



# ECHO OF MARY

## Queen of peace

### 146

May-June 1999 - [Info](#)

**July-August 1999 Our Lady's message 25 May 1999:**

**Dear Children, Also today I invite you to convert and believe more strongly in God. My Children, you seek peace and pray in various ways, but you have yet to give your hearts to God so He can fill them with His Love. Hence the reason I am here with you: to teach you and bring you nearer to God's Love. If you love God above all else it will be easy for you to pray and open your hearts up to Him. Thank you for responding to my call.**

### **Mary offers key to peace: acceptance of God's Love**

Between the lines of this message we see a reference to this crucial moment which is cause of worry for all, but Mary teaches us to look beyond, and in doing so offers us the key to overcome our worry.

1. Also today I invite you to convert. Conversion and prayer are the words Mary uses the most. Conversion is also the first Gospel call: Repent and believe the Good News (Mk 1:15). In saying, "also today," Mary's motherly patience in calling us to conversion is obvious for all to see; and not only today, but in all her apparitions around the world. In accepting God's grace we feel the need to change immediately; and we would not continue to think that it is the others who need to change.

Are you too amongst the many happy-go-lucky Christians who think there is no need to work for God's Kingdom? These go to Mass on Sundays, but don't worry too much about their salvation since they believe that "Jesus is good and couldn't condemn anyone to eternal hell." Jesus, however, speaks differently: Unless you repent you will all perish (Lk 13:5). To those who are not vigilant, the Lord will say: I do not know you (Mt 25:12).

Each day our conversion must begin again. Only grace can help us to understand this and give us the strength to advance despite our falls and weaknesses.

2 Believe more strongly in God. This means that we believe little! At the beginning of the apparitions Mary said: I have come to tell you that God exists. Surrender yourselves completely to Him. And to counteract our worries Jesus assures us: not even one hair can fall from your head without God knowing about it (cf. Mt 10:30). God is our shelter and our strength, so we will not be afraid when the earth gives way, when mountains tumble into the depths of the sea (Ps 46).

3. My Children, you seek peace and pray in various ways. Everyone desires peace. We too pray in many ways for peace. Everyone says peace, peace, yet there is no peace, said Jeremiah, but Mary points to a special condition which should make her children in particular reflect. From what type of hearts should our prayer be rising? From hearts which are given over to God so He can fill them with His Love.

To give your heart to God is to surrender yourself unconditionally to Him, allowing Him to shape it the way He wants. And what could God want except fill us with His Love! What more than His Love, than His Spirit, could God give us? After all, what He is giving is Himself!

When all our barriers will have fallen and when we will no longer depend on our own schemes then also our prayer will become easy. It will no longer be routine prayer, or sought out only in time of need, but will be a total trustful opening to God in the desire to do nought but His will, and everything we will ask will be given us.

If we love God above all else, we will see how He directs our every step and solves our every problem, and that from our every error or negative situation He knows how to extract good, were it even war, the apex of evil, because truly, He can do everything.

When our life will be spent entirely for God, peace is freed from converted hearts and will invade the world. We would heap burning coals on our enemy's head, says the Apostle (Rom 12:20).

4. Hence I am with you, to teach you and bring you closer to God's Love. Thus, Mary openly declares her reason for remaining with us for these 18 years. It means we are closed to God's Love and She has come to waken us and make it reign in our hearts. With the Spirit of Love everything is recreated, the world is made new (cf. Ps 104), and this is precisely what Mary wants to do through us.

Fr. Angelo

### **Our Lady's message 25 June 1999:**

**Dear Children, Today I thank you for living and witnessing my messages with your life. My Children, be strong, and pray so that prayer may give you strength and joy. Only this way will each of you be mine, and I will guide you on the way of salvation.**

**My dear Children, pray and with your life witness my presence here. May each day be a joyful witness for you of God's Love. Thank you for responding to my call.**

### **From Prayer comes strength to live and witness messages**

On the 18th anniversary of Our Lady's apparitions, Mary speaks to those who live and witness her messages with their lives. Her messages repeat the contents of the Gospel. Though they may be silent, many are the true disciples of Jesus and Mary today. They are found all over the world, in prayer groups and parishes, communities and families, and though they are the most live members of the ecclesial community they are often ignored by it. Many were formed by the Virgin at her school by her messages; and Mary thanks them.

For these "righteous" people God continues to be patient with the world and also with the men of the Church who are not faithful. And God will continue to be patient until the number of the chosen ones is complete (Rev 6:11).

Our Lady repeats in this message two words: "witness and strength." Satan has been called "strong," but we can defeat him if we are on the side of the "Stronger One" (Lk 11:21-22).

1. Fortitude is a gift of the Holy Spirit, but it is also one of the 4 cardinal virtues which are to be conquered. Be strong, Mary tells us; and we live in a world of weaklings. We too, by nature, are weak; but our strength comes from prayer when it is a sincere, insistent and perseverant opening up of the heart to God. Prayer gives strength and joy even amid troubles and crosses, and it helps us resist against

Satan's temptations and worldly seductions.

Prayer is the channel through which we receive Love. The Song of Songs says (8:6): Love is strong as Death, jealousy relentless as Sheol. The flash of it is a flash of fire, a flame of Yahweh himself. Love no flood can quench, no torrents drown. Such is the love sown by Mary in the world and reaped by open hearts. Those who reap it belong to Mary: only this way will each of you be mine and I will guide you on the way of salvation, the way of holiness.

2. Witness with your life. To witness means to show in a concrete way that you accept Christ to the point of giving your life. Witnesses were the martyrs. Martyrs are also the people of today who resist the call by a world which preaches the wide way; it captures also men of the Church, discouraging them from following Jesus on the narrow way. Yet, many are those who do not give in to the temptation of the devil who prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour, but resist him, steadfast in faith (1 Pt 5:8).

They will become joyful witnesses of God's Love, and many hearts will accept His love. People have always believed in witness rather than words. Today too they believe in words only if those who preach them also live them. Through His witnesses, God can raise children for Abraham even from stones (Mt 3:8).

Mary wants us to witness to her presence in the world with our everyday life so that many may be saved. Mary comes in the name of God, that her motherly love may persuade mankind. Let us help her save many from perdition.

## **Pope's visit to native Poland, 'to fill need of own heart'**

"I come among you on the eve of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. I come as a pilgrim to the sons and daughters of my homeland with words of faith, hope and love. At the end of this millennium and at the same time on the threshold of the new times to come, I wish to meditate together with my fellow countrymen on the great mystery of God who "is love." Thus said the Pope on his 7th and longest visit to Poland. From 5-17 June he visited 21 places and held 32 discourses, and celebrated 11 Holy Masses in public for 9 million faithful.

