



ECHO OF MARY

Queen of peace

79

January 1991

Our Lady's message, 25 December 1990:

"Dear Children, I invite you to pray in a special way for peace. My dear Children, without peace you cannot experience the birth of little Jesus, neither today, nor in your daily lives. That is why you must pray to the Lord of Peace, so that He may protect you under His mantle and help you understand the greatness and importance of having peace in your hearts, and so that it may spread from your hearts throughout the whole world.

I am with you and intercede for you before the Father. Pray, because Satan wants to destroy my plans for peace. Reconcile yourselves with your brothers and offer your lives so that peace might reign in the entire world."

If you do not have God's peace in you, there can be no world peace!

Today, Christmas day, I felt profoundly peaceful despite the little sleep I had between midnight Mass and early morning Mass. It was as though the entire world was at peace. This is what the message is about.

Our Lady is inviting us to pray to the Lord of Peace. These days there are many lords that we listen to, many of whom appear to us through the television; but these cannot give us peace, that real peace for our hearts and for mankind. It is time we Christians woke up and understood the presence of Our Lady and Her calls. Her appeal today is so long. The Lord, our one and only God, is the only one who can give us this peace.

It is important to pray for others, that they may receive the Lord of Peace. All the debates and theological discussions on God are worthless if we are unable to receive the Lord of Peace in our hearts. All Mary's messages are worthless if we are unable to receive the God of Peace in our lives.

We can do nothing without God; without His peace. Only if we are ready to abandon all the other lords, and if we open our hearts to God is He able to grow in us, and then our hearts will be able to spread His Peace to others. Prayer: Oh Lord, we can do nothing without You; we cannot direct our hearts. But you can do everything. Direct our hearts, and the hearts of those around us. Oh Lord, direct all those hearts that we feel and see around us or on the

TV, so that the messages of Our Blessed Lady may enter into them and into the whole world.

Direct all the hearts of the East, especially where there is danger of war or confusion. Oh Lord, prepare our hearts that we may feel every impulse of Your grace. Prepare our hearts so that You, Lord, as a child, may grow in us and bring salvation in us, and through us, to the whole world. And through the intercession of the Queen of Peace, may the Lord bless all the readers of Echo. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Tomislav Vlasic'

Fr. Angelo's comment:

Our Lady is once again asking us to pray so that we may understand the importance of peace in our times.

It is so easy for us to desire peace for the hearts of others, more so than for our own; and we are pleased simply by silenced weapons.

It is easy to guess that the devil wants to destroy Mary's plans of peace with the many snares he sets up for us so that we lose our peace, and so as to cause the spark which would start up a catastrophic war.

Mary, thus, urges us all to be reconciled so that peace may reign in people's hearts. Mary is also asking us to offer our lives, so that with our contribution, peace may reign in the entire world, and the devil defeated.

"LIVE MY CALLS"

"... I do not wish, my Children, for you to live my messages while at the same time sinning, as this does not please me...

I invite you to live in God's Love ... but you are ready to commit sin and to put yourselves in the hands of Satan without any forethought.

I invite each of you to decide for God and against Satan...

I wish to lead all of you to holiness and I want each of you to be happy here on the earth and then with me in Heaven."

(25 March, and 25 May 1987)

PADRE CANTALAMESSA TO YOUTH: HOW TO FREE YOURSELF OF SIN (that deadly cancer)

The FIRST STEP is to recognize our sin, by admitting that we have sinned - and it's not easy because we live amid it, we live in a world that has made sin the quintessence of life. The world no longer fears sin and even jokes about it. Even the Italian language has coined expressions to minimize sin - eg. "vizietto" (little vice), "peccatuccio" (little sin), in an attempt to make it more innocent.

