesus shrine, and is expected to become popular with pilgrims.

SACRIFICE EVERYTHING for the love of God

Lenten letter to "victim souls"
and those who would like to be one

Peace to you sister!

Peace to you brother!

With this letter I wish to offer you help for your Easter journey. The Easter experience makes us more aware of the love of God who wishes to donate Himself in a special way so that He can rise and live in us. Together with the Community, I will follow you with my prayer and offering. We shall be as one heart and one soul; as one family: God's family.

I know that you too, have some difficulty with what name to give this call (victim soul, a soul offered for others?). In fact, there is no name that can express the profound meaning of this call, because the infinite love of God cannot be humanly expressed. So from now on I shall call you: **MOST BELOVED SOUL** of God!

Make up your mind to belong totally to God! Begin Lent by immersing yourself in the biblical reading of St Paul - Romans 8: *If God is on my side, who can be against me?*

... *Who can come between me and God's love?*

I tell you that God's love for you exceeds all sins, all limits, all Satan's ploys and even death; so there is nothing that can come between you and God. Yet, you are separated from God's love, in the amount that your heart places things and people before Him. **So you see, it is necessary to sacrifice all the rest to find total fulfilment in God's Love!**

Whether you are a priest, a religious or a lay person, your itinerary is your day-to-day life. Decide for God's love without conditions. Be open to His love. Let Him guide your feelings, words and actions. Put God's love before everything and everyone. If something needs sacrificing, sacrifice it, and love will live and grow in you.

Only this love will bring you closer to God, it will light up your journey and show you what to do and how to do it.

The following are steps for you to follow during Lent. Take them seriously, and meditate on the Liturgical readings. Pray, consecrate yourself to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and adore Jesus.

Week 1. Create the conditions for God's Love! God invites you, through the prophet Isaiah: *Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty; though you have no money, come! Buy corn without money, and eat, and, at no cost, wine and milk. Why spend money on what is not bread, your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy. Pay attention, come to me; listen and your soul will live...* (Is 55:1-11) (Read and meditate on the entire passage.)

This is God's promise. It is truthful. If it has not been fulfilled in many it is because these have used the excuse of not having time. Their heads are full of their own ideas, their hearts full of their own desires. They are incapable of accepting God's love. Something so simple has become impossible for them.

You, though, must organize your time and your day so that you can make this biblical message yours... Jesus withdrew into the desert, He left everything, He turned to God. With the sole power of prayer and fasts He defeated Satan; for Satan even tempted Him.

Jesus created in and around Himself a total detachment from everything worldly so that God's love was central. God's promise was totally realized in Him. You too, in your daily lives, can create the conditions needed for God's promise to be realized in you.

Week 2. Experience the Transfiguration! You pray - even a lot - but this is not enough. You need to experience the Transfiguration. **How? Come out of yourself,** forget your desires, expectations and explanations of God and of His promises; and instead, live according to God's will.

Do not be surprised if He asks you to sacrifice something (cf. Gn 15:5-8). Everything you do should be done with *immense hope*. That way you will feel the richness of God's Blessing.

Do not become attached to pleasant prayer experiences, like St Peter (cf. Lk 9:28-36). Your spiritual life must advance with the conditions present in your daily lives. The love of God will be strengthened in you with each trial, and this will make you faithful to God's love even if He asks you to sacrifice everything (cf. Lk 9:57-62).

3. Be courageous and purify the temple of your body! The merchants in the temple cared so much about making money that they profaned the Temple. What was holy became a place of impurity. The place of God's Glory was turned into a place of personal interest.

This danger for the heart is in each of us. Be brave enough to look into your heart and throw out everything that does not belong to God. Courage will grow in you if you learn to tell the difference between divine and human, eternal and transient. Jesus is clear about this. That is why He could throw out the worldly activities from the Temple and say with courage: *Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up* (Jn 2:13).

Discovering the indestructible in you and believing in this truth means discovering the power and wisdom of God (cf. 1Co 1:22-25). When you see something in you that is sublime and eternal it will not be difficult for you to give up the transient. If you allow God to purify you, then He, through you, will purify the others.

4. Believe in the Crucified King! God gave orders to Cyrus, the King of Persia. To the people of Israel who were reduced to slavery He made Himself known as the King of Kings (cf. 2Ch 36:14). His Mercy is greater than all the evil in man who is a sinner. Jesus, in fact, saves the man who believes in Him (cf. Eph 2:4-10). God is King even when He is opposed, misunderstood, refused and Crucified!

St John guides you to the foot of the Cross, so that on the Cross you will see in the person of **the suffering and crucified Jesus** the **ETERNAL KING!** When you see Him on your crosses, ever alive, and you believe in Him, you are saved (cf. Jn 3:14-26). (...)

See Jesus as King in your crosses! Offer Him your mistrust in His Regality. Adore Him and glorify Him on every cross! He needs all your weaknesses and sufferings. That is the only way you can discover His Regality in every situation, and you will become His disciple.

