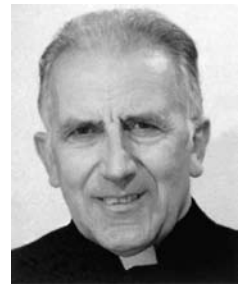




Echo of Medjugorje

March - April 2013 - Edited by: Eco di Maria, Via Cremona, 28 - 46100 Mantova (Italia) - Year 29, nr. 3/4
Poste Italiane s.p.a. - Sped. in A. P. - D.L. 353/2003 (conv. in L. 27/02/2004 n° 46) art. 1, comma 2, DCB Mantova

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Fr. Angelo Mutti
founder Echo of Medjugorje

Message of 25 January 2013:

"Dear Children, Also today I call you to prayer. May your prayer have the strength of a living stone, so that with your lives you become witnesses. Witness the beauty of your faith. I am with you and intercede before my Son for each of you. Thank you for responding to my call."

Witness with Your Life!

This is an intense call to build one's life on the rock and not only for our own good, but for the good of all. **Also today I call you to prayer.** Mary has called us to prayer many times, and perhaps we have taken her call too lightly; maybe we have prayed for this or that other reason or person. Today our Blessed Mother is reminding us that prayer is finding that communion between Father and child. Prayer isn't just asking; but it is dialogue! In any case, it is more vital to us than the air we breathe, more than the water we drink! The Life that makes us God's children flows into us through this communion between Father and child.

May your prayer be as strong as a living stone, Mary urges. This way we would be able to witness the beauty of our faith, and we could be always ready to respond to anyone who asks for the reason of our hope (cf. 1 Pt 3, 15b). Our faith is, yes!, beautiful, in the broad sense and also because it transcends every human meaning (which is always limited) to *draw grace upon grace* from the Hearts (Immaculate and Most Sacred) of Mary and Jesus. It is for this reason that faith is Life and prayer is food of Life, and for the same reason it is possible for us to be witnesses of this.

When Jesus took Peter, John and James with him up the mountain to pray, Jesus' countenance changed as he prayed and his robes became radiantly white (Lk 9:28b-29). No doubt in a lesser degree, Mary would like for our faith to be such that others notice the change. We shouldn't doubt that this could be possible because nothing is impossible for God, and we know that Mary's desires are reflections of God's own desires, and that she intercedes for each of us before her Son.

No excuses then! It's up to each of us to accept or refuse this great grace which is still being offered us. All we need do is surrender ourselves up to His Love. §



Consecrate Your Hearts to Me!

Message of the 2nd February 2013 (to Mirjana):

"Dear Children, Love brings me to you; it is the love which I also desire teaching you. It is true love; the love which my Son showed you when He died on the Cross out of love for you. This love is always ready to forgive and to ask for forgiveness. How great is your love? My motherly heart is sorrowful as it searches for love in your hearts. You are not ready to submit your will to God's will out of love. You can't help me help those who haven't come to know God's love, that they might come to know it, because you don't have true love. Consecrate your hearts to me and I will lead you. I will teach you to forgive, to love your enemies and to live according to my Son. Don't be afraid for yourselves. In afflictions my Son doesn't forget those who love. I will be by your side. I will pray the Heavenly Father that He give you the light of eternal truth and love to illuminate you. Pray for your pastors, that through your fasting and prayer, they may lead you in love. Thank you." §

Message of 25 February 2013:

"Dear Children, Also today I call you to prayer. Sin is pulling you towards worldly things, but I have come to lead you towards holiness and the things of God. You, however, struggle and waste your energies in the battle between good and evil that is within you. Thus, my children: pray, pray, pray! until prayer becomes joy for you and your life will simply become a journey towards God. Thank you for responding to my call."

Pray, Pray, Pray!

The contrast between what is of God and what is of the world does not imply that the two realities are incompatible. God came into the world to reconcile creation with the Creator. It is not a universal or automatic thing, but a possibility offered by Love, a way, a proposal, but not an imposition which we have the freedom to accept or refuse. But we are also invited to understand the consequences of our responsibility in making such a choice.

Mary is with us as a Mother to lead, correct, call and urge us so that God's Will can triumph in us. **Both good and evil abide in us,** Mary reminds us, and we need to fight so that the good can triumph. It is a battle that is never quite definitely won while we live. The great Apostle Paul reminds us, in fact: *"For I am conscious that in me, that is, in my flesh, there is nothing good: I have the mind but not the power to do what is right. For the good which I have a mind to do, I do not: but the evil which I have no mind to do, that I do"* (Rm 7:18).