We live in a world that fears everything (AIDS, wars, etc), but it does not fear sin, which is a declaration of war against God, the Eternal One, Who holds your hand; and if He left it

you would fall into the abyss of nothing. We no longer fear this. It's as if we were all drugged; but instead we must wake up. The Word of God wants us to call sin sin, that we wake up to its existence and that we realize that it is something serious... Sin is that terrible thing called hate, violence, injustice, poverty, lust, abuse ... The Word of God tells us that if we wish to free ourselves from sin then we must recognize it - it is not something abstract, but the real danger of our lives. The world will tell us differently, but we know where the world will lead us - as, the whole world lies in the power of the Evil One. (1 Jn 5)

SECOND STEP: repent for one's sins. Only the Holy Spirit, Who knows God, knows what sin and repentance is. When the Holy Spirit comes, first of all, He will show the world how wrong it is. (Jn 16.8) The world of course is man. To repent means changing our way of thinking... but it is not just substituting one opinion for another; to repent means substituting our opinion with that of God's...; it means throwing oneself into the abyss of God's judgement and saying: Lord, I don't know myself... You know everything about me... I throw myself into this truth, I accept Your judgement of me. This is the miracle of a contrite heart, that becomes a villa for God, a palace... God looks upon a contrite heart. Thus, after having recognized our sin and repented, we may move on to the third step.

THIRD STEP: make a definite break with sin. Break with that sin that keeps us chained down, that taints our relation with God... The chain must be broken. This step requires that we say enough with sin. God invites us to a holy divorce - between us and sin, especially with that sin that becomes a chain for us and that we fear to live without, because we would be then forced to change - so we keep it well hidden inside of us.

Now we must decide: Do I want to stay with the Gospel or with myself? Sin can be different in each one of us, but it is part of our lives in all of us. So we must say, Lord, You help me, as from today I want to live without this sin! We can fall back into it.. but it will be different as now the Lord knows that our heart does not consent to the sin.. As soon as we have understood what this sin is, we must immediately carry out an act contrary to that sin... Let's suppose that a man gambles. He must not say, Lord from tomorrow, I will not play anymore. He must decide to stop playing immediately, now, right in this very moment. This way, liberation is possible. The Lord will help us, but we must offer Him our decision to not sin anymore.

FOURTH STEP: destroy the body of sin. By continuing to sin every day, again and again... a hard crust takes form in our lives... that becomes part of our actions... By confessing, going to Mass, most of it is eliminated... but since our contrition is not always perfect, a little of that crust remains each time, amasses and forms a heart of rock. So therefore, what we must destroy is our heart of rock, that which we have made of ourselves, by sinning... and by saying no to the Beatitudes...

We must go to God in holy confession to change this heart of rock... where the Blood of Christ frees our heart of rock...; the Passion of Christ is a furnace - let's throw our heart of rock into It to see it melt - and to thus obtain a new one... When the Hebrews began the exodus, they were afraid, but when they entered the Red Sea, they came out free... Let's become free, us too, for the Grace of Christ Who died for us.

(3 Nov. 1990 - From a registration.)

FR. LEONHARD ON MEDJUGORJE

The number of pilgrims has increased by at least 20-30 per cent with respect to last year. The ever increasing numbers from 1985 to now may be seen in the number of Holy Communions distributed: 1985 - 482,200 / 1986 - 583,400 / 1987 - 804,400 / 1988 - 1,018,500 / 1989 - 1,120,000 / 1990 up to August - an increase of 30% with respect to the previous year. More than 22,000 priests concelebrated in 1990 (see Echo no. 71).

Many of the pilgrims come on foot, sometimes alone, sometimes in groups, especially from Herzegovina, west Bosnia and Dalmatia, Sebenico, Slavonski Fozegn, Lubiana and sometimes even from Spain, France, Germany. There was even a group of 30 who arrived from Bergamo in Italy on bicycle (23 April 1990).

Many take advantage of meetings, congresses, symposiums, races, etc, that are held in nearby regions, to pass through Medjugorje. In fact, a group of doctors from Lithuania visited Medjugorje after having participated in a congress on the family at Zagabria. Then there was another group from Dubrovnik, specialists in international law. There have been famous scientists, who attend lessons in Yugoslavia or other parts of Europe, and take advantage of these trips to then visit the common house of the Mother.

Among all the pilgrims, the young stand out. Apart from the 5000 who attended Youth 2000 in August (an international youth festival that is becoming a tradition), young groups from Austria, Germany, Italy (in particular from the Alto Adige region in Italy), are very numerous. Young people from the Croatian region are also numerous. A bus of young people from Moscow has announced its imminent arrival.

This year priests in particular were very numerous. Apart from those who accompany organized pilgrimages, there have also been groups of only priests. In particular, there was the group of about 200 who had participated in Evangelization 2000 in the Vatican before coming to Medjugorje. In September alone there were 27 from Lithuania, more than 100 from the USA, 51 from Brasil and a few hundred from Italy for spiritual exercises.