5. Now you can die to yourself! Your eyes permit you to see the eternal and the indestructible. You are aware of Christ's

eternal Regality, from which nothing can separate you - not humiliation, not poverty, death, hell or any creature.

There is no doubt that you can now hand yourself over to the hands of the Father. He is calling you to eternal life! If this is clear to you in your heart, then it will be easy for you to remove your untruthful ego, and learn to be at peace with your own limits. The limits and sins of the others will not disturb you because you will see beyond, you will see the **reality of eternity**.

For this you must sacrifice your untruthful ego. If you have decided for this out of love for the Father, then you have decided for the glorification of God in you. You give the Father the possibility for Him to be glorified in you (cf. Jn 12:20-33)... for God wants our glorification through both our small and big trials. Your false ego dies in you and in God your glorious ego is born because God glorifies you.

6. Live God's Love without conditions! Sacrifice all the rest. Leave aside everyone: the Judahs, the Peters, the Herods, the Pilates, the world... even your own thoughts about yourself. Just contemplate Jesus and live the way He lived. He continued on His way to the Father, peacefully and silently. The Father's Love for men was realized through Him; He offered it for the world.

Contemplate His love on the Cross. While bound by the limits of pain in a dying and humiliated man, it exceeds the limits of man's evilness and is offered for all, both good and bad.

This love was greater than the weakness of the chosen apostles. He gathered them up after the Resurrection and carried on with His work. Jesus was successful because He built on the Love of God which cannot be knocked down by weaknesses and limits, for it exceeds these. This is the law of God's creativity, the good result which is conditioned by nought.

If you, too, sacrifice all the rest, so that God's creativity can be freed, God will realize His promises in you and you will enter the fullness of Life!

Jesus is the infinite love of the Father. He gives you the fullness of Life. I wish for this Love and this life to rise in you, so it may be revealed to the world through you.

HAPPY EASTER!

May the Lord bless you and keep you. Amen.

May the Lord let his face shine on you and be gracious to you. Amen.

May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit descend upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

Fr. Tomislav Vlasic (13 Feb.'94)

The impulse to write this letter, and the call contained in it, comes from the experience of the Community named: *Kraljice Mira, potpuno tvoji - po Marji k Isusu* (Queen of Peace, all yours - to Jesus through Mary).

Anyone who would like to receive a copy of this letter (also in other languages) or for further information about Fr. Tomislav's community, write to: Comunità Kraljice Mira, Convento Francescano, 66010 Lama dei Peligni (CH), Italy.

Dear children, Pray, pray, pray.

(25 Oct. 1991)

News from the blessed land

(from Sr. Emmanuel's diary)

* **Medjugorje is lying under a thick blanket of snow** for the first time in many years. The snow and the sub-zero temperatures have put a stop to many activities, except the intense life of the parish. The Blessed Virgin expressed her joy in the early years at seeing the parishioners go to church even in bad weather: "because they love me and wish to show me their love in a special way. The Lord will reward them generously." (21 Nov.'85)

* **Ivanka's third child:** Ivan - was born on a special day: 11 February, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. We recall that on the birth of her 2nd child Our Lady said: *I thank you for giving your life to bring other lives.*

* **Our Lady's oases of peace all over the world** - During my round of conferences in France I discovered with admiration the work of the laity for Our Lady. They are extraordinary supporters, ready to work day and night in her honour, to consecrate all that they have. Our Blessed Mother has planted her little oases all over, in families which have given themselves totally to her and which shine out in the world.

In **Versailles**, Our Lady gave us a very eloquent sign. A man in the gathering was deaf in one ear and was due for an operation the following week. As I was talking about the main message he became aware of a very disturbing buzz. He complained about it to his wife; she replied that Our Lady was doing the cleaning up. Well, she cleaned up so well that he regained his hearing.

* **Ivan** is back after his mission in the southern part of the Philippines.

* After having been forced back from the front in Buna, close to Mostar, the group of soldiers from Medj. has now been called to the dangerous Bosnian front near Gornj Vakuf. Our prayers are with them. Mujaheddins have arrived from 37 different countries. Herzegovina, on the other hand, is calm and there has been no shooting in Mostar since 20 Feb. last. Morale is growing. Our Lady's last message is full of hope...

* **Fr. Slavko** telephoned the message and his comment to Radio Maria from **Miami** in Florida. That same evening he attended a meeting with 5000 people. The theme: Mary, Mother of consolation. The day after he and Fr. Tardif held a retreat for 70 priests, with the archbishop's blessing.

* **Fr. Slavko's Chinese mission** - Fr. Slavko was very happy on his return from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. He reports: "We met many people who follow the messages of the Queen of Peace. China is certainly another world, but the people are very kind and open. We spoke to 400 students in Macao. It was like a little Rome, so full of churches. Many missionaries left from Macao to spread the good news in China.

We celebrated Mass for Peace, in union with the Pope on 23 January with the Bishop here. There was a large crowd present and about 30 priests concelebrated.