Walking towards God is as natural as water or air is to our lives, Mary tells us. **Therefore, my Children: pray, pray, pray till prayer becomes joy for you and till your lives simply become a journey towards God.**

Thank you Mary for responding to our call, and though it may be unconscious, unspoken or tacit, it is from the heart. No offence to those who are tired of Mary's repeated calls and who seek elsewhere for signs of a Heavenly Presence, **but we wish to say thank you, Mary,** for your humble and untiring work, so full of light and grace, which has already given abundant fruits and will no doubt give many more!
Come Lord Jesus! Maranatha! §

(Comments to messages by Nuccio Quattrocchi)



Benedict XVI

General Audience 27 February 2013

"Thank you for coming in such great numbers to this last General Audience. Heartfelt thanks! I am truly moved and I see the Church alive! (...) At the moment I feel great confidence, because I know, we all know, that the Gospel word of truth is the Church's strength; it is her life. The Gospel purifies and renews, it bears fruit..."

When on the 19th April nearly eight years ago I accepted the Petrine ministry, I had a firm certainty... At that moment the words which echoed in my heart were: Lord, why are you asking this of me, and what is it that you are asking of me? It is a heavy burden which you are laying on my shoulders, but if you ask it of me, at your word I will cast the net, sure that you will lead me even with all my weaknesses. And eight years later I can say that the Lord has truly led me, he has been close to me, I have been able to perceive his presence daily. (...) I have always known that the Lord is in that boat, and I have always known that the barque of the Church is not mine but his. Nor does the Lord let it sink; it is he who guides it, surely also through those whom he has chosen, because he so wished. (...)

I have never felt alone in bearing the joy and the burden of the Petrine ministry; the Lord has set beside me so many people who, with generosity and love for God and the Church, have helped me and been close to me. We are in the Year of the Faith (and) I would like to invite us all to renew our firm confidence in the Lord, to entrust ourselves

like little children in God's arms, certain that those arms always hold us, enabling us to press forward each day, even amid difficulties. I would like everyone to feel loved by that God who gave his Son for us, and who has shown us his infinite love. I would like everyone to feel the joy of being a Christian.

In one beautiful morning prayer, it says: "I adore you, my God, and I love you with all my heart. I thank you for having created me and made me a Christian...". Yes, we are happy for the gift of faith; it is our most precious possession, which no one can take from us! Let us thank the Lord for this daily, in prayer and by a consistent Christian life. God loves us, but he also expects us to love him!

Dear friends! God guides his Church, he sustains it always, especially at times of difficulty. Let us never lose this vision of faith, which is the one true way of looking at the journey of the Church and of the world. In our hearts, in the heart of each of you, may there always abide the joyful certainty that the Lord is at our side: he does not abandon us, he remains close to us and he surrounds us with his love. Thank you!"

ASH Wednesday - Homily

The prophet Joel considers the prayer of the priests, who turn to God with tears, saying: "Do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" (v. 17). This prayer makes us think of the importance of the witness of Christian faith and life given by each of us and our communities for showing the face of the Church, and how that face is sometimes disfigured. I think in particular of sins against the unity of the Church, and divisions within the body of the Church.

"Return to me with all your heart", says the Prophet in an appeal directed to individuals and the community.

The expression "with all your heart" is important: it means from the core of our thoughts and feelings, from the wellspring of our free decisions, choices and actions, in an act of complete and radical freedom. But is such a return to God possible? Yes, because there is a power which does not reside in our own hearts, but springs from God's own heart. It is the power of his mercy. To return to the Lord is possible as a 'grace', for it is God's own work and the fruit of our faith in his mercy.

Again, the prophet has God proclaim these words: "Rend your hearts and not your clothing" (v. 13). In our own day, lots of people are ready to "rend their clothing" in the face of scandals and acts of injustice – the fault naturally of others – but few seem prepared to do something about their own "hearts", their own consciences and their own intentions, allowing the Lord to transform, renew and convert them.

In the page of Matthew's Gospel, which is part of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus mentions three basic practices found in the law of Moses: almsgiving, prayer and fasting; these are also traditional signposts along the journey of Lent, pointing out how to respond to the call to "return to God with all your heart". But Jesus makes it clear that is the quality and the truthfulness of our relationship with God which reveals the authenticity of any religious practice. (...) Our witness will always be more effective the less we seek our own glory and the more we realize that the reward of the just is God himself: being one with him here below on the journey of faith, and, at life's end, in the luminous peace of seeing him face to face for ever.