"The overall theme of these days was the Gospel text of the Beatitudes, which shows us God's love in the unmistakable features of Christ's face. What a joy it was for me to proclaim the eight Beatitudes in St. Adalbert's footsteps, that great Bishop and martyr," said the Pope at the General Audience of 23 June. The various stops of the Pope's Visit were dedicated to the memory of the Saints and martyrs, and new blessed were proclaimed. "These heroic witnesses of faith show that the "traditio" of God's Word, heard and put into practice, has been handed down from Adalbert to this day, and should be courageously incarnated in today's society as it prepares to cross the threshold of the third millennium."

"In Poland faith was nourished and greatly supported by devotion to the Sacred Heart and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Veneration of the divine Heart of Jesus had special prominence in this pilgrimage: in the background was the consecration of the human race to the Sacred Heart which my revered Predecessor Leo XIII performed for the first time exactly 100 years ago. Humanity needs to enter the new millennium with trust in God's merciful love."

"And then what can we say of my compatriots' filial affection for their Queen, Mary most holy? In Lichen I blessed the large new shrine dedicated to her, and in some cities, including my birthplace, I crowned revered images of the Blessed Virgin. In Sandomierz I celebrated the Eucharist in honour of the Immaculate Heart. Before my return I knelt in front of the venerable icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa at

Jasna Gora: it was a moment of deep spiritual feeling."

"During my journey I had several occasions to thank God for the changes which have occurred in Poland over the last 20 years in the name of freedom and solidarity. I did it especially when I spoke to the Polish Parliament where I recalled the peaceful struggles of the '80's and the revolution of '89. The moral principles of those struggles must continue to inspire political life, so democracy will be based on strong ethical values: the family, human life, work, education, care of the weak."

"At other events I raised my voice in defence of the weakest... Progress cannot be made at the expense of the poor."

To strengthen the bonds of unity he prayed with the Greek-Catholic faithful in memory of the Martyrs of Podlasie; and took part in ecumenical meetings with the Orthodox, Lutherans and other non-Catholic Communities. "The need for unity in the Church is felt by all: we must work for its full realization, ready to admit our faults and forgive one another."

His meeting with fellow townspeople was memorable. The people's enthusiasm made him "rise" after a day of illness; and he courageously greeted the people who were unable to see him on the previous day. To them he said jokingly: "I would not put up with such a Pope." The Pope "fulfilled the need of his own heart" and enriched the hearts of the Polish faithful with his deep spiritual teaching.

### **God wants salvation of all, including those from other religions**

At the General Audiences during the months of April and May the Holy Father held a series of talks on interreligious dialogue. The following is taken from the first of these talks.

".. If the Lord God of Israel is not one god among many, but the only true God, it follows that all the nations must be saved by him. The universal salvific will transforms human history into a great pilgrimage of peoples towards one destination, Jerusalem, but without loss of any of their ethnic-cultural differences. The prophet Isaiah vividly expresses this outlook in the image of a road connecting Egypt to Assyria, stressing that the divine blessing will join Israel, Egypt and Assyria (cf. Is 19:23-25). All peoples, while fully preserving their own identity, are called to turn more and more to the one God who revealed himself to Israel.

This "universalistic" inspiration in the Old Testament is further developed in the New, which reveals to us that God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tm 2:4). The conviction that God is really preparing all people for salvation is the basis of Christian dialogue with the followers of other religious beliefs. The Council described the Church's attitude to non-Christian religions in this way: "The Church has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men. Yet she proclaims, and is in duty bound to proclaim without fail, Christ who is 'the way, the truth and the life' (Jn 14:6). In him, in whom God reconciled all things to himself, men find the fullness of their religious life."

In years past, some considered dialogue with the followers of other religions to be opposed to proclamation, a primary duty of the Church's mission. In fact, interreligious dialogue is an integral part of the Church's evangelizing mission. As I have often stressed, it is fundamental for the Church, is an expression of her saving mission and is a dialogue of salvation.

Thus, interreligious dialogue does not mean abandoning proclamation, but answering a divine call so that exchange and sharing may lead to a mutual witness of one's own religious viewpoint, deeper knowledge of one another's convictions and agreement on certain fundamental values."

The Pope also spoke on dialogue with Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus.

This is all in perfect harmony with what Our Lady said in Medjugorje about other religions. To Vicka she said that respect must be given to all religions and that each person must observe the valid teachings in their own religion.

Laurentin said in his latest book: "When the visionary referred that Our Lady said: 'All religions are the same before God,' she meant (and later explained) that all races are the same before God. In fact, for the cultural conception of those lands, 'religion' is identified with 'race.' For them, Catholic means Croatian, Orthodox means Serb, and Muslim means Bosnian."

### **Pope to visit sites of salvation**

It is very meaningful that on the day of Sts. Peter and Paul, John Paul II should announce his desire to make a personal Jubilee pilgrimage to some of the places closely linked to salvation history: Ur of the Chaldees, Abraham's native land (now part of Iraq); Mount Sinai, symbol of the Exodus and the Covenant (Egypt); and the places where the mystery was fulfilled: Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

### **SEEDS OF UNITY**

The Pope's visit to Romania from 7-9 May broke down the wall which separated Catholics and Orthodox. The joint celebrations in Bucharest by the Pope and the Patriarch received loud echoes and reflected an unexpected spiritual communion. To further enhance the ecumenical event the Holy Father did not visit the Catholic zones of Transylvania and Moldavia, but chose to remain in Bucharest, a full Orthodox territory. The Patriarch Teoctist will return the visit with a future visit to Rome.

Rumanians are 87% Orthodox, 6% Catholic (about 2 million belong to the Latin rite and 1.5 million to the Oriental Greek rite), and 5% are Protestant.

The Pope said to the youth: "In these days the Spirit is handing over God's dream to you. That is, that all men be part of His family, that all Christians be one with Him. Be part of this dream in the new millennium!"

**Also Armenia**, small Christian island amid Islam, awaits a visit by the Pope before the end of the year. The way to communion was opened with the signing of a joint declaration by the Pope and the Catholicos Karekin I last year.

**Catholics and Lutherans** after 5 centuries have come to an understanding on the "doctrine of justification." Luther held that we were justified in a totally free manner by God through faith. Instead it has now been accepted that "the action of God's grace does not exclude human action." Card. Cassidy said: "The document which we will sign is a child of reconciliation, not of compromise." The President of the Lutheran Church, Pastor Noko said: "One cannot talk of winners or losers, but of Christians projected towards unity."

The joint declaration will be signed on 31 October.