The local bishops welcomed the message and even said how they desired going to Medj.

Siege on Sarajevo removed. Muslims and Croats will work together for peace

The bomb in the market at Sarajevo killed 69 people and wounded 140. The massacre, transmitted by the TV all over the western world, was what it took for diplomatic indecisiveness to take a turn and decide on an ultimatum: the Serbian army were to leave their postings around the city before 21 Feb., otherwise NATO planes would have attacked.

For the moment it is working, and the UN troops have collected more than 250 pieces of heavy artillery. The Russian "blue-berets" have also moved in to ensure the Serbs move out. No bombs have fallen on Sarajevo since 21 February. The NATO bases in Italy, however, are still on alert.

The **diplomatic move** was handled by both the **US and Russia**, though it seems fairly clear that Russia has greater influence in Slav concerns. According to some, this will not help in the definitive settling of the Balkan regions, because at the moment Russia represents a powerful interlocutor on a diplomatic level, and Serbia trusts Russia, which makes one think of political reasons being behind this.

Anyhow, a 20 km strip has been created around Sarajevo where the UN soldiers are now posted, and this is a first step to guaranteeing peace. This is a temporary solution, though, in need of outlets. The method whereby air attacks are threatened could be used in other zones because the Serbian forces have just moved with their war to other areas which they are isolating so they can take over the rest of the Muslim strong-holds. See **Tuzla** for instance, where the Serbs have closed off the airport, leaving half a million Muslims (inhabitants and refugees) without supplies.

In the meantime, it looks like the **conflict between Croats and Muslims is coming to mends**. The conflict between these two peoples (now tempting at reconciliation) is the cause of incalculable damage and the destruction of Mostar. The possibility of creating a confederation between the two ethnic groups is being discussed, where Muslims would have access to the sea.

At this point in time, no one can say the war has ended. The political, territorial and military questions are still open. The only global plan for peace so far discussed (and unlikely to be accepted) is the division of Bosnia into two parts. Neither Serbia nor the Serbs of Karadzic's Bosnia have ever said they would renounce their claims; so it's »

as soon as possible. We could not visit Communist China. The inhabitants of Macao are worried about having to rejoin China in 1999, but they told us that they are happy to pray and fast "to help Our Lady help them."

I was delighted to discover that the word *peace* in Chinese is represented by a woman beneath a roof (the mother of the house). They've understood that peace in the family comes from the mother! The symbol for the word *good* is a mother with a child; so it is good when both are together. This, also, helps me understand where peace and good come from."

* **Pilgrims** continue to come, there generally being a few hundred present, the majority of whom are French speaking.

Sparks of love in kingdom of hate

Life offered for sake of Love - Following is the latest news regarding the Poor Clares in the monastery of Brestovsko (central Bosnia):

The youngest of the sisters, Sr. Franciska, was sent to the UNPROFOR quarters in Zagreb because of her poor health. When she was better she asked to be taken back to her monastery, since they had promised her they would do this before she left, but they did not keep their promise. On many other occasions UNPROFOR requested that the community leave their monastery; but that would leave central Bosnia completely "cleaned out."

Worldly powers make projects like this. The Lord's projects are different. The nuns are ready for everything, even martyrdom. They all say: "Our departure would be like betraying the Catholic Church!" The Croatian soldiers say: "As long as the nuns stay we stay. For us they are God's protection; if they go, we go too."

At the moment the monastery has become refuge for many elderly women and mothers with children. The nuns help them to survive. They have neither water nor electricity. They drink mineral water when available, but they've mostly been drinking melted snow.

They say: "It is natural that we remain with these women. It would be unthinkable to do anything else. The Muslim soldiers on the nearby front ask themselves: 'How come our rifles don't harm or kill these nuns? What power is protecting them?'"

We pray for these soldiers too; that is why our remaining here truly is apostolate."

True love gets to the heart - A few days ago a priest came here. He is a refugee from Travnik. Mujaheddins destroyed the church and kept him prisoner in the presbytery for 6 months, till he finally escaped.

He tells: "One day a big man holding a knife broke into my room. When he saw there was no one else with me he fell onto his knees and started sobbing..."

After some minutes he begged forgiveness for his Muslim people, saying: "We locals know, and we can't forget how you helped everyone in need in our parish. It didn't matter to you whether they were Catholics, Muslims or Orthodox! Now we too are afraid of the mujaheddins, but we hope one day to be able to return such generous love!"

Fr. Jerko Penava (Ogulin, Croatia)

Mostar is hellish Vicka says: the war is in us

"Mostar is hell," whispered the two priests that visited the hospital with me. The hospital had no more room for the young men waiting: young men in their twenties - Croatians, Serbs and Muslims - waiting for a leg to be amputated. The hospital lacks even basic

» probable that they won't!

It must be said that the Pope's requests for greater spiritual commitment on the part of Christians has without a doubt played a part in this initial success.