May we feel deep within us the call to conversion, to "return to God with all our heart", accepting his grace which makes us new men and women, with that astonishing newness which is a share in the very life of Jesus. (13 Feb. 2013)

(www.vatican.va - 1 Jan. 2013)

No One Can Serve Two Masters

A reflection by **Mons. Giacomo Martinelli**, papal chaplain and a delegate of the Pontifical Academy of the Immacolata, given at Varese on the 2nd December 2012 at a prayer meeting with the participation of Marija Pavlovic and six thousand faithful.

"No one can serve two masters: For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other" (Mt 6, 24-34).

The importance of reflecting on this passage of Matthew's Gospel depends also on the fact that this same passage was chosen by Our Lady in the early years as a text for meditation by the Medjugorje prayer group. On the 29th February 1984 she said: "I desire for you to meet in Church every Thursday to adore my Son. There, before the Blessed Sacrament, read the sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, starting from: 'No one can serve two masters.'"

In this Gospel passage Jesus repeats that it is not possible to serve two masters, and we know, deep down, that this is true. One must decide; must choose whether we want to serve ourselves or the Lord; choose to serve the One who gave us life. He desires us to make this decision; He desires knowing whether or not this is our will.

Many of us might say: "But I have already chosen Him!", since we go to Church and we go to Medjugorje and we think we're ok. The Pope warns us, however, that things aren't that simple. Benedict XVI, in one of his first catecheses for the Year of the Faith addressed all the faithful when he said, "A particularly dangerous phenomenon for faith has arisen in our times: indeed a form of atheism exists which we define, precisely, as "practical", in which the truths of faith or religious rites are not denied but are merely deemed irrelevant to daily life, detached from life, pointless. So it is that people often believe in God in a superficial manner, and live as though He did not exist. In the end this

way of life proves even more destructive because it leads to indifference to faith and to the question of God." (Gen. Aud. 14 Nov. 2012).

Thus it happens that we might go to a Baptism or a Wedding (where they are still being celebrated!) or a Funeral, and we make the sign of the Cross, but our hearts are still dominated by worldly criteria that we absorb especially during the time spent in front of the TV.

But why can't we make this decision to belong to one side (or the other)? Quite simply: because we haven't encountered anyone in the religious practices that we attend.

Man cannot decide for a nullity; he cannot respond if he does not perceive a call; he cannot dedicate his life if he doesn't encounter someone for whom it would be worthwhile. The Pope has wanted us to see how faith does not consist in reading the Catechism or the Bible. It comes from making an encounter with God. You must encounter God; God who has always

known you, who created you, who has always thought of you, who knows you inside and out, and all your wounds.

Before I went to Medjugorje in 1983 I wasn't a bad priest, but when I got there all my thoughts and ideas on how to organize the various pastoral activities suddenly changed, and that was the beginning of my "year of the faith," for I had perceived God's living presence, through Mary's intercession. Mary's presence is the great motherly sign granted us by God. Through her intercession the rusty gates of our hearts are able to open allowing us to respond 'here I am' to God who calls. Our response marks the beginning of faith in our lives. At Medjugorje the "year of the faith" began for me because it was when I responded to someone who was calling me.

Each of us can begin his "year of the faith" when he responds to the call to be God's child. Our Lady began the year of the faith for all mankind when she responded to God's call (brought to her through an angel). When she said 'yes' Christ was born in her and she was no longer alone. This is the faith: encounter Christ, open oneself to Him, allow Him to be in us, and then we will no longer be alone as we face this life. Our Lady came to Medjugorje to deliver us from loneliness and from a life of sin and to familiarize us with the Mystery that has always tried to engage and talk to each of us.

Some years ago Cardinal Ratzinger was asked to reflect on what proof there was for God's existence, besides the classical "five ways" by St. Thomas Aquinas. The Cardinal responded that it wasn't necessary to go as far as the five ways, because every living person is proof of God's existence. Each of us, in fact, is able to perceive this presence of God within us, who speaks to our conscience and tells us when we are doing right or wrong. Christ lives in the depth of our soul, and we can tell, because when we adapt to the false worldly ways, our conscience tells us, it reproaches us.

I was once called to assist a dying person who lived alone. As soon as I entered the room he said he was happy that a priest had arrived. He confessed that he had always avoided the voice of his conscience. He had travelled a great deal, living an immoral lifestyle. He said that many times - in a hotel room of a Sunday morning - he would be woken by the sound of the bells and his conscience told him to get up and go to Church, but he never wanted to listen to his conscience. When he was dying he was finally reconciled to the Father who had tried to call him so many times, speaking to his conscience. The Father speaks also to our conscience, calling us to be real, to live in love for which we were created.