THE SCULPTOR OF THE BIG CRUCIFIX

Medjugorje is a wonderful medicine that God gave to the world.

The smile of his mother as she was dying (she was run over by a train) helped this man (a sculptor) regain his faith and now inspires his works.

An atheist in front of this crucifix said, "For as long as I stood in front of it, I felt the desire to embrace it."

Peppino Sacchi, sculptor from Bolzano, was interviewed by Fr. Slavko in October 1990.

Peppino: I was born in a poor farming family, and I'm proud to say it. I had a brother, younger than I - he was a hard worker, and that's why my father preferred him. My father thought I was lazy, but I was in love with pencils and colours - I loved drawing. My mother knew me better, however, and my uncle who understood me took me to Novara to an art school. My father was happy to have me out of the way.

Fr. Slavko: You said your mother understood you better. Can you tell us something about

her?

Peppino: It was her death that became very important for me. I had sculptored a wooden angel for Venice ... one morning my mother came to visit me and was admiring my work. I observed her face: there was a smile impressed on her face that I can never forget... One hour later I was told that she had been run over by a train. From that moment on, the look on her face and her smile were always before me. They very often inspire me. The death of my mother helped me regain my faith... It was then that the world that I had created around me, that I considered so secure, collapsed. It was a world without God, without faith, where eternity didn't exist... And so I then started living my faith. From then on it became very important for me to cultivate this faith, through prayer and work... That smile, that remained impressed in my soul and heart on that day that my mother died, is a great help to me especially in my work and when I have to create motherly faces... Now I look at everything with eyes of faith, and I see God in everything that has been created.

Q. Now that you are here in front of the cross, the people would like to hear you say something about it and the crucifix. What can you tell us?

A. I have read a lot about Christ. I have studied the Holy Shroud of Turin. Christ must have been very beautiful: He was vigorous, perfect, a man of large stature. So that's why I wanted to make a beautiful crucifix. People like a dead Christ with a joyful face; and I believe that He was just like that, because He was both Man and God. He suffered and died as a man, but at the same time He remained God - and that's how I tried to represent Him in His death. I tried to represent the atrocious pain that He underwent through the size of the nails that pierce His hands and feet. The wound of His heart is also very deep. Nonetheless, He was serene, because He was carrying out God's will.

Q. Tell us something about this Passion.

A. Yes, it is a small testimony. One day a friend entered my study - he was Communist, a non-believer... I was just finishing the crucifix. My friend stood in front of it for a long time, looking at it. He didn't say anything and I didn't ask him anything. Then he left, without even saying goodbye to me. Then when I went home for lunch, my wife told me that that friend had returned and had said, As long as I stood in front of that crucifix, I felt like embracing it... but I didn't have the courage, so I left. I was so happy. That was the first prize for my work...

Q. In this world, as you see it now, what significance do you think that Medjugorje has?

A. I find that the message of peace is very moving. Afterall, it is an invitation to us all to recreate harmony in ourselves and in the world... For me, conversion means discovering in oneself this way to peace and harmony and accepting God's help that arrives to us through the Mother. Medjugorje is a great medicine given to the world from God; even though there are things now at Medjugorje that delude me. I mean all those constructions that have caused disorder, that have taken away that harmony that was noticeable before. If things continue this way, much more will be destroyed. Despite this, Medjugorje is still a great medicine.

Q. What would you like to say to the parishioners and the monks?

A. ... Conserve the Peace. Pray and fast. Look for perfection and aim for it always. Be happy because Our Lady smiles on you every day. Never forget that. I know what it would mean to

me to forget that maternal smile. I would become unable to work, even to live. Do not forget Mary and you will be happy. You will be noble people, permeated with faith. Humanity needs people like this.

(M.M.)

AT MARY'S SCHOOL (5th day at YOUTH 2000)

IT IS CERTAIN THAT WE ARE THE LOVE OF GOD HIS LOVE OPENS OUR SEPULCHRES

(Prayer and meditation by Padre Tomislav Vlasic)

ADORATION:

... You are my God and my Lord. You are my Love! I want you to love me; I want it so much. I want you to fill me with your Love.

Lord, I want to become your love; I want the whole world to know your love. I want to embrace the whole world with your Love.

... Mary: touch our hearts; caress them with your love, so they open up to Jesus' Love.