This way [of prayer] is one that remains valid. We are asked to continue praying with greater intensity and decision, for: *if you pray and don't get what you ask for it is because you have not prayed properly* (Jm 4:3). **

things! Soon we'll be taking them a *Drager 800* respirator for their operating room, plus supplies and medicines of every type. This is possible thanks to Echo. We express the gratitude of all those people who don't even have tears left to cry with.

On our way back we stopped over at **Vicka's** and asked her what Our Lady says about the war. She replied: "This war is not the real problem. The real problems are found inside us. Inside us is the war and this is worse than what we can see outside. I can't see Our Lady being worried about this war, but for the world situation yes. She wants us to change inside, then the war will stop." We asked her what we could do for the youth and she replied: "Well, it's not our words that can do anything. It's our prayer and example that can touch their hearts." (*Luciana Randon*)

One hundredth voyage

Alberto Bonifacio, who collaborates with us, recently came back from his 100th voyage: 60 with pilgrims and 40 with aid. He says:

"The *Friends of Medjugorje Group* has been organizing convoys of aid for the last 26 months. The convoys are not only means of delivering aid, but also pilgrimages of solidarity and testimonies of friendship and prayer commitment."

From notes on his last trip: «We arrived in Medjugorje 12 February. Mostar is quiet they tell us, but only those who wish go there. The others unload at Caritas in Citluk which keeps 9,000 refugees. We get to Mostar together with a long convoy of UN tanks. The people of Mostar ignore the tanks but joyfully greet us. Such a beautiful city of 100,000 inhabitants, half Muslim, half Croat and 2,700 Serbs - now in ruins.

We are asked to visit the psychiatric hospital. There is only an old ruined barracks and the Neretva between them and the Muslims who continue to shoot on the other side. We can hear the shooting, it's very close.

The **hospital** is in bad conditions. All the windows are broken and replaced by plastic sheeting. Heating is practically inexistent. I am told that 15 people have died tragically over the last few months: some by sniper fire, others by throwing themselves down from the 3rd floor out of fear.

Doctor Helena, who speaks French, tells me we are the first to take aid to them. That leaves me astounded and dismayed.

Next stop is at the old hospital, then we get out of there as quickly as possible and return to Medj. Mita Ferrario, who works for the hospitals, tells us how things really are: different to the way our mass media presents them. We take our laden hearts to Adoration.

The day after is dedicated entirely to prayer, and the Way of the Cross on Krizevac in a snow storm. The silence is unreal, so contrasting to the shelling the day before, but on the other hand so precious for reflection and meditation.

Come without fear. Load up your vans and come with us. There is no danger as far as Medjugorje. Only those who wish need go to Mostar. It is an experience in life, faith and charity so enriching that you can't wait to get back there.»

Thanks from the Bishop of Mostar: I cordially thank you for all the good you are doing for our people. May God bless you and fill you with abundant graces.

8 February 1994 - + Ratko Peric

Fr. Jozo in Italy: "We're alive thanks to your help!"

Fr. Jozo came to Italy precisely to thank the makers of peace for all the help given to the refugees. It is this, he said, that has helped entire populations of refugees survive. Great crowds turned out to pray and listen to him in **Trieste** and **Pordenone** (12 Feb.) and **Udine** (13 Feb.). In Udine he spoke to a group of priests, then he met the press.

After, he went to **Bergamo** where he stayed for 2 days, one being dedicated to the sick at the Sanctuary of Basella.

Fr. Jozo said: "We are alive thanks to the help brought by volunteers. There are now refugees by the thousands and sick people who need caring for."

He spoke about the school organized by him for the children of the refugee families in the Siroki Brijeg area where he is the superior in the Franciscan convent. 6,000 children are taught by teachers who have offered to work free of charge. Besides books, the children receive a bread bun each day.

He also spoke about the war orphans and the sponsorship programme. 7,000 orphans have been sponsored so far thanks to this programme.

SOLIDARITY

«We are our brothers' keepers»

The aid that continues to leave from Italy and many other countries, thanks to **friends of Medjugorje** and other volunteers, is by **far superior in quantity to that sent by the international organizations**. Our papers reported of 4 Italian lorries that took 30 tonnes of aid to Mostar on 25 February. It is usual for our convoys, though, to be made up of dozens of lorries and vans each time.

The parish priest of Medj. says that 80% of the aid for Bosnia arrives from these volunteers. This may be ignored by the press, but not by God.

The fruit of Medj. is the amount of aid

Mons. Franic was asked about the Medj. phenomenon and its influence on the Croatian-Bosnian question.

He replied: «It has been said about the Medjugorje messages that they are "the biggest lie in the history of the Church, and will badly harm her.» Instead, we have seen just the contrary. The Medj. events have brought great fruits to the Church.

The pilgrims bring so much help which is being used for the Muslims and the Orthodox as well. This aid is brought to us at no expense to us (not even political) and those who bring it even risk their own lives. The aid helpers continue to work to help the refugees even though the voyages are lengthy and tiring. People leave from Italy, Germany, France, Belgium, Ireland, England and even from overseas.