## **Return to primitive fervour**

### **"Live Holy Mass"**

Many times Our Lady has spoken about Holy Mass. On Thursday 3 April 1986 she said: Dear Children, I invite you to live Holy Mass. Many of you have experienced the beauty of it, but there are those who do not come willingly. I have chosen you, my Children, and it is in the Holy Mass that Jesus gives you His

graces. Hence, live Holy Mass with awareness, and come full of joy. Come with love and accept in you the Holy Mass. On the 16 May 1985 Mary said: I would like your every Mass to be an experience of God.

On the 21st Nov. 1985: Come to Mass because this is a time which has been given you as a gift. Many come regularly (every day) even in bad weather, because they love me and wish to show their love in a special way. I ask you to show your love by coming to Mass. The Lord will reward you generously.

These were the years when the local people filled the church every evening.

To Jelena, Mary said: My Children, I want Holy Mass to be a gift of the day for you. Wait for it, desire it to begin, because Jesus gives Himself to you at Mass. Hence, long for that moment during which you are purified. If people attend Mass tepidly they return home cold and empty hearted. (30 March 1983)

On another occasion Our Lady asked the prayer group not to arrive at Mass at the last minute, but to get there at least 10 minutes before and to prepare for it with prayer. It is not good that many rush out of the church as soon as Mass has finished... It is not good that they loiter around the church... In doing so they will never be able to give themselves totally... (4 Feb. 1984).

### **Mass of primary importance**

Priests should speak more about Mass. If Mass is the heart of faith, then a year should not pass without there being a serious course on it. For catechists the matter should be very much alive in their individual spiritual life and very much alive in the transmission of Christian messages to children. On the matter the Church has said new, wonderful things which sadly have yet to reach all Christians.

I have to say that unless participation at Mass undergoes a revolution, nothing positive can come from pastoral programmes. If Mass is not the summit of our Christian living, then we have not at all understood the heart of Christian faith.

At no. 11 of Lumen gentium (from Vatican Council II) we read: "The Eucharistic sacrifice is the source and the summit of the Christian life." In saying this the Council said something paradoxical. By saying that Mass, the Lord's banquet, is the summit and the source of the entire Christian life, it said that Mass is the heart of religion, the propelling force of its vitality, its entire strength. Summit and source of ecclesial life means that the Eucharistic sacrifice is the "terminal" and the departure point of the Church's entire moving force.

The Council said that the Eucharistic sacrifice is the heart of religion, because: it is everything of religion, the end and the beginning of everything; it is the supreme act and the first act of religion; it is the final aim of religion and the first principle of religion; it is the scope and the means of religion; it is the conclusion and the beginning of religion.

"Summit and source" of Christian life, the Eucharistic sacrifice is: man's supreme act of love to God and the beginning of love; it is redemption for me, and my personal step in Redemption; it is man's greatest wealth.

### **Why did the Church launch this paradox at the Council?**

She can't have done it without purpose; before passing a decree the Council weighs its words with pedantry. So if it chose this wording it was so we would comprehend that the Eucharistic sacrifice is our faith and is everything for Christian faith; that the Eucharistic sacrifice is not an ornament for our faith, but is our faith. If it used this wording, it was to put a stop to our superficiality! and to draw the line for those whose religion is infantile, who think religion is magic.

Mass is everything - the Church is shouting at me - so either take Mass seriously or hash your faith. The

Eucharistic sacrifice is the first thing of your day, of your week. It is the hardest thing, the most committing, it is the peak, the most beautiful and the most attractive thing, it is the source of your purest joy. And if the Eucharistic sacrifice is the most important thing of your life, then it demands from you a new attitude: strongly, completely new, within your thoughts and within your actions. If the Church solemnly says that Mass is the summit and the source of religion, then your head and your heart must be present at the Eucharistic celebration: both head and life!

St. Justin, Christian philosopher and martyr (163 ad) witnessed that Christians participated at Holy Mass every morning before dawn. You see the Church asks us to prepare for this act, to plan for it, to be aware and not be robots, to be active and participate and not be idle.

### **Split up each day and week to prepare and live Mass**

If Eucharist is heart of religion, it must come first in our lives: be esteemed above all else; be the object of our greatest effort; be our prime joy; be our prime preoccupation; be our prime duty.

I would say that roughly we should divide our day into two parts: in the case of a morning Mass, continue this till midday, and from then on prepare for Mass the next day.

Be thankful there is Mass every day, for it gives us the chance to make up for our lack of love in the preceding Mass. I would say that those who don't go to daily Mass perhaps don't bother to seek it out. When we really desire something we are capable of everything, so why can't we find half an hour for Mass?

But even if it is not possible to go to Mass every day, than at least you must make your Sunday Mass of the utmost importance. It must be the place where your week begins. You should really split your week into two: up to midweek live your Sunday Mass, and for the rest of the week prepare for your next Mass with prayer.

From a conversation with Fr. Gasparino

### **A Treasure easily wasted!**

When the Queen of Sheba returned home she never tired of telling of the marvels she saw in Solomon's temple. The same thing should happen to a Christian who has properly listened to Holy Mass. Upon returning home he should ask his children and servants what it was that most appealed to and attracted them. My God, what am I saying? ... How many parents; how many masters would make fun of such a request and would ask not to be bored any longer with the matter!

Nonetheless, it generally seems that the words of the Mass are still listened to. However, once out, people let themselves go with all sorts of dissipation, such as rushing to leave. While the priest has yet to leave the altar people are out and talking about the most varied things. Brethren, what is the result of this behaviour? No profit or advantage can be gained from what was heard and seen in God's house! What a waste of graces and chances of salvation!

What misfortune to manage to change into harm that which should be a valid help in reaching eternal salvation! With your own eyes you have seen how burdensome the holy functions are for most Christians. They spent that little bit of time in church as though they were in prison, and once out, we saw them move and speak with so much verve and enthusiasm that it seemed they had just been released from prison.

How many times were we forced to close the door so as not to be shocked by their racket. My God, are

these the Christians who should leave your holy temple with a heart full of good proposals impressed in minds so they are never forgotten?

From lessons by St. John Vianney

## Rush to source of Mercy!

The Holy Father has indicated three spiritual goals for the next Jubilee:

1. Return to sacramental confession as a sign of conversion;
2. Complete faithfulness to Lord's day;
3. Spirit of solidarity with works of charity towards all those in need.

The archbishop of Loreto, Msgr. Angelo Comastri, has made up an examination of conscience for today's society.

Examination of conscience  
for a sincere confession

Holy Spirit, help me to confess all my sins with sincerity and true repentance.

1. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart"

- Am I a Christian in my everyday life, or only by name?
- Is my faith genuine and generous, or superficial? Am I superstitious, believing in magic and sorcery?

Do I seek out clairvoyants? and the horoscope?

- Do I pray only when in need of graces, or always, even when health, business, etc. is low?
- Do I blaspheme, swear, curse God, Our Lady, the Saints, holy things?
- Do I participate with devotion and profit Holy Mass on feast days, the Sacraments, Catecheses? Do I speak badly of religion, of the Church, of the Pope?
- What counts more for me: money, material well-being, career, success, fun; or God and eternal salvation?

2. "Love one another as I have loved you"

- The Gospel teaches us that you cannot love God unless you also love your neighbour. Am I convinced of this?
- As a child, am I obedient and do I respect my parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, family members? Do I follow their advice? Do I help them if they are ill or elderly? Do I study/work with profit?
- As a parent, do I care for the human and Christian education of my children? Am I a good example for them? Do I find time and ways to be with them and pray with them?
- As a spouse, am I faithful to my marriage and family commitments? Am I open to dialogue, am I patient, do I know how to forgive, to excuse the limits and faults of my partner?
- Do I love my neighbour as Jesus did? Or do I slander, or envy others? Am I jealous? Do I take part in malicious gossip? Am I domineering and arrogant?
- As an employee or employer, am I fair, honest, respectful of others' rights?
- Have I respected the life of others? Have I had or suggested to others to have an abortion?
- Have I stolen? Have I swindled in business? Have I damaged property which does not belong to me?
- Do I drive with caution, with respect for my own life and that of the others?

### 3. Duties towards self

- Am I aware that as a Christian I am "Temple of the Holy Spirit"?
- Do I care for my spiritual life with daily prayer and the Word of God?
- Do I participate with interest and a sense of duty in the parish and diocesan community?
- What use do I make of the time and other gifts received from the Lord?
- Do I keep my heart and body pure? Or do I cultivate impure thoughts and desires? Do I give bad example by immodest behaviour or dress? Do I read/watch indecent literature/shows?
- Do I exaggerate in the use of food and alcohol intake? Do I smoke? Do I take drugs? Do I gamble?
- As a Christian citizen, do I fulfil my political and social duties? Do I pay my taxes? Do I respect the environment? Is there anything else my conscience reproaches me for?

After a sincere and complete confession of ones failings, especially grave ones, the priest will suggest ways of being more consistent with the Christian faith, and will give a penance to perform, such as a prayer or good deed in favour of the needy in whom Jesus is hidden.

Confession concludes with the recitation of an act of contrition as a sign and expression of penance of ones sins and of good intention.

### **Jubilee Year undermined?**

The spiritual and pastoral vision being planned for the Holy Year risks being submerged by marginal preoccupations with pilgrimages, voyages, accommodation planning etc. behind which lie economical interests. The Pope, instead, strongly recommends its majestic spiritual finality. We renew our faithfulness to him, mindful of Christ's words: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church! Feed my sheep! Confirm your brethren!

## **Paul VI, Pope in a storm soon to be beatified**

The 165 testimonies gathered in the acts are yet to be published, however it is enough to read the life of Paul VI and his own writings to get to know this great man.

He wrote in his testament: "I close my eyes upon this painful, dramatic, magnificent world and in doing so I invoke the divine goodness upon it once more," and thus reveals his great love for man, though his serious appearance may have given a different impression. He was an intellectual, born in a middle-class family in a tormented period both for history and the Church.

While the Papacy of John XXIII was marked by enthusiasm, that of Paul VI was a very troubled one. At the time of the Council the Church was faced with progressive tendencies and Conservative resistance; and Pope Paul, often caught between two fires, was labelled with both in varying moments. But through all this, his great faith and ability to guide Peter's Barque shone through.

What did he do? Amidst the torment he reformed the Roman Curia. Cardinal Ruini recalls: "His was a profound hope, deeply theological. He believed in the future of the Church and in a new blossoming for Christianity." His apparent pessimism was an invention of the media. In fact, he gave new power to John XXIII's institute for the unity of Christians, and he created new ones for relations with Jews, Moslems, non-Christians and nonbelievers, and others for social communications, and for the care of migrants and lay people. He was a lucid and severe analyst of the evils of his time and he intuited the new times and the hidden yet growing need for spirituality.

Pope Paul VI was the first to inaugurate the great apostolic voyages to bring the Gospel to every corner of the world, kissing the soil as a sign of gratitude to God the Father for each land and people visited. His choice of Paul in honour of the people's Apostle was a surprise for all. He chose to wear a simple bishop's mitre, offering to the poor the precious tiara with 3 crowns, and he abolished the pontifical entourage in favour of a vigilance corps.

Faced with the injustices across the world and the armaments race of the cold war period, he visited the UN in New York on the 4th April 1965 and shouted to the world: "Let there be no more wars; never again! Peace must guide the destinies of the peoples and of all mankind." He later instituted the World Peace Day.

Paul VI was not immediately popular; but he was an innovator. How did he communicate his faith to others? He wrote a small treatise on the relation of the believer with the modern world, entitled: "De fortis dulcedine" (strong sweetness). Paul VI, as a man and Pope, was like that: firm in his faith but sweet and ready in his approach with others.

Many accused him of being a sad man, and these were certainly surprised when in the Holy Year of 1975 he wrote an apostolic exhortation totally dedicated to joy: "Gaudete in Domino" (Rejoice in the Lord). In it he said: "Today's technological society has multiplied the occasions of pleasure, yet it cannot be said that it offers joy; for joy comes from elsewhere; it is spiritual. The joy of being Christian, closely united to the Church, in Christ, in a state of grace, is truly capable of filling man's heart."

As a young priest, Fr. Montini did not yearn after an ecclesial career, but would have preferred to remain a pastor of souls in the Brescian diocese where he was born. It is God's style, however, to choose his captains from amongst the shepherds, like David; or amongst the fishermen, like Peter, so that they can "feed His sheep" just the way a Good Shepherd would want.

Nicola

## **St. Therese pilgrim in Russia**

The Brothers of Dom Marii in Moscow who print Echo in Russian, reported on the marvellous adventure of the corpse of St. Terese of the Child Jesus in their land.

On the evening of 24 February only three people awaited the arrival of the Saint: the Bishop's secretary, a nun who works with us, and Maria Teresa, wife of the ambassador of Guatemala. The others had been discouraged by lengthy bureaucratic procedures, though, in the end everything went smoothly and took less time than was expected.