Come, Lord! There are many barriers in our hearts, but you can break through them. There is no limit to your love. Come; we desire being the door of your love; we desire showing it to the world. We want the world to know that the Divine Love has visited the earth through Mary.

Oh, LOrd, that might we be able to accept your Love!

MEDITATION:

Dear Brothers and Sisters, yesterday I asked very much of you; it was my love for you that encouraged me to ask so much of you. Today I want to be a brother amongst you, and I want you to discover God's infinite Love.

Today in Medjugorje we have been praying and reflecting on the meaning of life starting from the womb. Abortion is something truly tragic. But right now I want to talk to you about another type of abortion; the abortion of our ourselves. There are situations in which our parents have abandoned us; they pay no attention to us; they have given us money, but not love. And we have been terribly wounded, and through these wounds we have become aggressive, sad and rebellious. We have become ugly even to ourselves. This way we have aborted ourselves. All our life long we have tried to escape from ourselves; in search of a different type of personality as a type of compensation.

In this state, in the depth of our souls, we have become sepulchres (graves). And perhaps we are unable to look into ourselves, because we fear the stink that is within us. That stink is death!

I want to teach you to turn that stink called death into a toy, and to discover your risen self. You will then find that the stink becomes a lovely scent, and that you were created beautiful. Inside of you, you will be able to find everything, so that you will not need to rush out in search of other models.

This happens upon finding Jesus' Infinite Love.

There is a sin, a great sin, that you have never confessed; and this sin is what stops you from

meeting Jesus who is Love.

We do not love ourselves enough.

When we were attacked or offended, that judgement of other persons took effect. From that moment, we appreciated ourselves less, we lost confidence in ourselves and in others. We became unable to receive love and to give love. We even lost confidence in the Love of God.

That sin put the Love of God in the tombs of our hearts. All our religious activities are not enough to save us if they do not open the way to the Love of God in us. Jesus said Love summarizes all the laws of the Prophets. We must learn to know the way that takes us to this perfect Love. Jesus walked this way and He said, "You will love the Lord your God with all your might and your neighbour as you love yourself." Thus, the road is in recognizing the Love of God and the love of ourselves.

Man cannot live without the Love of God.

Husband and wife cannot possess real love without the Love of God. For this reason, the world will die without the Love of God. We heard St. Paul say, "Many of you are sick, and many of you are already dead." Yes, many people received communion, but they did not receive love. That's why our main task is to open ourselves up to this Love, believe in this Love.

We must search for this Love, as Mary Magdalene did.

Take advantage of the boundless Love that opens up to boundless horizons. Then we will see the Love of God everywhere. We must start loving ourselves with this love: Love your neighbour as you love yourself. If you are not loved enough, neither can you love, and likewise, if you do not love yourself perfectly, you cannot love. If you do not love yourself perfectly, the Love of God cannot enter you perfectly. If the Love of God cannot openly come to you, you will be unable to show this love to the others.

So we must become children and allow Mary to teach us to love. Let us pray that She may take us upon Her Heart, that She may caress us and transmit to us this tender Love of God, and prepare our heart to accept God's Love.

Go to your sepulchre, go where you are sad or where you feel obsessed.

Go where you feel you have been aborted by mankind, go where you think to be dead, useless, ugly, refused. Search for the Love of God there and you will find your resurrection. When you find the Love of God in yourselves, then you will be able to rise.

I want to tell you something that you must never forget - place it in the very depth of your heart and soul.

1. I am God's Love

I was created to be loved by God. He has always loved me, even when I didn't know it.

When others have destroyed love within me, they took God away from me. God is present even in my death, in my sin. He always shouts: "I love you, I am your life. They killed me, they put me in the tomb, they tied me to a column when they tied you up. The two of us are One."

Come to me and accept me even if you find the tomb closed. You said, I am the Resurrection and the Life. I only need your love and then I will be able to change in you. Brothers and sisters, if you start looking for God Love, everything will start changing in your lives. They will open up to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We will be that immense wealth of the Divine Love that unites the three Persons.

2. My brother too is the Love of God.

I must see God's Love in every creature: and adore It, love It, respect It in every creature and place myself at the service of this Love. When you see a great sinner and you hear people judging him in all sorts of ways, you must do as Jesus taught us and say: stop. And start resurrecting the Love of God in that person. Open your lives for the resurrection of your brother or sister and this person will discover the Love of God, and you will be enriched with that Love that will rise.