This help is a testimony of the great faith and Christian love towards our Church and all those in need of help. This is proof that the fruits of Medjugorje are good. One could say that today in the world there is so much interest for our country because of Medjugorje»

(from *Glas Mira*, Dec. 93)

13 April: St Margaret

***Refused by family
In exchange
she gives them love***

Year 1287. There was much excitement in the castle of Metola (in Umbria), for the powerful captain, Parisio, and his wife Emilia were expecting the birth of their first child. The event, which should have been happy, only brought dismay because the little girl was such a frightful sight. She was so tiny it was thought she would not reach normal stature, one leg was shorter than the other and her back was humped. One week later, it was also discovered that she was blind.

They decided to keep her a secret and gave the little babe to a wet nurse. When there were no visitors in the castle, Margaret was allowed to walk around freely, but she was never allowed to enter the rooms occupied by her parents, who did not want to see her at all.

One day a guest came across her by accident. Parisio was so angry and embarrassed that he had a small room built onto the chapel in the wood - with a door that led only into the chapel - and closed her in there. He justified his action by saying she would be happier in the place she liked the best. It was when it was thought the enemy would invade that he closed her up in a real prison for fear someone would see her. So she was also deprived of her only comfort: confession and Holy Mass.

All this time Margaret showed no signs of rebellion, but serenely accepted the sufferings as if from God's hands, and in her heart she dearly loved her mother and father.

Some years later she was taken to the tomb of a saintly monk who had recently died, in the hope that she would be healed. The disappointed parents abandoned her on the spot. Margaret was found by some good women, then lovingly raised by a married couple, Grigia and Venturino. She grew in holiness, and found great comfort in prayer.

Though still a child, her holiness was greatly admired by all to the point that some nuns asked to have her in their convent. Margaret's adoptive parents sadly gave her over, but much time had not passed when the nuns sent her back home. In fact, Margaret's constant example of holiness and virtue was not well accepted by the nuns whose monastic life was a more relaxed environment.

When she was 14, thinking she would never be accepted into a monastery, she became a member of the Third Order of the Dominicans.

God rewarded her holiness with the gift of contemplation and many prodigies. She was illiterate and not at all knowledgeable, but the Lord gave her the gift of wisdom. Thus, she was able to interpret the psalms.

Margaret, commonly known as the blind woman of Metola, was very charitable. She often visited the prisoners and the sick to take them a word of comfort and on many occasions these were graced with miraculous healings.

Many mortifications that she subjected herself to, and the long hours of prayer weakened her already fragile health and in 1320, on the 13th April, she died at the age of 33. The townspeople were sorrowed by

her death.

The really striking thing is that a **child who was refused by her parents was able to understand and love them anyway**, right from when she was little.

From this we see how God guides people to the true love of Christ Crucified, no matter what their human condition is. Just like Him and His faithful disciple (Margaret), we too are called to love each man, no matter who they are or what they may have done. Margaret was able to accept everything with so much peace because of her profound communion with Christ. She once told her father director: "Jesus too was refused by his own kin and God permits me to be treated in the same manner, that I may follow my Lord more closely."

As we contemplate the life of St Margaret, we ask through her intercession the grace of being able to accept everything that our brothers bring upon us - whether it be consoling or purifying - as from the loving hands of God Himself, who desires our holiness. Being able to love he who disturbs me, but who does not directly harm me, is only the first step in loving. Pure love, that true Christian love, is forgiving he who persecutes me, who does not understand me, who speaks badly about me, who abandons me ...

St Margaret had a profound love for her parents, and by divine grace, three small globes were found in her heart (where she said she kept a treasure). These globes bore the images of the Holy Family.

Rosanna

**Broken family reunited
with power of Christ**

Three years had passed since we decided to separate and I felt good, as though relieved of that burdensome life made up of continuous quarrels and incomprehension.

By then I felt almost serene, even though I had the two children to raise. I started going to Sunday Mass with the boys and since the eldest was to receive Confirmation I became more interested in the parochial environment. Whenever I went to church it was like going back home after being away for a long time - when your folk are so glad to see you and you know you've not been forgotten.

Later on in time I was asked to take a catechism class. I thought about it a lot and finally accepted. As time passed I came to realize that the Holy Spirit was not only guiding my children, but He was also guiding me along a path made up of lots of yeses to God - which became more and more committing.

One day, during confession, the priest asked me to consider the possibility of getting back together with my husband. I told him that I could never consider that, as my husband was just too different from me and there was never any understanding between us.

"No, no, look at the cross! How can you say before Crucified Christ that you can't? That's wanting to be rid of the cross. Is that what you teach the children at catechism?"