The next morning a Mass was celebrated in Therese's honour in the Church of the Immaculate, but when the moment came to open the case it was found that the key was missing. The celebration began in any case, and then unexpectedly, a little before Consecration - the most solemn moment of Mass - a priest managed to open the sealed case. Everyone was moved.

Nothing had been planned for the next day (it was thought that it would have taken longer to get the Saint through customs); hence the relic was taken to Dom Marii (House of Mary) which organizes ecumenical meetings between Catholics and Orthodox. Here too the organizers were met with something unforeseen: the doors of the House were too small! The relic had to be lifted through the window into the refectory where 140 poor people receive meals. We believe this "visit" is a guarantee for the future of the house which is located in a city so far from God.

St. Petersburg was expecting Therese for the 27th February. Along the way, in the Ambassador's car, the relic was taken to Moscow's main sites so that her blessing could reach as much of the city as possible.

The driver was not discouraged by road blocks around the Red Square and managed the same to stop right in front of Lenin's tomb. Thus, the Saint's relics were placed in front of the remains of the "persecutor of Christians," and on that occasion prayers were said to obtain the grace of a meeting between the Holy Father and the Patriarch of Russia, Alexei II.

The Saint's relics then reached the Cathedral of the Assumption, in the Catholic seminary in St. Petersburg. Holy Mass was concelebrated by the Rector, Mons. Antonini, and all the professors. The other stops include Novgorod, Pskov, Smolensk, Kaluga and the other big cities as far as Vladivostok. After that the relic will go through Kazakhstan; the pilgrimage will end on the 1st July. The pilgrimage is a very important event for Russia because St. Therese was nominated Patroness of Russia by Pio XI. With this voyage little Therese will certainly have prepared the way for the Pope; that he may come to visit the Russian Population. She herself had prophesied: "After my death I will let fall showers of roses."

Fr. Rolf-Philipp

## **The New Martyrs**

215 in Korea - In view of the Jubilee of the Year 2000 a special Vatican Commission is preparing a list of new martyrs of the XX century. The Episcopal Conference of South Korea has presented 215 names of which 209 are Catholic and 6 are Anglican. Lay people, religious, priests and bishops, most of them were killed between WWII and the Korean war (1950-53). Historically, martyrs have always been ferment of unity amongst Christians; we hope the witness of these will bear the same fruit.

108 martyrs of the Nazi persecution against the Church in Poland were beatified by John Paul II in Warsaw on 13 June before a million people. Of these 3 were Bishops, 52 were priests, 26 were religious, 15 were professed brothers and sisters, and 9 were laypeople. Of these, 62 died a violent death, while the other 46 died as a result of torture or by privation. Many were victims of the death camps. Three others were beatified and one canonized.

## **Khmer Rouge executioner "repents"**

The head of the secret service under Pol Pot (the dictator who terrorized Kampuchea between 1975 and '79) has converted to Christianity. He says he is: 'deeply regretful' and 'ready to be judged by an international court.'

In the notorious prison which he directed more than 16,000 people were tortured and killed. The only survivors (seven in all) described him as "a monster with a human appearance," though he says that the executions took place only after approval by the entire group of Khmer Rouge heads. Missing for some time, Kang Kek Ieu says that after his conversion he worked for years with international humanitarian organizations.

## **Day of the Unborn Child**

The President of Argentina, Carlos Menem, instituted the Day of the Unborn Child on 25 March (feast of the Annunciation) and signed a decree which states that "life begins from the moment of conception."

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# News from the blessed land

## Mons. Bertone: Medjugorje can be considered one of great Marian shrines

### New Episcopal Conference renews examination

Mons. Bertone, secretary for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in an interview to Dr. F. Sanchez and Fr. Xavier of the Beatitudes Community on 12 Jan. 1999, spoke on the importance of assisting pilgrims in Medjugorje, and added: "For the moment Medjugorje is to be considered as a shrine, a place of Marian devotion, on the same level as that of Czestochowa.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has asked the Episcopal Conference of Bosnia-Herzegovina to open a new dossier in collaboration with a team of experts. Our concern is that clear pastoral indications are given to guide the crowds of pilgrims who go to Medjugorje. The basic question is not knowing whether or not the 6 visionaries see Our Lady, because the Church has yet to make a definite announcement on this. What Rome wants is that emphasis be placed on the sacraments, particularly Reconciliation and the Eucharist, and that pilgrims are guided towards prayer, conversion and faith, and that search for the extraordinary and anything that distracts from the essential be left aside."

(Sr. Emmanuel)

## A new Medjugorje in Panama

The Archbishop of Panama, on visit to Medjugorje, tells of his experience - "This is my first time here. I have come with a group of about twenty pilgrims. During my stay I have seen and experienced profound devotion and prayerful fervour. The spirit of faith of which one becomes aware through prayer acts as a stimulus to renew faith in the hearts of those who come here.

The fruits of Medjugorje, thanks to God, can be seen in Panama. We have a parish community guided by Francesco Verar. He comes often to Medjugorje and has organized the church on the model of the church here. He has also founded a community called "Sisters of the Queen of Peace," and every evening in their church the same Medjugorje prayer programme is held. On the 25th June 1998 I gave this Community diocesan recognition after having seen how it lived and worked and after listening to testimonies from other sources.

## Rosary and Love save drug addicts

The Hail Mary is the force of the Cenacolo Community, known by all for its use of the Rosary to heal drug addiction. "We recite the Rosary three times a day, just as we eat three times a day," says Sr. Elvira, foundress of the Cenacolo Community. "Food gives the body the strength to work, and prayer sustains ones joy, hope and peace. It is important to have models; ours is Our Lady."

In fifteen years of life, the Community has welcomed 15,000 addicts who have been helped to get rid of their addiction through prayer. Says Sr. Elvira: "In Lourdes, Fatima and Medjugorje Our Lady has

repeatedly recommended the Rosary. It is clear then that this prayer contains a mystical power. The Rosary heals the psyche; it is a strength which passes through the veins. It is a presence, not only a sign." The method used in the 27 houses around the world is the Christian method applied radically. If man is the image of God, then only God can build him up again. Hence their centres are called "schools of life" and not "therapeutical communities," and instead of "cure" they talk of "walk of resurrection."

Sr. Elvira explains: "Our rules are rigid and demanding so that the boys become familiar with the cross and learn to carry it. We do not impose anything; we respect their freedom, because true freedom is knowing your Creator. This is a truth which we propose gradually; but we don't want just a physical healing, we want salvation! If we get these guys out of drugs and then put them back in the world without ideals, they will still despair." It is calculated that at least 80% of those who have been in the Community have healed definitely.