[to be continued]



Year of the Faith Suggestions from Medjugorje

Faith: Life's Sole Joy and Happiness

Message to Mirjana, 2 Oct. 2008:

"Dear children, Again I call you to the **faith**. My Motherly heart desires for your heart to be open so it can say to yours: Believe!

My children, in life's trials **only faith can give you strength**. It will renew your soul and open the ways of hope.

I am with you. I gather you around me because I desire helping you, so that you can help your neighbours to discover **faith**, which is the only joy and happiness of life. Thank you."

~~~~~

MIRJANA, Message, 2 March 2013

*"Dear Children, I call you anew with motherly affection: do not be hard-hearted! Do not close your eyes to the admonitions that the Heavenly Father sends you out of love. Do you love Him above all else? Do you repent for often forgetting that the Heavenly Father - out of his great love - sent his Son to redeem us through his cross? Do you repent for still not having accepted my message?*

*My children, do not offer resistance to my Son's love. Do not offer resistance to hope and peace. With your prayer and your fasting my Son, with his cross, will crush the darkness that desires surrounding you and seizing you. My Son will give you the strength for a new life. [If you] live it according to my Son, you will be a blessing and hope for all those sinners who wander around in the darkness of sin. My children, keep watch! As your Mother I watch over you. I pray and keep watch especially over those whom my Son has called, so that they may be for you bearers of light and of hope: I refer to your pastors. Thank you."*

As if wanting to be able to say to the Father: see how sorry they are; see how they repent?, she repeats those telling words: **Do as he tells you...** hoping, pleading even, that we'll at least nod, and then she out of magnanimity will hide the dullness of our acquiescence with the light of her joy and love and say to God: can you see that they love you? that they are sorry for so often forgetting that you sent your Son to redeem us with his death on the Cross? And she encourages us: as her gaze turns back on us: Remember to do your part! **Do as He tells you**. Let me see that at least you try... she appears to be saying to us.

The Father sent his prophets and they were not accepted, then he sent his Son but he was not accepted. The Son sent his Mother... and she **keeps watch over us**, and she calls us to keep watch over our own souls, and over each other - because contrary to what Cain said, we are our brothers' keepers. (BK)

## IVAN interviewed by Radio Marija<sup>3</sup> (An excerpt)

**Fr. Livio:** Ivan, Our Lady says we must accept her messages with the heart and live them.

**Ivan:** Prayer really is the heart and soul of our faith, when it is prayer with the heart, that is, not out of habit or tradition, or said mechanically. Our Lady desires for us to dedicate some time to prayer and to God. Praying with the



heart especially means praying with love and with all our being. Our prayer ought to be a living encounter, a dialogue with Jesus, where we find repose and be filled with joy and peace. Our Lady also says that prayer should be joy too. We should pray with joy. Our Lady knows we aren't perfect, yet she desires that we begin in this school of prayer, and learn. In this school we need lots of patience, but we also need to be decisive and persevering, which are gifts we should pray for.

**Fr. Livio:** Ivan, Our Lady has called us many times to open our hearts. What does this mean? How does one open the heart?

**Ivan:** Well, it's a life-long programme; just as our conversion is. We have to open ourselves up every day, and pray every day. Even if I see Our Lady every day, my conversion is a process that lasts a lifetime. Being in Our Lady's school means to pray daily, and to want to grow a little bit every day.

And every day I need to remove myself from whatever hinders my conversion. I know that this can be difficult because there are many obstacles along the way, but I need to persevere every day with prayer and surrender my heart.

**Fr. Livio:** Ivan, this year Our Lady has urged and warned us not to murmur against priests, but to pray for them. It seems as though she were very concerned for the pastors of the Church.

**Ivan:** Yes, also in the messages she gives me there seems to be a certain concern. However, Our Lady's call is to pray for them. She has never criticized a priest or the Church. She loves the priests especially. Every Thursday, when we pray for priests, I see how much love is in Our Lady's gaze when she sees priests there.

(August 2012)



## ***"In the End My Immaculate Heart Will Triumph"***

In the message dated 25 Aug. 1991 the Queen of Peace announced a time of particular trial for the children of the Church: "Dear Children, also today I call you to pray now more than ever as my plan has begun to be realized. Satan is strong and desires halting the plans of peace and joy and make you think that my Son is not strong in his decisions..."

Our Lady also declared that her presence at Medjugorje is **directly linked to the apparitions and grace of Fatima**, and she asked her children to offer themselves entirely to God for the fulfilment of God's plans of salvation for the world and the Church... *"That with your help everything that I wish to realise with the secrets that I began in Fatima will be fulfilled."*