The Church does not condemn sinners!

God does not condemn; He loves! But rejecting Love is a terrible sin, and makes God's Love suffer. God offers us His Love so that we can be happy, but man rejects this Love! So do not condemn sinners, but: "Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

There is a difference between love of a sinner and love of sin. We love the sinner, we do not love sin. Why is this important? When a man lives in sin he is in a miserable situation. To be healed he needs Love. He is extremely sick, and in his error he did not receive the one and only medicine which is Divine Love. Instead of receiving the medicine of Love, he received hatred and poison, and his sin became larger. If you want to find where Jesus' Love is greater, then look inside a sinner. Go there and love Him, for He suffers there, in that person. He needs you; He needs your love. He needs you to visit that tomb so that He can rise.

Go to the tomb of your neighbour.

You must be completely free and humble. You will discover the Risen Jesus in the tomb. Luke 15 tells of the prodigal son who wanted to return to his father, even if it meant he would become the least of his father's servants. He felt the need to live and thus he no longer felt shame for his sins. The father ran to meet him, embraced him and gave a big feast in his honour. God has thus revealed to us His unconditioned Love.

To all of you too, I say: confess your sins, but don't look upon them for too long, just run to the Father. The greatest sin is not reaching out to the Father and His Love.

Why do you want to keep on smelling the stink in your lives? Psychology teaches that a person will typically continue to examine and smell his own stink. But there's no need for a Christian to do this as he can run to the Father and be given new life!

So don't look for those things that make you sad anymore. Leave your sins behind you and run to the Father. God loves me; I am His love. God is waiting for me; HE wants to put on a feast in my honour!

But there is something else you must be rid of! Don't judge yourselves! Do not say: "I am good, wise, faithful, I go to Mass, I don't sin the way others do." Remember that in Luke 15 the prodigal son had a brother, and he was like this. The father put on a feast for the other son that had left the house, and the "just" son reproached his father for doing this; he was jealous, saying that his father had never given him anything. The father responded: Son, everything that I possess is yours. That elder son was close to the wealth, yet he was unable to possess it!

So, we can all enter the house of the Father; and we shall celebrate the feast of Love, of Divine Love! Nourish yourselves with this Divine Love and you will build the world up with this Love. You will become the living Communion, the Eucharist of Love.

Let's sing: Trouver dans ma vie ta prÈsence, tenir une lampe allumÈe; choisir d'habiter la confiance, aimer et se savoir aimÈ. The Lord is my Shepard.. Even if everyone hurled stones

at me ... happiness and grace will be my companions for the whole of my life.

Thank You Jesus, because Your Love is alive even there where I thought It was dead. Thank You because You loved me even where the others condemned me. I want to stay only with You. I feel wonderful with You, even when I am in the tomb. I celebrate Your Love even in my death. I want to stay in the centre of Your Love and be Your Love here on earth: this is eternal life. Thank You Jesus.

Fr. Tomislav Vlastic'
(From a registration.)

TIHALIJNA: BLESSED ARE THE HANDS WHICH BRING BLESSINGS

PADRE JOZO: "Without your hands we cannot live. We are proud of you, our dear priest!"

"Dear Priest, look at your hands and think of the day your bishop consecrated them, and he sent you out to the world to serve us and to make us holy.

Can you remember the plans you had, the things you would have done with these hands, to bring grace and salvation to the peoples?

Think of the children you've baptized with these hands; of the young people you've joined in marriage. Think of how many times your hands lifted up in a sign of forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and to bless on thousands of other occasions.

Now think of your last Mass, and the many others, when you took in your hands that simple bread and wine and you turned them into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ... Think of these hands, in which you placed His Glorious Body and the Chalice of His Precious Blood... Think of the times that you stretched out your hands and took ours in yours in a loving circle of prayer... Think of the young and trembling hands that you united in the Sacrament of Marriage... Think of the mentally and physically sick that came looking for you, to find help, and then they went away with live hope in their hearts... Think of the dying bodies that these hands anointed for Heaven.

Today we will anoint these hands once again with our love; with the love of the whole Catholic family. If, in the days to come, you feel alone and discouraged, please remember these words; lift your hands and look at them and recall how they nourished us with the Bread of Life, how they brought hope into our lives, how they comforted us, and healed us; and opened the door of our home (the Church) for us again.