The "Field of Life," the house born in Medjugorje 9 years ago, at the moment holds about 80 men from 18 different countries. Their presence is important for Medjugorje because it is a live witness of how Our Lady really came to save her children, including these young victims of drugs, a plague of this century. "When they leave us, we have a feast and we give them a cross and some rosary beads; the cross because they will encounter it immediately and the beads so they never separate themselves from prayer again." But not all leave, and numerous are the "volunteers for love." These are men destroyed by drugs who do not fear to become missionaries for others (some even run a House in Brazil on their own). They do not fear the responsibility because they have learnt to know the paternity of God who provides food daily. In fact, no one pays to stay in the Community, and the Community does not accept public contributions, so the young people know that society does not have to pay for them, but that they instead have to pay with their own sacrifices and work and this is sustained by trust in God.

The Community has received Diocesan recognition. Lay people, married couples, and religious (more than 800 in all) have understood that only love saves and offer assistance to the Community.

(From *Avvenire*, 12 March 1999)

## **My Life with Our Lady a visionary recalls**

Jakov Colo tells: I was ten years old when Our Lady appeared for the first time, and before then I had never thought about an apparition. We lived here in town; we were poor, there was never any news and we had not heard about other apparitions, not even Lourdes or Fatima. Then again, a ten year old doesn't really think about apparitions or God. Other things are more important to him; such as being with your friends and playing, but not praying.

However, when I saw that woman for the first time on the hill, and she was calling us to go to her, I felt in my heart that there was something special. I immediately understood that my life would have completely changed. Then when we got up to the spot and we saw Our Lady close up - and the way she radiated her beauty, peace, and joy - well for me in that moment nothing else existed. My heart burned with the desire for the apparition to happen again, so we could see her again.

The first time we saw her we didn't say a thing because the joy and emotion was so great. All we could do was cry and pray that it would happen again. That same day, back at our homes, we were faced with a problem: how to tell our parents that we saw Our Lady? They would have said we were mad! - and in fact, their first reaction wasn't a good one - but then, upon seeing the changes in our behaviour they

began to believe us. My mother said that I had totally changed, not wanting to go out with friends any more, but wanting to go to Mass and to pray and to go to the hill of apparitions. So I can say that it was from that moment that my life with Our Lady began.

I saw the Blessed Virgin for 17 years. One could say that I grew up with her and that I learnt everything from her, including many things that I didn't know at all. When Our Lady came here she immediately called us to her main messages, and these were all new for me, such as prayer and the three parts of the Rosary. I asked myself: "why pray three parts of the Rosary, and what is the Rosary, and why fast?" I couldn't see the sense of it; I didn't know what conversion meant or why we should pray for peace. It was all new to me, but right from the beginning there was one thing I understood, and that was that to accept everything that Our Lady told us all you needed to do was be totally open to her. Our Lady says many times in her messages: all you need to do is open your heart to me and I will do the rest. So I understood and I put my life in her hands. I told her to guide me so that whatever I did would be according to her desires. That's how my journey with Our Lady began.

Our Lady called us to prayer, asking that families go back to saying the Rosary together. She said that there was nothing like the Rosary said in the family - in particular with the children - to bring a family together. Many who come here say to me that their sons or daughters don't pray and ask for council. I ask them: have you ever prayed with them? Many say no, so you can't expect that at the age of 20 they start praying if they've never seen their family pray or learnt from their family that God exists. We have to be an example for our children; we have to teach them, and it is never too early to do this. They don't have to, at the age of 4 or 5, say the three parts of the Rosary with us, but at least dedicate time to God to understand that God must come first in the family.

Why does Our Lady appear? She comes to us for us, for our future. She says: I want to save you all and one day give you, a most beautiful bouquet, to my Son. What we don't understand is that Our Lady appears here for us. How great her love is for us! She always says that with prayer and fasts we can do everything, even stop wars. But we have to understand Our Lady's messages first with our hearts. Unless we open our hearts to Our Lady, we can do nothing, not even accept her messages.

I always say that Our Lady's love is great, and that in these 18 years she has proved this to us over and over again by repeating the same messages to us for our salvation. Think of a mother's sadness when she always tells her son to do one thing or another, but he doesn't do it. Despite this, Our Lady continues to come here and to invite us to the same messages. To understand how great her love is we only need to look at the message of the 25th of each month. She always says thank you for having responded to her call. How great she is when she says "thank you for responding to my call!" It should be us who thank her for coming amongst us for the sake of our salvation and for helping us!

Our Lady invites us to pray also for peace because she came here as the Queen of Peace and with her apparitions she brings us peace and God gives us His peace. It's up to us to decide whether or not to accept this peace. Many, in the beginning, wondered why Our Lady insisted so much on prayer for peace since we had peace at the time. They understood later because she had also said that with prayer and fasts even wars can be stopped. After ten years of her daily calls to prayer for peace, the war broke out here. I am sure in my heart that if we had all accepted Our Lady's messages many things would not have happened. I don't just mean peace in our country, but all around the world.

You must all be her missionaries and carry her messages. Our Lady also asks us to convert, adding that our hearts must convert first. Without conversion of heart we cannot arrive to God. It is logical that if we do not have God in our heart we cannot accept what Our Lady says. If we do not have peace in our heart we cannot pray for peace in the world. I often hear pilgrims say such things as: "I am angry with my brother; I have forgiven him but it is better if he stays away from me." This is not peace, it is not forgiveness, because Our Lady brings us her love and we must show love for our neighbour and love

everyone. First we have to forgive everyone to be able to have peace in our heart.

Many, when they come to Medjugorje, hope to see something extraordinary, but I say that the main thing, the greatest sign God can give you, is your own conversion. This is the greatest thing a pilgrim could receive in Medjugorje. What can you take back home as a souvenir of Medjugorje? The greatest souvenir are Our Lady's messages; don't feel ashamed to witness. All we need to understand is that we can't oblige any-one to believe. Each of us are free to choose whether or not to believe in God. We are to witness, but not only with words.

You could make your homes become prayer groups. It doesn't take 200 or 300 people; with just 2 or 3 people you can form a group; however your first prayer group must be your family; then we have to accept others and invite them to pray with us.

(7 Dec. -98, F. Silvi and A. Bonifacio)

## **Wounded in body, healed in soul**

Mariana, a young woman from Mexico, tells: "I was young and independent and like most young people I did what I liked and tried to make the best of life. One day, on my way to the cinema with friends, an armed drug addict approached us and shot me in the back. When I recovered I was in hospital; my body was paralysed. Yet I never felt hatred towards that fellow because I sensed that the best thing was to forgive.