All I could do was ask forgiveness and think about the ambiguous position I was in. At this point the Lord was asking me for another yes. What should I do? Thoughts

like: what would the others think, how could I convince my parents that I was doing the right thing after all that I went through before, filled my head. I was trying to hide from the truth, I was afraid, I wanted to back out. I don't think I've ever felt so terrible as when I was put before Crucified Christ. It was as if I was nailing Him down even more. Yet He loved me and was waiting for my yes.

In the end it was His love that disarmed me and I was able to say: "Lord, it's not possible not to love when Your love for us is so immense, and given so freely. By Your grace I too will learn how to love the man I was destined for from the beginning of time."

So I started going out with my husband and the children, but back home I'd ask myself if I was mad thinking about getting back together with him. "Why am I doing it - it's so good without him, no one to argue with!" There was a real battle going on within me, and it was only in prayer that I could find peace.

Nonetheless, I couldn't turn back, so I forced myself to live out the Word. Little by little things started changing and the man I had married and loved for my own sake, I was now able to love for the sake of a greater Love. Today, after 12 years of separation, my husband and I have decided to set up family again.

In all this the devil has certainly not been a spectator, but the certainty of knowing we are not alone in this battle gives us the courage to go on. God is with us and with His infinite love He will repair our failures.

We both know it won't always be easy and wonderful, but the Lord made this "miracle" come about, so He certainly won't abandon us now.

I pray to Him, that what has happened to us may also happen to other married couples, that they do not close themselves up in their limited convictions, but leave a space in their hearts for God to work. He can do what we can't do: make a new family.

Nadia (Milan)

Nine years of apparitions in Schio - They write to tell us: «On 25 March it will be nine years since the Queen of Love started appearing to the visionary, Renato Baron. Despite the adverse publicity the press has given us over these years, pilgrims continue to come in great numbers. They come from Italy and abroad, particularly Germany, but even from Russia and Brazil.

The special days in Schio are Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday when great crowds arrive for the Way of the Cross and the Rosary, in an effort to put Our Lady's promise into effect: *It will be God's people to save God's people... In and with the divine love you will become collaborators of all the wonders of God's Providence.*

These wonders here in Schio include signs, conversions and works in favour of the needy, especially the homeless children and the lepers. *The Church is in danger... make your foundations on the holy Church, remain united to the Pope.* To the priests She says: *no compromises. Do not close your eyes.*

The Spirit of God calls to conversion, to holiness and to works of love which build up the Church. Only a blind man could not see the fruits of this fountain of grace.»

Prayer is a battle

Prayer is a gift, donated by grace; on our part it is a decisive response. It is implied that effort is needed. The great praying men of the Old Alliance before Christ's time, the Mother of God, the saints and of course Christ Himself teach us that praying is a battle. Against whom? **Against ourselves and the cunning of the Tempter, who does everything he can to distract man from prayer,** from being united to his God.

One prays according to how one lives, for one lives according to how one prays. If one does not wish to act habitually according to Christ's Spirit, then one cannot pray habitually in his Name. The "spiritual battle" in the new life of a Christian cannot be separated from the struggle of prayer.

The usual difficulty with prayer is **distraction**. (...) Searching for what distracts us is falling into a trap. All we need to do is recollect ourselves and continue with our prayer. **Distraction reveals to us what we are attached to,** and realizing this should awaken in us our preferential love for Him, whereby we offer Him our hearts so He can purify them. This is where the battle lies: in choosing which Master to serve.

Another difficulty, particularly for those who sincerely wish to pray, is **aridity**. Aridity in prayer is when the heart remains insensitive to thoughts, memories or feelings, also on a spiritual level. This is when only pure faith helps you carry on. *A wheat grain that dies ... yields a rich harvest* (Jn 12:24). If the cause of aridity is lack of roots, because the Word fell on stony ground, then the battle concerns the field of conversion.

The most frequent and hidden form of temptation is our **lack of faith**. It is manifested not so much in a declaration of unbelief, but in a preference for facts. When we decide to pray, a **thousand chores or worries** come to mind, which we consider as being urgent and requiring immediate attention.

Once again this is the moment of truth for our heart: whom do we love the most? At times we turn to the Lord as if to a last resort: but do we really believe? Other times we consider the Lord as our ally, while the heart is still in a state of presumption. In any case, lack of faith reveals that we are still not disposed to being humble of heart: *Without me you can do nothing* (Jn 15:5).

Another form of temptation, which arises from presumption, is **spiritual laziness**. With this term the Fathers of spiritual life refer to a form of depression caused by a slackened asceticism, by a weakened state of alertness, by not keeping watch over the heart. *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak* (Mt 26:41). The higher the fall is the more one gets hurt. Feeling discouraged is the opposite to presumption. **A humble person is not surprised by his own wretchedness;** but discovering it leads one to a greater trust in God and to a greater constancy.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church - ref. nos. 2725-2733)

God is offering Himself totally to you, but you can discover and recognize him only in prayer. Therefore, make a decision to pray.
(25 February 1990)

Non-stop Prayer Continues

«So you had not the strength to keep awake with me one hour?» (Mt 26:40)

Our friends from France write:

"To the brothers and sisters who have committed themselves to becoming a link in the chain of prayers for peace, and to all the children of the Queen of Peace:

Dear children, pray, pray, pray. (25 Oct. 1991)

I invite all those who said yes to me to renew their consecration to my Son Jesus, to His Heart, and to me, so that we may use you all the more fervently as instruments of peace in this unpeaceful world... (25 April 1992)

Plus the many other messages that urge us to pray for peace...