We would like to take you by the hand and stay in the most congested crossing of the city and shout to the world: Everyone look, this is our beloved priest whom we love! These are the hands of the Sacrament of the Holy Order. We venerate them, and we cannot live without them... without You. Thank you for devotedly and lovingly serving us. We are very proud that you are our beloved priest.

MOTHER TERESA: WHAT JESUS AND HIS PRIEST CAN DO ...

... Among those suffering from AIDS

When I was last in New York, where we have a house for those suffering from AIDS, I received a telephone call from a youth who said, "Mother Theresa, I have the sickness ... I want to come to you, I want to die with you" ... I said to him, "Of course, come straight away. I will be very happy to see you here." He came. I saw the joy on the face of that man, the joy to know that he was wanted, the joy of being able to make peace with God and of asking a priest to help him make peace with Jesus and to receive forgiveness.

After two weeks we prepared this young man to die, and he died a beautiful death... Very often we have these beautiful episodes in the houses where people come face to face with God, and where the priests help the people find the joy in love and in being loved...

... In a hospital in Moscow

When we received permission to go to Russia, a doctor, chief of a hospital in Moscow, accepted us in his hospital. We arrived there and he gave us three rooms, and then we began cleaning the toilets. That was our first apostolic work! ... Towards evening, a priest came and celebrated Mass in the small make-shift chapel; then he gave us Jesus and placed Him in a small tabernacle for us. The whole place seemed different...

After one week the doctor came to me and said, "What's happening in my hospital?" I said, "I don't know. What's happened?" He replied, "I don't know, but I see that the nurses and doctors are much kinder and more affectionate with the patients, and the patients do not scream with pain anymore. What has happened? What are the nuns doing?" I looked at him and said, "Jesus is now in this house, in this chapel. He is present, He lives, He loves. It is He Who brings this joy, this peace and this love." The doctor then shook his head and said, "Thank you." It was lovely to feel the presence of Jesus in that hospital after 70 years of atheism.

Now at Moscow we work very much, and there are about 600 handicapped and disabled people with us. We were asked why we went to Russia. I told the government that I wanted to bring the nuns to Russia to bring love and affectionate help to the poor. So they accepted us. We have a chapel there, amid 600 people and an extraordinary change is visible: there is peace, and joy, and even the desire to return home... 30 of them already died a beautiful death because of the presence of Jesus, and with the help of priests...

... And in 91 countries

Now the sisters work in 91 countries. In all these countries, where we are, we create a new tabernacle for Jesus. The sisters work with Jesus and offer themselves for the priests. It is a wonderful gift to be able to be so close to the Lord and receive from Him such a tender love. ... Now we have 27000 sisters that pray for 27000 priests. That is, they offer everything they have for a priest that they adopt ... It is a wonderful gift of God to be able to do such a thing for His Glory and for the good of the Church...

A CALL BY OUR EASTERN BROTHERS ONLY WITH LOVE CAN RUINS BE REBUILT

Hunger and chaos in Russia: "But the worst is yet to come"

Catholic aid favours reconciliation with Orthodox Charity, Marian style

Our friend, Bishop Paul Hnilica, returned from a trip to Russia on Christmas eve where he had accompanied a convoy of German trucks loaded with provisions. HE told me about it over the phone.

Known as he is at the Slovak frontier through contacts at various Embassies, his presence made the transit quicker for the provisions heading for Uzhorod. Upon their arrival they were told of the great need by people in Moscow and they asked that at least 4 of the trucks go there. Msgr. Hnilica objected, however, saying that these trucks were meant for them, and that a convoy of seven trucks would be departing soon for Moscow.

The thousands of parcels containing provisions were prepared by motherly hands: mostly mothers of soldiers who died in Russia. In every parcel, together with the food, there were also signs of love: a crucifix, a book, pictures, Christmas greetings. Thus, they felt remembered, loved and esteemed. Work of the heart: a mother makes a donation to an unknown mother. This is reconciliation! The people were moved by these delicate gestures. In Russia, however, Catholics are a minority (9 million in Lithuania, Byelorussia, Ukraine, etc). That is why the bishop went to Moscow to speak to the representative of Patriarch Alexei (the Patriarch was ill). But in the name of who? In the name of Marian movements in Germany, who also wish to help the Orthodox (they love Mary as we do).