After some time I saw Jesus and Mary in a dream and Jesus said to me: "I will heal you..." In the beginning I thought he meant a physical healing, but then I realized that Jesus had healed my spiritually and had given me the grace to be able to pray more and better. So then I decided to go to Medjugorje in the hope that I would be healed also physically. The physical healing was not granted me, but I received an even greater grace: I had understood that my youth was one of darkness and void and that I had risked losing my soul. God had used this accident to bring me close to Him.

Now I do not feel the need to be physically healed. I rather feel the need to make God be known by my friends. I feel a profound desire to consecrate my life to prayer and intercession and I offer my suffering that men may be healed of atheism and come to know the joy that I now know."

\* **Fr. Jozo** responds and points out that the call to pray 9 consecutive novenas for peace did not come from him. "I do not know who spread this message, but one thing is clear. When a call is tied to a threat, for example the risk of war, then it comes from someone who is afraid. Mixing fear with prayer is not the Medjugorje spirit, for Our Lady never transmits fear to souls."

Faxes from various parts were sent to us by Fr. Jozo's collaborators to advise of the novena. In any case, an urgent call to prayer is not harmful in this moment. Also Vicka says that Our Lady continually asks for prayer.

**Msgr. Schönborn**, Cardinal of Vienna, received me on the 28th April last. The argument of our conversation was the slanderous attack by various papers, including Catholic papers, to defame some of the Medjugorje witnesses. It is known that the authors of the articles have never personally met the visionaries or priests of Medjugorje. The Cardinal, aware of the old methods used in the East to discredit a priest, reminded us that he had invited Fr. Jozo to talk in his cathedral two years ago, and then added: "Please tell Fr. Jozo that I invite him again to talk in my cathedral!"

## "Stay with God the Father"

This was the theme of the meeting in Numana from 6-9 May last, guided by Fr. Tomislav Vlastic. Ever aware of the spiritual needs of the participants (over 800), and with his ability to transmit the fruits of his experience as pastor of souls, Fr. Tomislav spoke on our relationship with God the Father, indicating certain steps as necessary. The serene atmosphere and deep interest of the participants, plus personal Eucharistic adoration day and night made the meeting an experience of peace and communion.

1. Called to be part of life... - To be with God means to live. When God created us man lived in harmony with God. Our destiny was to be one of fullness, of perfection, and God the Father relates with us in this way. That is, He stays with us and acts in us. Creation is not an act which belongs to the past, but also to today. The entire history of salvation is a continuous call to return to this relationship of life which reaches its fullness in Jesus Christ. It is a vital relationship! It has nothing to do with ideology; there is nothing which one must learn by heart; all God's laws are within us. To violate these laws within us is to make an attack on life; and this is how war begins. We, instead, are called to communicate with the source of life, with God the Father.

2. ... not of war! - War against life, against God, happens when man refuses to let go of his own plans. When he is not reconciled with God, fear rises from deep within. It is Satan who lets fear in and then causes in some aggressiveness, in others depression.

This war does not remain in a single soul; it spreads to others, so that everything starts from a soul which is unable to relate fully with God the Father. This soul begins to destroy oneself and then others.

This battle cannot be solved by human arguments, but only by being reconciled with God the Father. All it takes is one soul to be reconciled with God the Father to make Lucifer tremble with fear and defeat him. Whoever comes to the light of God the Father wins the war within himself and brings light to self and the universe.

I invite you to begin this inner work and this aperture to God who is Father. It is not an aperture of the mind; it has nothing to do with knowing how to talk well of the Father or of reading books by great theologians, and neither does it have anything to do with sentimental feelings. It is a relationship with God within the soul.

Unconditioned aperture to God inevitably brings one to Resurrection. No one is excluded from this. Not even our sins or limits can impede us from entering into a relationship of vital faithfulness with God the Father.

3. What happens when we respond to God's call? - When we begin to pray before God the Father, heaps of doubts and fears surface. One of the first fears is that God wants to own us, as if to steal something from us. How many young people refuse to surrender themselves because of this! But God wants to give us full life!

Another fear is that God does not listen to us; is unable to understand us. This is not true! God the Father listens to everything and understands everything. It is rather the case of us not listening to Him because we already have our own answers to our questions. This type of attitude increases our fear, and this results in an increase of neurotic prayers and tension. Self-centredness is more than just a part of our character; its roots are very deep.

It is not possible to open up to God the Father if we are concentrated on ourselves; just as we cannot relate with others. From the encounter with the Father we receive overflowing life. This life is not

abstract, or for the afterlife. It is a full life for today. Unless you begin from this certainty you have everything wrong. Nonetheless, no one can explain this inner relationship with God the Father to you, for it is something you have to discover yourself.

4. To be able to stay with God the Father, requires two steps: one is see... - Do you want to see God the Father? "Yes," we would all reply, but it is not true. Here we are on a very profound level. God the Father can be seen on condition that you seek only Him and that He is given absolute primacy in your soul. It is only then that the soul can begin to see. This concrete step can be done by contemplating Jesus Christ, but not as an icon.

The fifth chapter of St. John speaks of inner responsibility. It says man can see and meet God and that this is ensured by Jesus Christ with Redemption. Jesus opens the way for us on a deeper level so that we can see and meet the Father, but this demands from us an authentic decision and the renunciation of all types of excuses before the Father. It is important to unmask our excuses: the more we discover and eliminate them, the more we enter into the light.

5. ... the other is to come - St. John then indicates the second step. To see is not enough; one must also come. We generally have a rather static idea of faith, but to be open in faith is to be catapulted out, and to encounter the Father implies once again a decision, a readiness.

What does it mean to come? In John 6 Jesus talks of the Eucharist when he speaks of the bread of life: He who comes to me will never be hungry (Jn 6:35). We must come to the point of accepting the Father through the Son. This means sacrificing our egoism in all its forms. It means overcoming our crosses in a way that we become bread of life. Jesus fed souls with the life of the Father. In this union we too become bread and we transmit the life of the Father. He who gets to this level reaches contemplation. He who arrives at this open relationship with God, arrives at royal priesthood! You have to seek God the Father, not to possess Him, but to donate yourself to Him.

6. That you may go and bear fruit! - Whoever remains in God bears fruit. Whoever has God within himself can reveal Him to others. Our actions done in the name of God are not true unless we remain in Him and He remains in us.

Our duty is to manifest the living God, so I invite you to remain in God the Father and continue to discover this relationship with God in you. Our mission is to keep God's life in us and in others without allowing it to be destroyed. This is the attitude we should keep: not bring yourself in the name of God, but bring God's life (to others). Only this way, in communion with God the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, can you regenerate the world.