We were touched by this appeal of our heavenly Mother. We made a commitment, a personal yet solemn one, to intercede with continuous prayer for peace in the world! Our names have been presented to the Queen of Peace, and She looks upon us lovingly.

Now, are we being faithful to that commitment? Are we keeping guard before the Lord each time it is our turn? Have we put aside this time each day to dedicate to prayer and stay with the Lord?

Let us remember that we are the children of the Queen of Peace. She needs those prayers we promised Her. She waits for them; and it is our duty.

«Perhaps there are fifty just men in the town,» Abraham implored (Gn 18:16-33).

Anyone wanting to join us in this non-stop prayer can contact: Echo de Medj., Allée Thévenot, F-39100 DOLE, France. All you have to do is send us your name and state the day and the hour you intend to pray."

* **Bus service from Trieste to Medjugorje** continues to operate every day. Where: bus station adjacent to train station in Trieste. Departure: 6 pm daily and return from Medjugorje same time daily. Cost: Lit.86,200 return fare. Validity 10 days. Ph. Italy 040-360300.

* **Fr. Jozo's initiative for sponsorship of Croatian and Bosnian children.** For information write to Matteo Rossi, via delle Grazie 9, 54100 Massa, Italy. Give full name and address, and print or type when writing.

Helping the refugees

Contact your nearest Medj. or Caritas centre. If you wish to send your donations through us, please specify that the money is for this purpose. Make your cheques out to "Echo of Medj."

In **GB** the **Medj. Appeal** accepts donations and supplies, such as non-perishable foods, school equipment, medical supplies, nappies, baby food, tools, sewing machines and kits, etc.

From a report by Appeal workers stationed in their Medj. warehouse Medj.: "... there are encouraging reports about how people in the area of conflict from different ethnic groups help one another: Muslims sheltering and feeding Catholics and vice versa..."

Unfortunately, this situation is not publicised... as only atrocious situations make news..."

Mother Teresa: "Don't kill the child, give him to me!"

This is what Mother Teresa said on the 2nd February at the annual National Prayer meeting in the US with the President and congressmen. She was invited to say her prayer for "those unable to defend themselves:" the unborn children of course.

The President and his wife blushed as Mother Teresa was applauded by others.

She told those present: "**The greatest threat to peace is abortion.** If we accept that a mother can kill her child, how can we tell people to stop killing one another?"

Pray for those who treat you badly

(Lk 6:28)

We receive many heart-warming letters and testimonies. The following may help us meditate for this Lent. The writer is a young man who distributes hundreds of copies of Echo in North America:

"Before Christmas I had my car stolen, so now I walk and make use of public transport. It takes me nearly two hours though to get to the post office. At times I think about buying a car, but when I remember that so many people are really poor, I put the thought out of my mind.

I ask you all to pray for the people who stole my car. May the Lord have mercy on them and forgive their sin. Please also pray for me." (G.B. 10 Jan. '94)

Thank the Lord that your heart suffers for the sins of others rather than for what you've suffered. Put aside your scruples my dear G., and buy yourself another car so you can serve Our Blessed Mother and Her poor children more efficiently.

ECHO IN OTHER LANGUAGES

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*The apparitions of Belpasso (Catania)

- The second network of the Italian national TV has been transmitting programmes on various supernatural events and apparitions. In Belpasso a young student, Rosario Toscano, says Our Lady appeared to him between 1986 and 1988. At the time he was at high school, he now goes to University. The TV reported: "After the events, pilgrims began visiting the place of apparitions. We saw no fanaticism. They are composed and reserved.

The various witnesses, priests and experts talk of celestial phenomena seen with their own eyes and two miracles, almost with an air of detachment. The main character, the visionary, did not accept being interviewed. He was filmed at the time of the apparitions without him knowing it, but he has kept himself out of the limelight since. The local bishop appointed a priest as his spiritual guide."

Rosario has never made out he's a prophet, or spoken of threatened disasters to those who won't believe. After the last apparition he read one of Our Lady's messages - very similar to those of Fatima and Medjugorje - that announced suffering and trials for the whole world and the Church.

Though the Bishop of Catania, Msgr. Bommarito, says she becomes suspicious when faced with the many supposed extraordinary cases, he also spoke of the: "tendency to believe there is something extraordinary in Belpasso." The bishop also spoke about Rosario in a positive way, saying he is psychologically stable and humble. In the end he confessed that he goes to pray every now and again to the rock where the supposed apparitions took place.