He said, 'We trust in the Catholic Church. Do not abandon us. 10% of the population, especially in the big cities, are in danger of dying. The situation is very bad in Moscow. But the worst is yet to come. A woman in a city close to the capital killed herself so as not to see her children die of hunger. People are turning to the convents, like here, in moments of shortage - they are familiar with the nuns. I have been told of cases where the only food is old bread and lettuce. There is a poverty in the families so evident, that it is just unthinkable.'

Msgr. Hnilica continues, "He told us which were the areas most in need. They do not trust the government channels, which are disorganized, where things cannot flow freely, where things get stolen, and where there is a black market. I went to Zagorsk, the holy city of Russia, together with six representatives of Marian movements from just as many countries. This is the real spiritual centre of Russia (much more than the Vatican which is mostly administrative). All the Orthodox bishops come from there. They have 700 seminarists to feed, and they have received only a minimum help from Sweden. They must be helped. Material help will favour the reconciliation between Catholics and Orthodox, just as Mary desires.

The taxi driver that took me to the airport said, 'The government here is breaking up. There is no more authority (one doesn't know who commands). There is no more conscience.' This is what happens where the system denies even natural laws. Man, destroyed by the system, needs to be restored to his natural state. If Our Lady will triumph in the end, She must not triumph over corpses. The power is breaking up, and man's intelligence is waking up. The people are hungry for everything that is not Communist. I was told that 40 journalists from the Intelligentsia are preapring to become Catholics.

A film called "Holy Russia: the effects of Communism" was viewed in Moscow by 2 million people in the first week. People are opening their eyes. Caricatures on communism can be seen all over, which is being compared to the Tower of Babel.

It is therefore necessary to urgently send provisions, but without forgetting the most

important thing: spiritual reconstruction. 3 million bibles are needed - if printed in Russia they would only cost 2 dollars each. 600 Russian seminarists are guests in Poland, and 500 in Slovakia. They are preparing themselves to return as Russian priests.

There is urgent need of real missionaries. "The harvest is rich but the labourers are few." Yes, there are many vocations, but the best thing is that they grow in their homeland, with suitable study centres. Everyone faithful to Mary must have Mary's heart. We must work for this reconciliation: love is the essence of Christmas.

With this great commitment in mind, we must remember that above all, there is need to "pray, pray, pray," every day, as only God's power can save.

Fr. A.

DESPITE PAPAL WARNINGS, MARXISM HAS DICTATED LAW ALSO IN WESTERN WORLD - WITH WHAT RESULTS?

In past years, the Western world, including Catholic parts of it, was overcome by Communism. Now, faced with the disastrous effects of its fall, the continuous warnings by the Church come back to mind. Leo XIII called it: "a mortal plague which lurks in the bowels of society..." (1878), and Pius XI called it: "the worst heresy of all times, archenemy of God and the Church."

In 1942 an angry reaction arose when the Holy Office (under Pius XII) ex-communicated those who propagandized Communism; and the mass media spoke of Pius XII as, "the most reactionary Pope ever, and an enemy of the people"; and in the same instrumental manner John XXIII was presented to the people as though the Good Pope had never condemned Communism (his public condemnation in 1961 was artfully ignored) and the people were made to believe that they finally had a "people's pope" who had condemned Pius XII's work! However, a look at the present situation in Russia is enough for us to see things in their proper light. The system which wanted to free people of subjection to God, not only wiped out development and freedom for the peoples of the East, but it threw all Russia into starvation, a country which was once known as Europe's number one grainstore!

Russia is going through terrible moments. The ruins foretold by the Virgin of Fatima are coming to light; not only in Russia, but also in the countries which followed on in Russia's footsteps. Yet the enlightened spirits (some of whom in the Church) persist in not believing, and in deriding those who trust in the Pope.

Truly, when it is not the Lord who builds the house, those built in the sand are bound for total ruin.

It can now be seen clearly what enormous trickery Satan had prepared for humanity, and what enormous liberation God must work, through Mary, to reduce the diabolic powers to nothing.

These diabolic powers used Communism to get people to abandon the Church, and destroyed people's consciences. They made people seek only materialistic happiness in an affluent, consumeristic society which favours abortion and drugs and divorce.

The fragments of this society are now being picked up; but is everyone really convinced that the house which is not built on the rocks is destined to fall?

Fr. Angelo

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