Nicola

## **Beatification of Francisco and Jacinta of Fatima**

Only 10 and 11 years of age, they will be the youngest blessed proclaimed by the Church. The Pope made the announcement on the eve of Sts. Peter and Paul, thereby approving the miracle obtained through their intercession on a woman who had been sick for 20 years with cancer. If you think they too young to be declared Saints, remember that in prison they resisted before death threats, refusing to reveal the secrets! There is no suitable age for one to practise heroic virtues and become a Saint.

## **Prayer culminates with end of war on Corpus Christi**

Eighty days of war saw the tragedy of a million Kosovar refugees, the atrocities which accompanied ethnic cleansing, and the destruction wrought by bombings on Serb territory. Things could have been worse - many had warned of the possibility of the conflict extending.

After repeated appeals by the Pope, and efforts by the Holy See to end the conflict, the Holy Father urgently called all Christians to pray, indicating "Corpus Christi as the peak of the intense entreaty by the Church for peace in the Balkans."

Well, precisely on Thursday 3 June (Corpus Christi) the Yugoslav government approved a solution to the conflict. John Paul II said at the end of the Eucharist procession on that day: "Our prayer this evening is strengthened by the hopeful prospects which are finally emerging."

The following Thursday, on the eve of the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the UN signed a cease-fire. Of course not all is over, for refugees are returning to destroyed homes; hatred and revenge increase the number of victims; escaping Serbs sack and burn their homes before leaving; and there remains the problem of reconstruction. But this is the moment for man's love of neighbour to shine through.

## **Fr. Tardiff, friend and "prophet" of Medjugorje, has left us**

Fr. Tardiff, Canadian and Missionary of the Sacred Heart, died following a heart attack on the 8th June in Cordoba, Argentina, at the age of 71.

The Lord had given him the charisma of intercession during prayer for those suffering in spirit, mind and body. Hundreds are the testimonies of healing and conversion. He, himself, was healed in 1973. "I was gravely ill with tuberculosis and I had been prescribed a year of intensive cure, but I was healed in 3 days thanks to the prayers by five lay people." To anyone who said he performed miracles he would respond: "I am the Lord's donkey. The crowd's shouts of acclamation were for Jesus when he entered Jerusalem, not for the donkey which carried Him."

At his every meeting and in all his works Fr. Tardiff proclaimed: "Jesus Christ is Lord; Jesus Christ lives!"

Did he know he would soon die? All we know is that the year before his death he constantly preached the need to be always ready to meet the Lord. Those closest to him say that he for first took care to be prepared. And God came to call him while he was preparing to celebrate Holy Mass during a retreat for priests. A significant moment given that Fr. Tardiff had placed the Eucharist at the centre of his life, his ministry and his charisma. Let us pray that we also know how to make Holy Mass our life, and of our life a Holy Mass.

Sr. Emmanuel writes: "Fr. Tardiff was always closely tied to Medjugorje. In 1981, at an international retreat for priests in Rome, he prophesied to Fr. Tomislav Vlasic: "The Holy Virgin will come to visit you," and one month later the apparitions of Medjugorje began!

In 1983 he came to Medjugorje with a brother from the Beatitudes Community and two other priests. On that occasion, through the visionary Marija, they received a private message in which the Virgin said she had called them so they would spread the messages to the world and proclaim her Son Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Communist authorities arrested them the day after because with their prayers over the sick after Mass they attracted large crowds. They were thus expelled from the country and barred from entering for five years.

Fr. Tardiff returned many times and his ministry of compassion for the suffering was always in line with

the spirit of Medjugorje. Thanks to the Blessed Virgin's intercession, many spiritual and physical healings were had."

## LATEST NEWS

Corpus Christi in Medjugorje - Bishop Peric administered Confirmation to about 70 children before hundreds of faithful. He also blessed the new doors of the church, the new confessionals and the new tabernacle. The evening programme concluded with the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

18th Anniversary - On 25 June a great crowd of pilgrims from around the world were present. Holy Masses were celebrated in 16 languages. It is calculated that about 50,000 people were present for the evening Mass which was concelebrated by 160 priests. Also present were Archbishop Franic, the Apostolic Nuncio of Slovenia, Cardinal Echevarria and 2 Bishops from Ecuador. All the visionaries were present. Marija came with her family. The peace march behind the Blessed Sacrament, from Humac to Medjugorje, was held the day before.

## To Ivanka: "Pray for peace!"

According to Our Lady's promise, Ivanka received an apparition on the anniversary. Our Lady remained with her in her home for about 7-8 minutes. Her husband and 3 children were the only ones present. Ivanka said she prayed for the parish, for families and for everyone. Our Blessed Mother left the following message: Dear Children, Thank my Son for all the graces He has granted you. Pray for peace, pray for peace, pray for peace.

\* 8th UK YOUTH 2000 Int'l Prayer Festival, 26-30 August, Walsingham, Norfolk (National Marian Shrine). No fixed charge for prayer festival, but donations are asked for. Sleeping bag accommodation and food will be provided. Speakers include Fr. Benedict Groeshel, CFR, Fr. Stan Fortuna, CFR, and Fr. Slavko Barbaric, OFM (on Aug. 29).

Contact YOUTH 2000, POB 119, London SW 7 5RH (Fax/ph. 0171 370 0211) for further details and booking forms.

ECHO ON INTERNET: <http://www.eclipse.it/medjugorje>

**Youth Festival in Medjugorje** from 31 July to 6 August.

Fr. Jozo with Marija in ecstasy during Mass at Milan on 28 March '99. Fr. Jozo's meetings in Italy were attended by great crowds. In Verona, more than 4,000 people attended the prayer meeting which lasted from 3pm till 9,30 pm. Fr. Jozo was warmly greeted by new bishop, Mons. Carraro.

What grace it was for me to celebrate my 50th anniversary! On 29th June I celebrated with the priests who were ordained with me, and on the 27th with my parish. I must say that my parish is all the more generous with me as it sees me ever more unable to take care of myself. I thank God that I can still celebrate Mass, though with some difficulty. On this occasion I said: Thank you Father for your infinite gifts. Jesus, good shepherd, save and sanctify those you gave to me. Holy Spirit, complete in my infirmity that which I did not do in good health. Mother: trust and hope of mine, I surrender myself to you.

As far as Echo is concerned, I must now say stop. I ask you all to pray to Mary to find someone to act as editor and co-ordinator for the enormous amount of work involved with the Italian and other language

ECHO

editions handled in Mantova.

In the Most Precious Blood of Christ and the the glory of Mary Assumed into Heaven, I bless you all.

Fr. Angelo

Villanova, 1 July 1999

I want to teach you to pray!