Do not take God's gifts for own use

"A risk faced by people who have locutions, visions or any other particular experiences is that these extraordinary experiences and miracles etc., can become possessive about them, and interpreted by themselves, used for themselves and centred around themselves, to the point where they even threaten those who do not believe.

They act as if they had rights over the truth and thus create false fears and division. This type of behaviour permits Satan to use a soul's extraordinary powers for himself.

Everything that is extraordinary or ordinary must be subjected to God for the good of our brothers and sisters. That is the only way God can fulfil His plan for which He originally gave those gifts, without causing rifts in the unity and in the meaning of the Church. Ordinary gifts such as humility, obedience and submission to God are worth much more than extraordinary ones.

Any gift, whether it be ordinary or extraordinary, can be used by God only when we are submitted to Him and we let Him dispose of us as He wills."

Fr. Tomislav

"The Father Speaks to His Children:"

«Is it possible that having called Me your Father and having shown your love for Me, you could find in Me such a hard and insensitive heart as to let you perish? No, no, do not believe it! I am the best of Fathers! I know my creatures' weaknesses! Come to Me, come with confidence and love! I will forgive you after you have repented. Even if your sins

Refugee mothers in Medjugorje have constructed a wall. On each brick is written the name of a son killed at war. The mothers bring flowers and prayers.

were as repulsive as mud, your confidence and your love will make Me forget them, so you will not be judged! I am just, it is true, but love pays for everything!

Listen, my children, let us make a comparison, and you will be assured of my love. For Me, your sins are like iron, and your acts of love like gold.. so that with just a little love, great iniquities can be expiated.

You must love and honour Me so that you will not be judged, or rather, that you will be judged with infinitely merciful love»

Taken from the book: *The Father Speaks to His Children.*

* **The Father Speaks to His Children**, introduced by Fr. Andrea d'Ascanio, OFM. Write to: I Nidi di Preghiera Publications, Casella Postale 135, 67100 L'Aquila, Italy

* The four books containing meditations by **Frs Tomislav and Slavko** provide excellent spiritual guidance. These books are free. Donations are accepted for cover mailing costs, etc. Write to: Amici di Medj., Via Nirone 9, 20123, Italy.

* **True Devotion to Mary**, by St Louis De Montfort, for preparation and Consecration to Immaculate Heart of Mary. Ask at your nearest Catholic book shop, or write to: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., Rockford, Illinois 61105, USA.

* **Rex Tuus Venit** (Thy King is Coming): paintings by Bradi Barth - £4 or US\$6 (excluding postage). Profits for the needy. Write to: The Medjugorje Appeal, Lambs Bus. Park, Unit J, Tilburstow Hill Road, South Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8JZ, England.

* **My First Catechism** - Synthesis of the New Catechism of the Catholic Church. by Fr. Paolo O. Pirlo, SHMI. For children and youths. Write to: Sons of Holy Mary Immaculate, Isabella De Rosis St., Multinational Village, 1700 Paranaque, M. Manila, Philippines.

Medjugorje 1994 National Conference, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, 46556, USA. May 20-22, 1994 (Pentecost weekend).

Theme: **Unity for the Mission of the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.**

Speakers include: Bishop Paul M. Hnilica, S.J., Fr. Andrea d'Ascanio, O.F.M., Fr. Daniel-Ange, Sr. Emmanuel. For information write to: Queen of Peace Ministries, POB 761, Notre Dame, Indiana, 46556, USA

* Donations received for month of Feb.

For Medjugorje in the East: Lit. 2,335,000

For Bosnia-Herzegovina: Lit. 4,490,000

Mother Teresa and Seminarists: Lit. 700,000

For Sahel and Latin America: Lit. 250,000

From the mail: "...This Jan./Feb. edition more than made up for the wait. Thank you, Father, we would be lost without our "nourishment." Maureen D., GB

FAMILY NEWS

Thank you to all those people who so generously support us and make it possible for Echo to continue. A special thanks to our readers from **Germany** who sent us a lump sum of 11 million lire. Also to our readers in **Switzerland** who send us 2 million each month towards Echo in German and 2 million towards Echo in Italian. **French**-language readers also sent us a lump sum of 11.5 million lire last January for the publication of Echo; and we thank our **English**-language readers for the many private donations received by them.

Echo is free. It lives on donations. In the month of February, for the 5 editions we publish ourselves (Italian, French, English, German and Spanish), plus the help we give to those editions published in the East, and to upgrade the computer for the English-language edition we spent: **Lit. 66,500,000**

Through the many letters we received from all parts of the world, telling us to continue with the way Echo is (following our request in Echo 107, page 8), Our Lady has wished to **encourage** us. I thank you for your letters of concern and your prayers for my health. Thanks to God I have now recovered and, God willing, I shall continue with Echo.

Without a doubt, **Echo is a gift from Mary**, given as nourishment for Her little children in this time of famine. In our efforts to be faithful to Her and the service She entrusts us with, let us renew our consecration to Her Immaculate Heart, to become live members of the Church. God bless you all now and always.