Furthermore, **to dispel the temptation to relativism** which is so widespread amongst today's Christians Our Lady warns us: *"I call you, my children, to comprehend the importance of my coming here and the gravity of the situation."* With touching motherly concern she also tells us the reason for this great cycle of apparitions: *"I wish to save all souls and present them to God. Therefore, let us pray that all that I have begun may be completely fulfilled."*

**The Fatima message** tells of difficult times for the Catholic Church and for the Pope in particular. We should not forget that the apparition of the 13th July 1917 at Fatima in which Our Lady revealed the secrets is sealed by the promise: ***"In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph"***; a promise which sustained many of her children in the gravest moments, including St. Maximilian Kolbe who offered his life for the sake of another at Auschwitz.

**Far from millenarian fantasies** and arbitrary interpretations of the third secret of Fatima, I do believe, however, that the events of the present time in which the Church (the institution) is being particularly tried should serve to make us respond more generously and with greater awareness to Mary's appeal which she first made more than thirty years ago at Medjugorje.

**Our Lady desires exposing and destroying** the plans of death of the old enemy who is now more than ever engaged in a bitter final battle against the "Woman clothed in the sun" (Rev 12:1) and her offspring (Gen 3:15). Mary knows only too well that to strike out at God's people with great effect the enemy concentrates on striking out at *"those whom my Son has chosen; that is, your pastors"* (mess. 02.02.2012), *"because... without their guidance and the strength that comes from their blessing, you cannot go on"* (02.06.2012).

Mary calls us **not to fall into the trap of the enemy** who "accuses the brethren before our God day and night" (Rev 12:10) who wants to create irreparable wounds in the Body of Christ, the Church (cfr. 1Cor

12:27) by inducing the Baptised to judge without mercy and to become bearers of division. ***"Do not fear! My children, pray for your pastors! May your lips be sealed against making any sort of condemnation, since (you must) not forget that my Son has chosen them, and He alone has the right to judge."*** (2 January 2013)

Giuseppe Ferraro



## **Jesus Teaches How to Pray**

Jesus insists on the **CONVERSION OF HEART**, which must involve reconciliation with one's brother, love of enemies, prayer for persecutors, prayer to the Father in secret, purity of heart...

Once committed to conversion, the heart learns to pray in **FAITH**. Jesus himself asks us to "seek" and to "knock," since he himself is the door and the way.

Jesus teaches us **FILIAL BOLDNESS**: "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will." Such is the power of prayer and of faith that does not doubt: ***"all things are possible to him who believes."*** Jesus is as saddened by the "lack of faith" of his own...

Jesus calls us to **ACCEPT GOD'S WILL**, and to be concerned with cooperating with the divine plan.

And He calls us to be **WATCHFUL**. In communion with their Master, the disciples' prayer is a battle; only by keeping watch in prayer can one avoid falling into temptation.

The parables of "the importunate friend" and the "the importunate widow" tell us that it is necessary to pray always without ceasing and with the patience of faith. To he who prays like this, the heavenly Father will "give whatever he needs," and He will give above all the Holy Spirit who contains all gifts.

When we pray, Jesus hears our prayer. Here is the popular prayer known as **"The Jesus Prayer"** which can be said anywhere, anytime, as often as the heart desires:

***"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner!"***

(cfr. CCC 2607-2616)

## **Echo fully relies on Readers' donations.**

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

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## **Benedict's Farewell**

Benedict XVI, a true son of Mary and a faithful and humble servant of Jesus and his Gospel has retired from his service as successor to Peter. He has left us with words of great comfort and hope:

*"I thank God for all that I have "heard" in these years of the Petrine ministry about the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the love which truly circulates in the Body of the Church and makes it live in love, and about the hope which opens and directs us towards the fullness of life, towards our heavenly homeland. (...)*

*I receive many many letters from ordinary people who write to me simply and from the heart, and who show me their affection, an affection born of our being together with Christ Jesus, in the Church. They do not write to me in the way one might write to a prince or an important person they don't know, but as brothers and sisters, as sons and daughters, with a sense of a very affectionate family bond. Here we sense palpably what the Church is: not an organization or association for religious or humanitarian ends, but a living body, a communion of brethren in the Body of Christ, which makes us all one. To experience the Church in this way and be able as it were to put one's finger on the strength of her truth and her love, is a cause for joy at a time when so many people are speaking of her decline. This is the Church alive today!"*

*J. Remo*

**Mantua, March 2013**

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